

**Report of – Head of Early Help Services (Children’s Services)**

**Report to – Children’s and Families Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2014**

**Subject: Youth Activity Funding**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

This report responds to the following questions from Children’s & Families Scrutiny Board -

Is the Service delivery model successful and has area management teams the relevant capacity and expertise to support this

Is the Activity fund successful in term of providing a sufficient localised offer of a range of services which is influenced by children and young people

Is the quality of the offer consistently good in terms of provision, delivery and quality across all localities including how this is monitored and any performance information that is available (and that any good practice is shared)

If the localised methods are presenting an improved service and saving money

For a “Health check” on progress and if it is working

Clarity on whether monies delegated to Community Committees can be accessed by Targeted Youth Services

**Recommendations**

That Scrutiny Board (Children & Families) note the content of the report and makes recommendations as deemed appropriate.

## **Purpose of this report**

To provide Children's & Families Scrutiny Board with a summary of progress regarding the Universal Activity fund since the delegation in May 2013 to Community Committees.

## **1 Background information**

- 1.1 In May 2013 the delivery of universal activity for children and young people was delegated to Area Committees. The task was to promote, commission and evaluate local opportunities for children and young people aged 8-17 years in line with the needs and priorities of the area. "Activity" is defined as play, sports, arts and cultural opportunities.
- 1.2 The budget for 2013/14 was £250,000, increasing to £500,000 for 2014/15. Each Community Committee has an allocation based on population, creating a variation of budget and fair allocation.
- 1.3 The delegation includes the involvement of children and young people in decision making and shaping the needs of community activity.

## **2 Main issues**

This report responds to the following questions from Children's & Families Scrutiny Board -

- 2.1 Is the Service delivery model successful and has area management teams the relevant capacity and expertise to support this

The service delivery model used for activity fund is based on the wellbeing model with slight amendments to incorporate the needs of children and young people.

There is a requirement for all applicants to be registered members of the Breeze Culture Network (BCN). All funded activities must be advertised on the Breeze website and the providers are required to use the BCN online management information system to record their monitoring information. This process ensures the quality assurance of an organisation; that event advertising is citywide and that there is a single, effective monitoring system for the activity fund as a whole.

To date, there is evidence that the majority of the organisations are becoming registered members of the BCN. This is a positive step as it creates a more effective, vibrant network of activity providers for the city. Registered organisations are required to demonstrate they have the appropriate policies and procedures in place, so by doing so, the authority can be more confident regarding the well-being and safeguarding of children and young people.

However, despite being a condition of funding, not all providers have been advertising their events and activities via the Breeze Culture Network and even fewer providers have been using the online monitoring system.

Training has been offered to both area support teams and organisations to enable them to become familiar with the system and requirements of the monitoring. There has not been a significant uptake of this training due to the apparent lack of

capacity. As a consequence, there will be gaps in monitoring information for the first half of 2014/15.

This has now been addressed and as from September there has been an increase in monitoring on BCN. There is a commitment from area support teams to ensure the remaining monitoring for 14/15 is collated and that all future monitoring is submitted onto BCN. The Youth Offer Team and Breeze Team continue to support with training, advice and guidance.

It was expressed early in the process that the Area Support teams lacked the required expertise required for working with and engaging children and young people. The Youth Offer team have supported the engagement of young people, and as a result, there are now 11 local youth engagement panels established, that each meet on a monthly basis.

2.2 Is the Activity fund successful in term of providing a sufficient localised offer of a range of services which is influenced by children and young people

In 2013/14 93 different projects were commissioned to deliver activity and 34 projects were part funded for the summer with Activity, Wellbeing and Cluster funds.

7314 children and young people took part in the activities in 2013/14.

Each application for 13/14 and 14/15 has been scrutinised by young people, via the Area Youth Engagement panels and/or existing youth groups. Feedback is reported to Community Committee panels or sub groups, who will then use this feedback to inform their decisions.

There has been significant consultation in some areas to shape the delivery of activity to ensure the needs of children and young people are at the heart of the process. One good practice example of this is within the Outer South. Here, the Community Committee commission a Breeze event each summer and use this to facilitate a consultation to gain the views of as many children and young people as possible. In summer 2014, 705 children and young people took part in the consultation. This has proved very successful and is supported by the Area support team, Youth Offer, clusters and the Youth Service.

2.3 Is the quality of the offer consistently good in terms of provision, delivery and quality across all localities including how this is monitored and any performance information that is available (and that any good practice is shared)

The quality of the provision is captured within the monitoring and evaluation information collected by the Area support teams. This is an area for further development as the focus so far has been getting the process for applications, involvement of children and young people and consultation in place.

The Youth Engagement panels are now established. The next step is for these groups to begin to carrying out peer inspections of funded activities across the city to support the quality assurance of providers.

2.4 If the localised methods are presenting an improved service and saving money i.e. Health check on progress and if it is working

The Activity Fund has presented increased opportunity for providers to access funds which can complement other funding streams. Details in 2.2 give an indication of the volume of applications and numbers of young people who have benefited from this funding.

Given that this is a new initiative it is difficult to draw comparisons as to the level of improved service.

2.5 Clarity on whether monies delegated to Community Committees can be accessed by Targeted Youth Services

Please see background paper which clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the Youth Offer teams in relation to Universal Activity fund.

### **3 Corporate Considerations**

#### **3.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 3.1.1 Young people's engagement is demonstrated throughout the process and is referenced in response to the questions raised. Children and young people have been involved in the decision making process of when, where and what type of activity will benefit their community. They are also involved in the evaluation of all Activity fund applications and making recommendations to Community Committees. Combined with Community Committee member's knowledge and experience of their localities this results' in an effective way of securing successful programmes of activities for children and young people.

#### **3.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 3.2.1 2014/15 delivery is proportionate across the city in the delivery of the number of projects delivered to date. Each area is considerate to existing delivery of events and activity to ensure a broad variety of activity across the community.

#### **3.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

- 3.3.1 The delivery of the universal youth activity fund supports the Children and Young Peoples Plan with a particular focus on; children and young people have fun growing up; and are active citizens who feel they have voice & influence.

#### **3.4 Resources and value for money**

- 3.4.1 The Universal Youth Activity Fund resource for 2014/15 is £525,000 this includes £500,000 across the ten Community Committees and £25,000 for city centre delivery. Community Committee allocations are based on populations of children and young people age 8-17 years across the city.

#### **3.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 3.5.1 N/A

### **3.6 Risk Management**

- 3.6.1 The risk of missing data, due to some organisations not using the Breeze Culture Network management information system has been addressed. Providers have started inputting from August/September 2014. Capturing the data for 2014/15 will be collated from BCN and area support teams. The monitoring for 2015/16 will all be through BCN this will enable immediate access to attendance and session data for all areas and citywide.

### **4 Recommendations**

- 4.1 That Scrutiny Board (Children & Families) note the content of the report and makes recommendations as deemed appropriate

### **5 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 5.1 Presentation on Youth Offer/Youth Activity Fund roles and responsibilities.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.