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**Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)**

**Date: 16 July 2010**

**Subject: Formal Response to Scrutiny Recommendations – Youth Service Surveys**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In April 2010 the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) published a statement arising from its inquiry on youth service surveys.
- 1.2 It is the normal practice to request a formal response to the board's recommendations, once an inquiry report has been issued. The response is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Members are asked to consider the responses provided, and to decide whether any further scrutiny involvement is required. Any recommendations where action is outstanding will be included in future quarterly recommendation tracking reports to enable the Board to continue to monitor progress.

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the responses provided and to decide whether further scrutiny involvement is required.

**Background papers**

None

## **Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) Statement - Youth Service Surveys**

### **Recommendation 1**

**That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds report to us within 3 months on how awareness of youth service activities generally can be more proactively promoted in schools, and young people be directly encouraged to participate in such activities.**

### **Response**

A number of new and evolving initiatives are helping to raise awareness of youth service activities through schools. Youth Services programmes now feature on the Breeze website and the website is being promoted in schools in a number of ways. For example, young people who form the Breeze Youth Promise Project Group have developed an activity pack that ties in with the curriculum and was distributed to secondary schools in May. During the summer term the Breeze card has also been pro-actively distributed throughout schools. This is a change from the previous process whereby young people had to request the card and should help significantly raise awareness of and access to Breeze activities.

### **Recommendation 2**

**That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds explore children and young people's participation in activities and identify barriers to participation in more depth, either by including questions in the next Every Child Matters survey or by developing a separate survey using the Be Heard survey tool.**

### **Response**

It is agreed that understanding barriers to participation is an important area of work. Officers will explore the most appropriate way to gather young people's views on this. This may involve using the Every Child Matters survey, or the Be Heard survey tool, but it may also be that another approach is considered more likely to gather a wider range of opinions from those young people who do not currently participate.

The new Children's Trust Board are also investigating opportunities to widen participation and will be working with young people to explore suitable opportunities.

### **Recommendation 3**

**That the Director of Children's Services ensures that the local analysis of findings from surveys such as the Every Child Matters survey and the Youth Service user survey is routinely made available at a local level to Area Committees and Clusters to inform their planning of future activity.**

### **Response**

We will work towards providing future survey information to both clusters and Area Committees in a routine way. Cluster Managers will be able to access data from the 2010 Every Child Matters Survey later this year. For 2010 it will be possible to break this down to wedge level and in future we will aim to localise this further. A process is already in place for reporting key children's services performance information to Area Committees on a half-yearly basis. In future we will work to incorporate key survey outcomes into this where appropriate.