

Title: **Children & Young People**

Member: **Cllr Terry Chivers and Cllr Andrew Bryant**

Service Manager: **Richard Rogers**

1. Purpose

This report is in response to Cabinet's request for a review of how this Council can further establish and strengthen links with young people across the District.

The aim is to propose how this Council can most effectively add value to what is already taking place whilst retaining the emphasis upon realising our corporate plan.

The definition of young people used in this report is the same as that which has been adopted by the "Children and Young People's Trust Board", namely:

"All young people aged 0-19, care leavers over 19 receiving services and those over 19 and under 25 with disabilities"

2. Introduction

Over the past few years, the Government has placed increasing emphasis upon engaging with young people and encouraging local authorities to lead the way in paying specific attention to their needs and aspirations. In most cases, it has been the County Council that has been resourced and required to take the lead. Although much of the responsibility for this work has been centred within the departments responsible for children and education as well as health and social care, there is also increasing attention given to the key common areas of improved consultation, communication and engagement.

West Wiltshire benefits from a range of voluntary and statutory youth provision. As with the majority of districts, a large proportion of youth activities are organised on a voluntary basis by non-professional workers and faith based organisations. There also exist a number of peer education projects and pseudo-political bodies such as Wiltshire Assembly of Youth and local parish Youth Councils that provide a level of feedback and consultation with local authorities as well as organising events and activities.

West Wiltshire District Council has relatively little statutory duty that it is required to undertake. While recognising that change is continuous within Local Government and this requires us to be a learning organisation, the main focus of the Council's work is contained within the Council's Corporate Plan and the Districts Community Strategy.

In May 2004, the Audit Commission's CPA report on West Wiltshire District Council praised much of the work the council was engaged in with young people. For example with the issue of public space, it stated that the Council's 'strengths outweigh weaknesses and consequently there is a low risk of function failure and/or poor outcomes.

However the Commission also highlighted the following specific areas where the Council was weak.

- No comprehensive analysis of young peoples need.
- Lack of corporate focus on youth despite being a priority amongst local people
- Undeveloped approach to social inclusion.

While demonstrating that the Council is continuing to build upon its strengths, it is these areas of weakness that this report focuses upon. The key question is how can we add value to what is already happening in order to address these areas for improvement and ensure that this Council's priorities are realized.

3. Addressing 'No comprehensive analysis of young peoples need'

A) Young People and Children Trust Board

A children's trust is the government's preferred method of achieving the local integration of services and better outcomes for children and young people. In Wiltshire, the interim 'Young people and Children's Trust' was established during 2005 and the responsibility for its success lies with the County Council. West Wiltshire District Council is a statutory partner and Richard Rogers is currently our representative.

One of the key responsibilities of the Trust is a responsibility for drawing together an overall needs assessment for young people and produce an action plan. A draft version of this is currently out for consultation. The Trust will also be responsible for constructing the Local Area Agreement on Children and Young people that will come into affect in April 2007.

The purpose of the Trust is about providing services that are:

- More coherent and joined up in the experience of the service user and do not allow children and young people to fall through the net
- More effective as they are based upon what works and are provided preventively
- More efficient as they are planned and delivered in partnership

The work of the Trust focuses upon five desired outcomes derived from "Every Child Matters". They are

- "Be healthy" which includes exercise and lifestyle
- "Stay safe" including maltreatment, neglect, exploitation and crime/anti social behaviour.
- "Enjoy and achieve" which includes recreation

- “Make a positive contribution” which includes community cohesion and enterprising behaviour.
- “Achieve economic well being” including housing, education, economy.

B) Leisure and recreation Needs Analysis

One of the key areas where the Council was weak in terms of understanding the needs of young people was in the area of leisure and recreation. During 2005, this analysis took place and the resultant report will be used to direct the Council in its service delivery specifically by:

- Ensuring future provision for young people as identified throughout the analysis is fed into the development policy.
- Addressing the need for good facilities for teenagers
- Improving the provision and quality of children’s play
- Working closely with the County Council and local schools to improve the leisure facilities

C) Other consultation

Further consultation that adds to our understanding of the needs of young people is being carried out regularly. One of the most recent contributions is that of the Wiltshire Assembly of Youth. Following consultation with all secondary schools and youth centres in Wiltshire, they identified four priorities. These are:

- Education
- Transport
- Facilities
- Environment.

4. Addressing ‘Lack of corporate focus on youth’

A) Youth Champion

On the 20th July 2005, Cabinet approved the Leader appointing a Member youth champion. Cllr Andrew Bryant was appointed to this position in late September 2005. His remit is to provide a corporate focus upon youth from a Member perspective.

Cllr Bryant has met with a number of young people, youth development workers and organisations as well as participating in a number of young people’s events. His findings have influenced the writing of this report.

It is proposed that the role of a youth champion should focus upon co-ordinating activity, communication, and exchanging information amongst members. In addition, there is a role to liaise with partner agencies and work with the appropriate officers where the task contains a strong young people element. An example of this is in the implementation of the ‘Leisure and Recreational Needs Analysis’.

Cllr Bryant recommends that the Cabinet adopt the five tests drafted by the National Youth Agency, that should be applied to local authorities’ policies and provision directed towards young people:

- a. Policies are relevant – to the variety of young people's needs and concerns
- b. Entitlements are explicit – young people know what to expect.
- c. Provision is accessible to young people in all their diversity – age, gender, ethnicity, ability and location
- d. Duties on the authority and others, including Children's Trusts, are transparent – accountability is clear throughout the system.
- e. Proposals are sustainable – funding is secure and long term.

B) Officer Corporate Approach

The most affective way of ensuring that the needs of young people are adequately addressed is not to make it the responsibility of one person, but of the whole Council. Almost every service area within the District Council engages at some time or other with young people, and it is the responsibility of all service managers to continually evaluate their service in respect to young people. In this way, the CPA criticism that there is a lack of corporate focus can be addressed.

During late November 2005, Richard Rogers met with all service managers in order to talk to him or her about how they plan to address the needs of young people. As a result, a matrix of what engagement with young people is planned to take place has been put together and can be found attached to this report. It can clearly be seen that a considerable amount of additional activity will take place to ensure this Council continues to positively engage young people.

C) Youth Green Paper "Youth Matters" (18th July 2005)

Based on the principles set out in Every Child Matters and the Children's Act 2004, it gives a leading strategic role to local authorities to coordinate, facilitate and manage services for young people. It continues to support youth engagement via youth parliaments, scrutiny committees and other ways. To this it plans to add new measures including

- Tackling social inclusion for young people such as in the areas of encouraging volunteering and entrepreneurship, promoting good citizenship and improving information availability.
- Rationalising funding streams and procurement through children's trusts
- Increased emphasis upon improving facilities.

5. Undeveloped approach to social inclusion

A) Improved Communication

There are plans to increase the accessibility of the Council to young people. This is an important element of the Council's priority of putting the customer first, including the development of CRM. Depending upon the outcome of an engagement process with young people early in 2006, some possible further developments that are likely to take place include the introduction of the e-form, SMS texting and improved web site.

B) Improved Engagement

Some service managers are aware that engagement with young people is not as developed as it should be, and that they will be seeking to improve the way they carry this out during 2006. The Council's priority of 'Put Customer First' includes both the development of CRM and its related processes as well as changing the culture of the organisation to increasingly become more customer focussed. Young people have been identified as one of the three people groups to whom particular attention should be given.

C) Improved Consultation

Currently, the main way of consulting with young people is through 'Tomorrows Voice'. Concerns were raised at the way this has been used and how representative it is. Work will be undertaken during 2006 by the Policy and Communication Team, not only in order to improve the way that 'Tomorrows Voice' operates but to ensure that 'Peoples Voice' is fully representative.

D) Local Democracy Week

Local Democracy Week takes place every October and is designed to raise awareness of local government and the local democratic process amongst young people. Although Members have been encouraged to link into the programmes run by the County Council, WWDC have had little involvement in this initiative since it began. It is recommended that Cllr Bryant with the support of appropriate officers consider early on in 2006, how this council can best be linked into this process.

6. Recommendations

- I. Cabinet supports the approach to improve engagement with young people as outlined in this report
- II. Cabinet adopts the five tests described in this report and drafted by the National Youth Agency, that should be applied to Local Authorities' policies and provision directed towards young people.

7. Financial Implications

Some of the proposed programme of work is subject to resources being made available in the budget for 2006/07 and beyond.

8. Legal Implications

There are no human rights implications

9. Human Rights Implications

There are no human rights implications

Service manager: Richard Rogers **Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Terry Chivers

Youth Champion: Cllr Andrew Bryant

Appendix A 'Proposed work focussed upon young people'

Project/Work Area	When	Service Manager
Work with Youth Champion to Invite young people to proof read the web site and offer feedback. This is also to recommend any additional links to other sites, and possibly including young people in the design of the front page for their own areas of interest.	Summer 2006	Andy Spurway
Introducing ' e-form ' to improve consultation and communication, including with young people.	December 2005	Wayne Smith
PFI project to provide 400 affordable homes. Most are general needs lettings, but housing societies are reluctant to have 16&17 yr olds. PFI contractor will be forced to consider all nominations, including 16/17 year olds, and not discriminate.	2008-2010	Chris Trowell
Virtual foyer for young people aged 16-25 to be located in Trowbridge Town Centre.	2006 onwards	Chris Trowell
Improve engagement with young people in planning within Development Control	2006 onwards	David Hubbard
Look to improve delivery of developments for young people and link into the delivery of the L&RNA.	2006 onwards	David Hubbard
Work with the County Council, and the Youth Champion in regard to planning local democracy week . This could possibly include a youth forum during the week.	Work to be carried out in May 2006 for local democracy week in Oct 2007	Paul Mountford
Support the Youth Champion to help members engage better with schools .	Ongoing 2006/7	Paul Mountford
Support the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and act as a partner on the Agenda 21 group. The Trust work in partnership with WRAP (Waste and resources action programme) to deliver a waste minimisation programme, which includes a school recycling scheme. Schools can apply for compost bins, and training is given to the pupils. Funding has recently been secured to fund the installation of two 'In vessel' compost machines in St Laurence school Bradford on Avon and The George Ward school in Melksham.	Ongoing	Paul Mountford
Ensure future provision for teenagers as	Feb 2006 for	Mark Russell

<p>identified through the L&RNA is fed into the development policy.</p> <p>Implement the 'Statement of Community Involvement' which identifies how we are to engage more effectively including with young people. This document can be updated at any time.</p> <p>Young people to be specifically included in the conservation area reviews.</p> <p>The core strategy will be starting during 2006/7. It is the visioning for the local plan. Young people will be specifically targeted in this process</p>	<p>preferred options</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Trowbridge is being carried out now. Bradford and Warminster to be carried out 2006/7</p> <p>During 2006</p>	<p>Mark Russell</p> <p>Mark Russell</p> <p>Mark Russell</p>
<p>Improve Play Areas so that they are more accessible and engaging for young people.</p>	<p>Ongoing but more strategic from April 2006</p>	<p>John Follows</p>
<p>In response to the new licensing act, there is an Increased emphasis to be placed upon protecting children from harm caused through exposure to inappropriate activities in premises. Extra powers have been provided and these are to be used.</p> <p>Active participation in "Junior Good Citizen" which is a two week event joint with North Wiltshire, and aimed at year 6. This event normally reaches @800 young people</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>June/July 2006</p>	<p>John Carter</p> <p>John Carter</p>

Increased emphasis upon educating young people about recycling .	From April 2006	Kevin Gibbs
Service Development Bid for enforcement officers will also contain a strong community cohesion element. This will include educating young people in regards to litter and street scene, and could include a role for Police Community Support Officers.	From April 2006	Kevin Gibbs
Work Related Learning Programme - is about recruiting employees from businesses across Wiltshire & Swindon to forge closer links with schools. The target is to enlist around 250 businesses to work with schools across the county.	Until August 2006	Lee Boyes
"NEETS" – Not in Education or training. Scheme for young people aged 16 years and over that helps them gain the skills, confidence and contacts to find employment.	Next event between Jan and March 2006	Lee Boyes
Financial support for "Young Enterprise"	Ongoing	Lee Boyes
Implement Young People Protocol launched April 2005 in partnership with other Local Authorities in Wiltshire.	Ongoing	Nicole Smith
"Reconnect" – Council funds this mediation service in relation to housing for 16-25 year olds.	ongoing	Nicole Smith
Consultation with young people ages 16-19 years concerning the Local Public Service Agreement on Housing .	Early 2006	Nicole Smith
Follow up the launch of the Secondary school Resource Pack (Year 9), launched in late 2004 and develop a version for primary schools	2006	Nicole Smith
In response to the National Curriculum for schools containing a housing element , the Council will be working with Connections and a local school to develop a film about young people and homelessness	From January 2006	Nicole Smith
"Young People Safeguarding Board" – The Council is a statutory partner on this Board which coordinates the work amongst children at risk.	Ongoing	Nicole Smith

<p>Creation of Contact Center - As a result of the Audit Commission report that highlighted that the Council was only “promising” in the way that we engage with our customers, a service development bid has been put forward to create a contact center. Young people are one of the three targeted groups to focus on.</p>	<p>From April 2006 (If bid successful)</p>	<p>Wayne Smith</p>
<p>Capacity Building Fund – The council has led in a bid for £320k of funding to be used to develop improved community leadership within Wiltshire. If successful, the council will manage the funding and the officer. This has a strong element concerning on hard to reach groups including young people.</p>	<p>April 2006 onwards (If bid successful)</p>	<p>Paul Mountford</p>
<p>Review of consultation including ‘Tomorrows Voice’ and ‘Peoples Voice’.</p>	<p>Early 2006</p>	<p>Paul Mountford</p>
<p>Work with the children and Young Peoples trust Board to develop an action plan and produce a local area agreement</p>	<p>2006</p>	<p>Richard Rogers</p>
<p>Funding provided through Community Safety for a range of organisations and projects involving young people</p>	<p>April 2006 to April 2007</p>	<p>Richard Rogers</p>
<p>Young people - Arts Development Wiltshire Youth Arts Partnership has recently developed a three year business plan, which gives strategic direction to the partnership and a framework for the co-ordinator’s yearly work programmes. The partnership essentially works with 13 to 21 year olds. Some of the projects that WYAP will be undertaking over the next year are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young promoters/assessors project • MusicXpress project • Youth Arts Awards • Zero gravity project 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Richard Rogers</p>
<p>There are opportunities for young people to engage in the arts in other ways such as the PAWS scheme and provision through our partners, such as the regular programmes at Wiltshire Music Centre and Arc Theatre.</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Richard Rogers</p>

governing bodies of sport are contributing to the programme so they can identify talented and gifted young people with the aim of linking them to a given sport.		
<p>Wiltshire and Swindon Sport and Physical Activity Partnership (WASP) – This is an alliance of local regional and national bodies working together to boost levels of participation in activity and sport throughout the county, in order to meet both local needs and government targets of 50% of the population being regularly physical active by 2020. The vast majority of the work undertaken is aimed at young people. 2006 will see the first year of implementing its delivery plan.</p>	Ongoing	Richard Rogers
<p>Leisure Facilities - Through the Council's provision of eight leisure facilities which are managed by DC Leisure Management Ltd activities and opportunities for young people to be physically active are available at all facilities. There is a policy of looking to continually improve and evolve the activities including the swimming lesson programme, fitness sessions, fun house club parties and Holiday activities.</p>	Ongoing	Richard Rogers
<p>Leisure & Recreational Needs Assessment (L&RNA) - The L&RNA is a comprehensive assessment of the needs for the district. The report has identified 13 key themes where improvements or changes are required. Most of the themes will have an impact to some degree on young people and children but there are three themes that have a particular focus on children and young people.</p>	Ongoing	Richard Rogers
<p>Provision for teenagers This theme identifies that there is a lack of good facilities for teenagers. The report identifies some good examples such as the Melksham Skate Park but recommends that a network of facilities designed by young people be developed across the district with a least one quality facility in each town. The provision of teen shelters should also be improved to enable young people to gather without disturbing or upsetting others.</p>	Ongoing	Richard Rogers
<p>Provision for Children's Play This theme confirms that there are a lot of small</p>	Ongoing	Richard Rogers

equipped children's play areas but that they offer relatively little stimulation and excitement to most children and this will need addressing.		
Working with Schools This theme suggested that the Council should work even more closely with Wiltshire County Council. The Councils should aim to improve the leisure facilities on school sites so that during curriculum time young people benefit from the improved facilities and the community can then access the facilities when the school is shut.	Ongoing	Richard Rogers
Community Initiatives works with groups to identify needs/ improvements in their local play areas, groups have organised consultation with young people through fun days and other events areas include Melksham skatepark, Greenland view, Beanacre, Bowerhill and Berryfields. This work will continue and develop in conjunction with Community Area Partnerships depending on local priorities.	Ongoing	Richard Rogers
Annual Grant Fund - The District Council funds a program of grants focussed at supporting activity support by the Council's Corporate Plan.	Ongoing	Richard Rogers