



**Report of the Director of Children's Services
Executive Board**

Date: 16 May 2007

Subject: Future of Youth Services in Leeds

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents proposals designed to respond to the expectations of Clause 6 of the 2006 Education and Inspections Act. As such, the report describes a range of actions, changes and developments which collectively set out a future direction of travel for youth services in Leeds. Implementation of the proposals is a key strategic aspect of further developing the Every Child Matters agenda.

Specifically, the report seeks approval for the establishment of an Integrated Youth Support Service from April 2008. Key components of the proposed IYSS are the Youth Service and a localized Connexions Service. Additional elements of the proposed IYSS are also outlined within the report.

Executive Board is being asked to approve the proposals and to agree that 2007/08 is used as a transition year.

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the implications of Clause 6 of the Education and Inspections Act for youth services in Leeds within the broader strategic context of Every Child Matters.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Clause 6 of the Education and Inspections Act contains the legislation through which the Youth Matters Green Paper is being implemented. This new legislation necessitates a fundamental and creative review of approaches at local authority level to the organisation and delivery of services for young people.

- 2.2 Clause 6 sets out that a local education authority in England must, so far as reasonably practicable, secure for qualifying young persons in the authority's area access to sufficient educational and leisure-time activities for the improvement of their wellbeing, and sufficient facilities for such activities. Specific reference is also made to supporting young people's personal and social development.
- 2.3 The duty applies to the 13-19 age range and those aged up to 24 with learning difficulties. The law came into effect in January 2007.
- 2.4 Detailed statutory guidance is being released so that local authorities are clear on the precise duties and additional expectations. Leeds City Council needs to put in place a coordinated and cohesive approach to the resourcing, planning, delivery, and performance management of the following expectations which are all specifically mentioned within Youth Matters and the legislation:-
- full participation of young people in shaping, designing, delivering and evaluating services
 - provision of opportunities for young people to be engaged in decision making processes, including elements of deciding how resources are spent
 - preparation and publication of a "statement of ambition". This is more commonly described as a "youth offer"
 - provision of comprehensive, accurate and accessible information on the range of available activities, programmes, opportunities, guidance services, etc. This is described as a duty to "publicise positive activities"
 - coordination and growth in youth volunteering initiatives
 - access to sufficient youth work activities and related facilities
 - access to information, advice and guidance services
 - development and use of a youth opportunity card
 - access to out of school activities, notably through Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP).
 - targeted support for vulnerable young people
- 2.5 At present Leeds Youth Service's remit focuses solely on the authority's requirements for youth work as principally set out in the 1944 Education Act. The provision of youth work through the Youth Service addresses only part of the ambition and duties outlined in Youth Matters and Clause 6. The Youth Service, however, provides a focal point which, with appropriate changes and reorganisation, would enable the authority to respond in a cohesive way to Youth Matters and Clause 6 requirements. The Department for Education and skills expects that the Youth Service should lead this transformation.
- 2.6 Two major strategic drivers within the implementation of Youth Matters involve: -
- the localisation of Connexions Services as from April 2008
 - the creation of what is described by the Department for Education and Skills as an "Integrated Youth Support Service".

2.7 Links with, and the engagement of schools will be very important if the full potential of an Integrated Youth Support Service is to be realised. Strategic and operational links between Leeds Youth Service and Education Leeds are well developed and captured in an annual protocol. Building on this good foundation, it is proposed that the principal strategic link for the Integrated Youth Support Service should be with the 14 to 19 Strategy. As such, many of the priorities for the work of the Integrated Youth Support Service would be drawn from the needs, issues and priorities emanating from the 14 to 19 strategy. The 14-19 strategy aims to make Leeds the most exciting place in the country to learn by ensuring that all young people are able to achieve their full potential through a personalized learning pathway built on access to the widest possible range of high quality learning opportunities. The planning and further development of extended services on or around school sites will also usefully sit alongside the Integrated Youth Support Service. All of the extended services objectives link with Integrated Youth Support Service objectives. For example, extended services include within a core offer: -

- secondary schools to deliver a varied menu of activities
- swift and easy referral to a range of specialist services

2.8 Implementation of Youth Matters and Clause 6 also needs to be carried out within the strategic context of: -

- the Children and Young Peoples plan which has priorities for change especially for those most at risk and vulnerable
- an increased focus on parenting and family support services required from local authorities
- Youth Offending Services, Respect agenda and community safety considerations
- The development of new universal services for 0-19 year olds

2.9 The proposals in this report align with actions and arrangements taken by the authority in respect of the 2005 Childcare Act. The proposals also demonstrate action in line with the report received by Executive Board on 9/2/07 in which the desirability was presented of establishing early areas of integration within a broad 0-19 context. Outcomes will be improved and increased as a result of integrating services and of being able to increase the proportion of resources allocated to front line service delivery.

3.0 Proposals for Leeds

3.1 The central proposal is to establish, as from April 2008, in Leeds an Integrated Youth Support Service which: -

- brings as many components of Youth Matters delivery as possible into one coordinated infrastructure
- secures firm strategic links with remaining components of Youth Matters delivery located outside of this Integrated Youth Support Service

3.2 The aims of establishing an Integrated Youth Support Service are to:-

- facilitate a coordinated approach to the implementation of Clause 6
- improve outcomes for young people
- join up services in a more tangible and effective manner

- streamline infrastructures, tackle areas of duplication and make resultant efficiencies which could increase the overall proportion of resource invested in front line delivery of services
- be part of a wider integrated strategy for 0-19 olds and their families.

3.3 It is an important starting-point, though, to acknowledge the desirability of retaining professional and specialist roles of Services and staff who would be part of the wider Integrated Youth Support Service. Youth work and careers provision are two examples. The challenge for the future is to acknowledge these roles but to work flexibly in the new world of integrated services

3.4 It is further proposed that, as from April 2008, all aspects of Youth Service and of localised Connexions Services are brought together as a platform for the overall Integrated Youth Support Service.

3.5 Detailed work is taking place on the financial implications of moving to a localised Leeds Connexions model from April 2008. All the indications are that the realignment of available resources, through Connexions localisation, will enable the authority to proceed with confidence to establish an infrastructure for the Integrated Youth Support Service. Subject to the ongoing detailed financial analysis, it is likely that additional resources could be channelled into front line services as well as ensuring the added value of co-ordinating new aspects of the Integrated Youth Support Service.

3.6 More details of the potential components and aspects of an Integrated Youth Support Service are contained in the next section of the report. Executive Board is asked to agree the specific proposals contained within this report but to acknowledge that the April 2007 to March 2008 period will be used for more detailed planning. This will entail action planning of the points set out in this report but also exploring any additional scope for the improved service as part of Integrated Youth Support Service.

3.7 The Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) conducted an inquiry at the end of 2006 exploring:

- What should Leeds City Council include in the Youth Offer that it will have to publish in 2007?
- What can be learnt from the existing patterns of provision across the city?
- What do young people want and expect from youth services in Leeds?

The resultant report and recommendations were considered at the Scrutiny Board's meeting of 17/5/07 and will be taken into account during the transition to an Integrated Youth Support service incorporating a youth offer for Leeds.

4.0 Components of the Integrated Youth Support Service

4.1 The Youth Offer

4.1.1 It is proposed that the Leeds Youth Offer is branded as "The Breeze Youth Promise". This is in recognition of how well known Breeze is in Leeds. Leeds Youth Council has fully endorsed and encouraged this concept.

4.1.2 The Breeze Youth Promise will need to capture the full range of youth provision. As such it needs to embrace youth work, leisure, education, and information, advice and guidance services. The Youth Council has been consulted initially on what should be included and has offered to be further involved. The Breeze Youth Promise needs to be a self contained part of the 0-19 universal offer.

The universal offer is a key element of the “change for children” programme which involves all services transforming what they offer to improve access, extend support and achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes for all children, young people and families. A new universal menu of services has therefore been identified for the 0-19 age range, within which the Breeze Youth Promise will focus on the 13-19 age range.

4.1.3 The following are cited nationally as examples of what should be included:-

- youth work within a 30 minute safe journey from home
- two hours per week of sporting activity
- two hours per week of constructive activities in youth groups or classes
- volunteering opportunities
- a range of other cultural experiences
- safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time, including simply socialising
- information, advice and guidance
- targeted support for vulnerable young people

4.1.4 The future infrastructure of the Integrated Youth Support Service will need to include capacity to publicise, facilitate review of, and monitor the Breeze Youth Promise.

4.2 Publicising Positive Activities

4.2.1 There are two key existing initiatives in Leeds which provide a very good platform:-

- The Family Hub (Children’s Information Services)
- Breeze Leeds Website

These two sites are now linked. The Youth Council supports the use of the Breeze brand for publicising all the positive activities.

4.2.2 The future infrastructure of the Integrated Youth Support Service will need to use and further develop the scope of these sites

4.3 Youth Volunteering Initiatives

4.3.1 Leeds has a good track record of providing volunteering opportunities for young people. A voluntary organisation, Learning Partnerships, successfully manages major initiatives such as Millennium Volunteers and Xperience 9 on behalf of the city.

4.3.2 However, improvements need to be made in terms of:-

- mapping existing work and achievements
- informing young people about volunteering opportunities
- making the most of volunteering opportunities within LCC services

4.3.3 It is proposed that one agency is identified and resourced to coordinate youth volunteering on behalf of the Integrated Youth Support Service. This might well lend itself to a commissioning arrangement by the Integrated Youth Support Service as part of the Joint Preventative Partnership.

4.4 Youth Work

4.4.1 Leeds Youth Service had an OFSTED inspection in September 2004. The assessment was that “Leeds City Council provides a satisfactory service with a balance of strengths and weaknesses. The Service uses its resources

effectively and provides satisfactory value for money.”

Good progress has been made since the inspection and the Youth Service is well placed now to play a pivotal role within the broader Integrated Youth Support Service as part of the Joint Preventative Partnership.

4.4.2 Furthermore, Leeds youth Work Partnership is developing well. This brings together statutory and voluntary sector providers to achieve joint planning, commissioning, delivery and performance management of youth work.

4.4.3 It is proposed that youth work remains a distinct service function but that it is fully embedded within the Integrated Youth Support Service as per 3.4 above.

4.5 Information, Advice and Guidance Services (IAG)

4.5.1 The statutory standards on IAG have been issued by DfES for consultation and a response has been sent from Leeds.

4.5.2 There is a very clear link between IAG provision and Connexions services. The localisation of Connexions therefore provides the starting point for delivering IAG work.

4.5.3 The original government concept behind the establishment of Connexions was to create a single support service for young people, bringing together the professional expertise of youth workers, careers officers, education welfare workers, and those working with young offenders. Incorporating Connexions into the Integrated Youth Support Service reinforces both historical and current aims.

4.5.4 Commissioning of Connexions services by Leeds City Council will include competitive tendering, as appropriate, of some contracts. Any resultant efficiencies would assist the dual aim of increasing front line services and of ensuring an infrastructure for the Integrated Youth Support Service which is fit for purpose.

4.5.5 A Connexions Transition plan for Leeds was presented to Government Office at the end of March 2007. A Connexions Transition Manager will be engaged for 2007/08

4.6 The Role of Young People

4.6.1 Leeds has a unique and well developed approach to young people's participation. It focuses primarily on:-

- a democratic strand through Leeds Youth Council managed by the Youth Service
- a partnership strand through Reach Out And Reconnect (ROAR) managed by West Yorkshire Youth Association, a voluntary youth work organisation

4.6.2 It is proposed to build on the good practice and existing arrangements and to ensure that one agency is identified and resourced to coordinate future work and developments on behalf of the Integrated Youth Support Service. This might well lend itself to a commissioning arrangement.

4.6.3 Future arrangements would include management of the Youth Opportunity Fund and the Youth Capital Fund.

4.7 Youth Opportunity Card

- 4.7.1 The Leeds Breeze Card has been fully endorsed by Leeds Youth Council as the appropriate card to be developed and made available to all young people. The Youth Council has already fed in excellent views on how the Breeze Card can be increasingly used by young people to access services, obtain discounts, etc
- 4.7.2 Responsibility for managing the Breeze Card will be through the City Development Directorate. The Integrated Youth Support Service will require a service level agreement ensuring the contribution of Breeze Card to the objectives and proposals set out in this report.

4.8 Out of School Activities

- 4.8.1 Learning and Leisure has had an established and effective Out of School Activity Team which has had a cross cutting role including :-
- Breeze on Tour
 - management of major items of equipment and mobiles
 - Positive Activities For Young People (PAYP)
- 4.8.2 It is proposed that management of the Out of School Activity Team is vested in Leeds Youth Service for 2007/08 and within the Integrated Youth Support Service from April 2008. A service level agreement will be established with City Development Directorate to ensure that the Culture and Recreation Services formerly in Learning and Leisure can continue to benefit from the work of the Out of School Activity Team.

5.0 Youth Offending Service

- 5.1 Leeds Youth Service and Leeds Youth Offending Service have developed a growing and meaningful partnership. There are tangible examples of jointly delivered programmes such as Revizit and Youth Inclusion Programmes. Furthermore, the two services cooperate closely on the anti social behaviour agenda as evidenced by the effectiveness of Positive Activities for Young People targeting. A protocol exists between the two organisations.
- 5.2 Earlier government documents, dating right back to pre Connexion days, encouraged the inclusion of Youth Offending Services within any potential integrated approach to services for young people.

However, YOS is a statutory partnership under the 1988 Crime and Disorder Act. As such it remains important for the YOS to continue to be viewed as a separate entity. This view is endorsed by the Youth Justice Board.

- 5.3 The Heads of the Youth Service and of the Youth Offending Service agree, though, that it is worth exploring whether some of the infrastructure functions could be shared between Youth Offending Service and Integrated Youth Support Service. This could have benefits in terms of economies of scale and cementing strategic and operational links.
- 5.4 Any such integration would assist the planning and accountability for targets which overlap the agendas of Youth Offending Service, Youth Service and Connexions: -

- Prevention of offending
- Reduction of recidivism

- Access by young people to education, employment and training.

6.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

6.1 This report was requested by Executive Board at its meeting of 4/4/07

7.0 Legal and Resource Implications

7.1 The proposals enable Leeds City Council to meet duties specified in Clause 6 of the Education and Inspections Act

7.2 The creation of an Integrated Youth Support Service will enable a greater proportion of available resources to be used for the front line employment of staff working directly with young people. In turn this will lead to increased and improved outcomes for young people.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 To approve the establishment of an Integrated Youth Support Service in Leeds as from April 2008, as described in this report

8.2 To agree the full integration of Leeds Youth Service and the localised Connexions Service into the Integrated Youth Support Service as part of a wider universal offer for 0-19 year olds.

8.3 To ask officers to progress all aspects set out in this report for integrating services for young people.

8.4 To regard 2007/ 08 as a year of transition and change