

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:-	Cabinet Member for Community Development, Equality and Young People's Issues
2.	Date:-	16 th January 2012
3.	Title:-	Update on Rotherham Youth Service.
4.	Directorate:-	Children and Young People's Services

5. Summary

This report will provide an update on the following areas of work.

- (i) The publication of the Governments "Positive for Youth" Strategy and a brief overview of implications for Rotherham Youth Service.
- (ii) Funding issues re the Teenage Pregnancy and Health projects.
- (iii) An update on the Apprenticeship scheme.
- (iv) An update on the Mobile provision.

6. Recommendations

That the Cabinet Member notes the contents of this report.

7. Proposals and Details

- (i) The publication of the Government's "Positive for Youth" strategy.

The Government published its promised Youth Policy "Positive for Youth: a new approach to cross government policy for young people aged 13 to 19" on 19th December 2011. The statement brings together for the first time all of the Government's policies for young people aged 13 to 19. It therefore covers a wide range of issues – from education and youth services, to health, crime, housing and more. Nine government departments have been involved in developing it – including the Department for Education, the Department of Health, the Home Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government. Young people and youth professionals have also been involved directly in developing the statement through extensive collaboration and consultation.

The overarching thrust of the work is to create a new approach to cross Government policy for young people aged 13 to 19 in England. It aims to bring together all Government policies for this age group aiming to create a single vision across at least nine government departments.

The executive summary is attached to this report and the whole report can be found on:

<http://www.rywu.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/positive-for-youth-executive-summary.pdf>

Implications for Rotherham Youth Service.

Overall the Service is well placed to meet the requirements of the strategy.

- It is well along the path in terms of Voice and Influence and the creation of Borough wide infrastructure to enable young people to have a voice in the use of resources and the creation of provision relating to them. This is reflected in the commitment of resources re the Voice and Influence workers within the recent Service restructure.
- The Service has had evaluation of provision by young people in place since 1999 via its Peer evaluation processes. This area of work has been long identified as good practice. This process is currently under review in order to offer improvements especially in terms of broadening its remit across all sectors.
- The service has been instrumental in the design and rolling out of the Voice and Influence principles which have been adopted across the Council and the Voluntary sector consortium.
- Youth Service also supports and facilitates the Youth Cabinet, the UKYP process and MPs and also the Looked After Children and Young People's council.
- The Service is also has well developed cross sector partnerships e.g. the MyPlace project and the CWDC graduate and Apprenticeship project with the Voluntary Sector Consortium. The Service is well placed to continue to support the development of a comprehensive Youth Offer across all sectors.

- The paper calls for the development of well supported Prevention and Intervention or “Early Help” strategies. With the continuing development of support pathways via the Youth Service Multi agency Early Intervention Team the service is again well positioned.
- There is specific reference within the paper to the role of Youth work, targeted provision and open access Youth Centres. The following quote outlines the governments approach to the role of Youth Service.

“The role of youth work, targeted provision, and open access youth centres”

Local areas will need to consider what balance of targeted services and open access services will best meet local needs. However services are provided, the Government believes that aspirational personal and social development programmes, including investment in young people’s capabilities and character through high quality youth work, can have a significant impact on young people’s life chances and be an important form of early intervention for young people at risk of poor outcomes. This is reflected directly in local authorities’ statutory duty to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, access to educational and recreational activities for the improvement of young people’s wellbeing – which includes explicitly a duty to secure access to sufficient activities for the improvement of young people’s personal and social development⁹¹.

The Government is committed to helping policy makers and local commissioners to better understand the impact that high quality youth work professionals and volunteers can have in the lives of young people – supporting and empowering them to achieve positive outcomes and avoid negative ones. In September 2011, it commissioned a group of national youth sector leaders to develop a narrative for the role and impact of youth work. Their draft paper has been published for comment on the Department for Education’s website.

The Government welcomes and endorses this narrative and hopes that it will help commissioners and providers of youth work to form a common view of the role and potential of both detached and centre-based youth work within the overall system of support for young people.The evidence shows that good quality open access youth clubs that provide structured activities (whether run by local authorities or local communities) can be highly effective in meeting priority needs, particularly where these are located in areas where disadvantaged young people are concentrated. They can be hubs through which to offer young people access to a wide range of advice and support services, and identify early those who may need additional help.”

*Page 69 “Positive for Youth” HM Government 2011.

- Other key points arising from the paper include reference to further consultation work on the nature of the statutory basis for Local Authority Youth Services working from the starting point that this is a positive thing.

- The paper is also very strong on the need for robust systems for impact analysis. Rotherham Youth Service is currently undertaking a range of initiatives around this area particularly in terms of CAF, Early Intervention and targeted work. This work will need to progress and develop in order to meet Government expectations.
- There are few, if any, new avenues for resources for RYS in Positive for Youth, MyPlace is already on stream in Rotherham, there may be small opportunities for gaining sub contracted work form Private sector Family Based initiatives. EIG is seen as the main resources vehicle for targeted provision.

In conclusion it is relatively early days in terms of the Positive for Youth strategy, however Youth Service is reasonably well placed to meet its expectations.

(ii) Funding issues re the Teenage Pregnancy Girls and Young Women's Targeted projects.

These projects have been operating over the last four years initially in Wentworth Valley and subsequently at Rotherham North and Wentworth South. The workers are situated within the Early Intervention Teams. The projects have been extremely successful in targeting vulnerable young women and working intensively with them in order to enable them to progress in their education and raise their levels of self esteem thus preventing early unwanted conceptions.

The projects have been entirely funded via NHS Rotherham since its inception. However we have notice that this funding will conclude on March 31st 2012. A bid has been developed for submission to NHS Rotherham in order to continue the funding. In the interim the project workers have been served notice. If this funding cannot be continued then there could be severe Implications re support for young women and subsequently for the levels of Teenage Pregnancy in Rotherham.

(iii) An update on the Apprenticeship scheme.

Following the successful recent Integrated Youth Support Services post Graduate and Apprenticeship programme a new piece of joint working has Been developed which will create Apprenticeship opportunities for 17 local young people. This is again an IYSS approach with funding coming from Coalfield Regeneration funding, IYSS and Youth Service. RCAT will deliver the training.

The Apprentices will be offered placements within Youth Service and IYSS and partners including MyPlace and Safe Havens.

The course will begin in February. There are still places available, they can be accessed via the National Apprenticeship website.

(iv) An Update on Mobile provision.

All 7 Mobile Units should have arrived by early February. There will be a launch event which is currently being planned.

The relevant strategic and operational planning with accompanying protocols for use will be in place by the end of January. February will be a test month with published programmes of delivery from the beginning of March.

8. Finance

No unexpected implications re finance.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There are risks and uncertainties in relation to the future work and subsequently the outcomes of the Young Women's Targeted Projects.

10. Background Papers and Consultation

- **Positive for Youth:** *A new approach to cross-government policy for young people aged 13 to19.*

HM Government 2011.

- **Contact Name:** - Chris Brodhurst-Brown. Youth Service Manager.

Christine.Brodhurst-Brown@Rotherham.gov.uk