

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 19th May, 2010.

Present: Cllr David Harrington (Chairman), Cllr Phillip Broughton, Cllr Mrs Ann Cains, Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Maurice Frankland, Cllr Miss Barbara Inman

Officers: G.Carson, T.Frank, P.Seller, P.Surtees (CESC); N.Hart, J.Trainer (LD).

Also in attendance: Mr D.Campbell, Mr R.G.Lupton (Non voting co-opted representatives); Leon Mexter (Chief Executive, Regional Youth Work Unit, North East).

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Cllr Sherris and Mr Cash (Non voting co-opted representative).

CYP 6/10 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Cains declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of the item entitled 'Youth Service Review' as a result of reference within the presentation to UNITE, of which Councillor Cains was a member.

CONCLUDED that the declaration of interest be noted.

CYP 7/10 **Draft Minutes of 14th April 2010**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

CYP 8/10 **Youth Service Review**

Leon Mexter, Chief Executive of the Regional Youth Work Unit North East, presented members with an overview and background to the development of Youth Work, and its contribution to integrated service provision.

Youth work was defined as 'a process of informal personal and social education, founded on a voluntary relationship with young people, that strives to challenge discrimination, develop understanding and empower individuals and groups'.

It was noted that youth work today was located in general youth clubs, local youth projects, and via specialist projects delivering:-

- detached youth work,
- drugs education,
- citizenship in schools,
- alternative educational provision,
- sexual health,
- crime diversion,
- teenage pregnancy,
- participation and inclusion,
- health etc.

The main policy drivers and legislation behind current youth work provision was summarised, as were the benefits, challenges and opportunities. Members were also provided with examples of best practice both locally, nationally and

internationally. In response to member questions, Mr Mexter referred to the need to ensure that provision within youth clubs remained relevant, as many clubs had seen their attendances reduce as a result of the activities provided being not desired by the young people attending. It was imperative also that the centres themselves were adequately resourced, with trained and experienced staff, willing volunteers, and with a proper system of evaluation. Evidence of impact/evaluation of activities provided nationally was presented to the Chairman and would be shared with the other members of the Committee. It was also noted that street based youth work was an effective means of targetting 'hard to reach' young people; i.e those that were not readily inclined to use the youth service. The assistance of other partner organisations such as the Police, Fire, Forces Cadets and charity organisations etc could also be considered as a means of breaking down the barriers to making contact with young people who were reluctant to engage.

Members thanked Mr Mexter for his attendance and agreed to share with him the draft findings of the Committee once known.

Consideration was then given to the proposed consultation arrangements for the review. It was noted that an on line survey would be provided from 1st June, to which members would have the opportunity to have input. It was suggested that press releases to the local press be also included as part of the consultation plan.

Members also considered the draft programme for site visits of youth clubs within the borough, and it was agreed that arrangements for the visits be confirmed by the Team Leader-Scrutiny in consultation with the elected members concerned. Feedback on all visits undertaken would be provided to members at a future meeting of the Committee.

Regards the envisaged project plan for the review, the Chairman and Vice Chairman expressed concern that the timescale for completion by October 2010 was ambitious; and proposed that the project plan be amended with a view to reporting to Cabinet in December 2010.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The presentation be noted.
2. The proposed revisions to both the consultation arrangements and project plan for the review be agreed.
3. The Team Leader-Scrutiny be requested to finalise with elected members the arrangements for the forthcoming site visits of youth clubs, and provide feedback for members to a future meeting of the Committee.

**CYP
9/10**

Progress Update for Previously Agreed Recommendations

Members were asked to consider the assessments of progress contained within the Progress Updates on the implementation of previously agreed recommendations.

There were no outstanding recommendations from the review of Bullying and it was agreed that this review could now be regarded as complete.

Members were requested to consider the assessments of progress contained within the Progress Report on the implementation of the recommendations from the review of Obesity.

Members questioned whether initiatives had begun to take place nationally which would assist in addressing this recommendation; such as smaller meals provided by a chain of restaurants in London which had been referred to on BBC Radio. It was suggested that the Team Leader-Scrutiny check the rating given to this recommendation with the project lead to establish whether there was further evidence of progress made. Members felt that dates should be identified against each of the outstanding recommendations to indicate when they would be achieved.

CONCLUDED that the assessments of progress be approved, subject to the above comments.

**CYP
10/10** **Work Programme**

Members were provided with an updated Work Programme. The next meeting would be held on the 9th June 2010; to which all members of the Council would be invited to attend to receive a presentation on youth work and targeted youth support, including information about youth participation available through the Geographical Information System (GIS).

The next scheduled meeting (30th June 2010) would consider evidence from voluntary and community sector workers, and a further meeting would be held on the 14th July to review progress to date, receive consultation feedback and discuss initial options.

Members had earlier been advised of likely changes to the timescale for completion of the review; and this matter would be addressed at the next meeting of the Executive Scrutiny Committee on 1st June 2010.

CONCLUDED that the Work Programme be noted.

**CYP
11/10** **Chair's Update**

The Chair advised that a mid tri-partite review meeting would be held shortly with the new Cabinet Member for Children & Young People given the recent portfolio changes.

CONCLUDED that the Chair's update be noted.