

## **Youth Advisory Groups Update - Roll out to all community areas**

The Wiltshire 11-19 Commissioning Strategy was agreed by Cabinet and the Wiltshire Children & Young People's Trust in September 2011. This included the implementation of a new local Youth Work Offer.

Part of the Wiltshire Youth Work Offer includes the formation of Youth Advisory Groups with standard terms of reference in each community area, led by young people. These groups will be linked to Area Boards and chaired by a young person under 25. Over 50% of the members will be under 19 years of age and the groups will play a key role in improving the coordination of positive activities for young people in local areas. This will involve encouraging partnerships that avoid overlap and fill gaps.

The groups will also be involved in planning and shaping local services from a young person's perspective. Furthermore they will help local young people know what opportunities and activities are available for them to access. Mechanisms will be established so that knowledge and ideas can be shared between the groups across the county.

Youth Advisory Groups have been piloted in four community areas since January 2012. The areas involved include Salisbury, Southern Wiltshire, Melksham and Malmesbury. The pilots have recently been evaluated and the learning is being used to inform the development of groups in other areas. It is expected that groups will have commenced in all community areas across the county by the end of October 2012.

- Youth Advisory Groups will be co-ordinated by staff from the Integrated Youth Service and supported by the Voice and Influence Team.
- An evaluation of the Youth Advisory Group pilots has been completed and an evaluation report is available on request. Young people who took part in the pilots were involved in the evaluation and explored what worked well and what did not work so well.
- Standard Terms of Reference for Youth Advisory Groups have been developed and updated following the evaluation. These are also available on request. There will be a minimum of six meetings per year, however the frequency of local meetings will be determined by community areas.
- In keeping with the commitment to localism, it will be up to individual community areas to decide upon the future of Community Area Young People's Issue Groups (CAYPIGs). Following the formation of Youth Advisory Groups in each community area some areas may decide to continue their CAYPIG, whilst others might prefer to disband it. Some areas may opt to

develop their local CAYPIG into a Youth Advisory Group. Either of these options is possible and it's important that decisions are made based on local needs.

***Next Steps***

- Area Boards and Town Councils are invited to appoint a representative to their local Youth Advisory Group.
- Area Boards and Town Councils are invited to consider how they might support and work in partnership with their local Youth Advisory Group.

***For further information please contact:***

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