

**COMMITTEE:** BEST VALUE SCRUTINY PANEL

**DATE:** 3RD NOVEMBER 2004

**SUBJECT:** YOUTH SERVICE

**REPORT BY:** CORPORATE DIRECTOR, LIFELONG LEARNING

**CONTACT OFFICER:** NICK CHAMBERLAIN 01582 548057

**IMPLICATIONS:**

LEGAL	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL ✓	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING	OTHER

**WARDS AFFECTED:** ALL

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### **PURPOSE**

- 1 To inform Panel Members of the work that is currently being completed by the Youth Service to ensure the service is fit for purpose by delivering a high quality service to young people (aged from 13 to 19), and is prepared for a future Ofsted inspection.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2 Best Value Scrutiny Panel is recommended to note the report and to comment upon the actions being taken by the Youth Service prior to the confirmed Best Value review process, being undertaken in 2005/06 and the Ofsted Inspection.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 3 The full background of services was included in the report to the Best Value Scrutiny Panel submitted by the youth service on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2004. This report also provided a breakdown of the recommendations and progress at the time regarding the internal health check process that the service undertook. **(Appendix 1)** An overall briefing presentation and a further action plan on how the service was responding to areas of the service requiring improving was requested by members. At the next available opportunity on the 12<sup>th</sup> October the youth service provided a presentation that covered structures, achievements, developments and challenges for the future. At this meeting it was agreed that a Best value review process would begin in April 05.
- 4 As from the 6<sup>th</sup> September the youth service management structure has been complete. This includes two senior operational managers taking on new roles, one new senior operational manager and a new Principal Youth Service Manager. The Youth Service now has the capacity to develop a comprehensive Youth Service Pre Ofsted Action plan which will tackle current self assessed areas requiring improvements and therefore also cover any outstanding areas requiring improvements identified previously through the internal service health check.

## **REPORT**

### **Development Of Youth Service Pre Ofsted Action Plan**

- 5 **Senior Management** - The youth service senior management consists of Nick Chamberlain – Principal Youth Service Manager, Tracey Quinn – Youth Work Manager (Centres), Richard Jenkins Youth Work Manager (Areas) and Melanie Skyers – Youth Programmes Development Manager (Until 31st March 2005). The service is supported by an Administration Manager Janet Rolt.
- 6 **22<sup>nd</sup> October** – At the first opportunity available the senior management team spent a day undertaking the Ofsted self-assessment process. This process would occur in more detail during a normal Ofsted Inspection. This process fully imbeds the internal Youth Service Health Check that was undertaken 12 months previously.
- 7 **Inspection of local authority youth services** - The overall aim of an inspection of a local authority youth service is to answer the question: How efficiently and effectively does the local authority ensure the provision of a high-quality youth service that meets the needs of young people?
- 8 **Evaluation Requirements** - The evaluation requirements that apply to the inspection of youth services cover three general reporting areas:

- standards of young people's achievement and the quality of youth work practice
  - quality of curriculum and resources
  - strategic and operational leadership and management.
- 9     **Quality Statements** – Overall there are twenty-two quality statements that needed to be completed. **(Appendix 2)**
- 10    **Areas Of Developments** – After completion of the twenty-two quality statements the senior management team have identified the following areas to develop further as part of a Youth Service Pre Ofsted Action Plan.
- a.     Participation and decision making by young people
  - b.     Accreditation and recorded outcomes
  - c.     Curriculum
  - d.     Quality Assurance
  - e.     Needs analysis/MIS/record keeping
  - f.     Training
  - g.     Performance and performance indicators
  - h.     Youth Service specific policy guidance and procedures
  - i.     Communication
  - j.     Partnerships
  - k.     Health and Safety
  - l.     Best value review and youth reference group
  - m.     Funding strategy and external income
  - n.     Governance including work with area committees and the Youth Reference Group.
- 11    **Timetable Of Completion Of Youth Service Pre Ofsted Action Plan** – The action plan is currently being completed and a draft is planned to be completed for the Youth Service Reference group meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> November.
- 12    **Duration Of Action Plan** – The Youth Service Pre Ofsted Action plan is aimed to be functional from November 2004 until the end of March 2005 when the process will be repeated. The plan will sit alongside the wider Youth Service Operational Plan 04\05 and the overall Youth Service Strategic Plan 03 - 06

### **PROPOSAL/OPTION**

- 13    The youth service Pre Ofsted Action Plan is also brought to the Best Value Scrutiny committee for information and reference.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14 Current action plan costs are being met from within existing budgets. The Deputy Finance Manager for Lifelong Learning has seen and cleared this report, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2004.

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D**

- 15 Self-assessment report  
Local authority youth service  
September 2004  
HMI 2308  
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**Document reference number: HMI 2308**

## **APPENDICES**

- 16 Appendix 1 Report of Luton Youth Service – Ray Westcott  
Appendix 2 Ofsted Self Assessment Report  
Appendix 3 Youth Service Reference Group Membership

## **APPENDIX 1 - Extract Of Report submitted by Ray Westcott 21.6.04.**

**BACKGROUND** -Up and until 2002 the Luton service was located within the Chief Executives Department and had experienced a range of staffing and operational difficulties. Since then real and substantial improvements have been made. Area working and planning has been introduced and has been effective in integrating the work of youth workers community workers, Adult Education and other key partners. Main youth centres are being upgraded and improved. Some like Lea Manor now provide a full range of excellent activities in partnership with the school. Previously this centre was only open one or two sessions a week. The service requested Internal Audit to review youth centres and their financial management systems, and an action plan is in place to tackle weaknesses. Performance management systems are in place, for example all staff are now regularly supervised and appraised. Financial management training has been given to cost centre managers. The service is also tackling long-standing issues (matters like training, appraisal, supervision etc) around employing some sixty part-time sessional staff.

The service has some well-established partnerships with the voluntary sector where it has a number of seconded workers, CYCD is a good example. The service has improved its quality control by introducing SLA's with these organizations. The first Strategic Plan and Operational Plan have been published and an excellent Curriculum Framework and Toolkit have been developed in collaboration with DeMontfort University. These plans link to Council aims and objectives, and Government aspirations and targets for youth services nationally. The service has improved its profile within the region in relation to GO-East and other practitioners.

Some of the continuing constraints include difficulties in recruitment, some remaining issues around competence and skills, limited management capacity and until recently poor procedures and management systems. Successful recruitment remains a key element in the service's ability to delivery a high quality service. The Council has agreed to include youth workers on it's 'hard to recruit to' list for extra funding.

### Strengths

- Committed staff
- Strong local knowledge and networks
- Good number of qualified staff
- Cross party political support
- Above average Council spend
- Good voluntary sector relations
- Good inter-agency work
- Area focused
- Improving youth centres

## Weaknesses

- Difficulty in recruiting full time staff
- 60 sessional workers - support, management
- Under-resourced youth centres - staffing
- Under-resourced youth centres - buildings
- Under-developed detached work
- Strategic partnership work
- Management capacity
- Number of full time staff
- Poor inward investment record
- Publicity

The service is aware that an Ofsted inspection is likely within the next two years. To ensure it is fully prepared for this, an external consultant was commissioned to do a benchmarking exercise. This 'Health Check' was received by the Panel at its last meeting. The consultant who did this work had previously been a principal officer in youth services elsewhere. The report was not in huge detail but was welcomed and seen as a very helpful assessment of strengths and weakness with recommended actions. The following report outlines recommended actions and progress so far.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>1</b>	Provide a clear strategic direction for the Youth Service's role and contribution to corporate aims and to the delivery of services to children and young people in the Borough.	NC	The service will be included in the new Children and Learning Department. These actions to be taken forward by the new Principal Officer from September 2004.	Ongoing from September.
<b>2</b>	Prepare the Authority's strategic response to the OfSTED requirements of strategic leadership and management.	NC	The service has concentrated on capacity and organisational development issues. It will now take forward strategic/leadership /OfSTED issues from September 2004.	Ongoing.
<b>3</b>	Develop the Youth Service's contribution to the school improvement	TQ	Current pilots at Lea Manor are occurring on how youth workers can work more closely in the school-based environment.	June onwards.

	and social inclusion agendas by building on existing examples of good practice.		The new centre manager will also be tasked on ensuring maximum usage of school based buildings and youth work are achieved over the next six months. A decision is imminent on how the Welbeck can assist in this area post connexions from September.	
4	Implement the new management structure with a professional Head of Service post focusing on leading Luton Youth Service to meet the national standards set out in Resourcing Excellent Youth Work Services and Transforming Youth Work.	NC	Management capacity has been a critical issue for the service with only one out of three posts filled. New managers start in June and September so after a year their will be a 100% management capacity.	New Principal Officer. September 2004.
5	Review the agreement and sub-contracting arrangements with the Connexions partnership to ensure a clear focus on the Youth Service's contribution to Connexions targets.	NC	This has been achieved and have been successfully renegotiated. LBC have reduced the amount of resources committed by April 04 with a full reduction by September 04. This area has been overtaken by the national picture and the issue of VAT. As with other areas Connexions from September are going to become a direct delivery model.	Service to review its role in schools.
6	Seek to increase levels of external funding to the Youth Service by linking it to Borough-wide bids and collaboration with corporate initiatives.	ALL	Due to the management capacity of the service up until June i.e. only 1 out of three posts filled it has been in practical to follow this recommendation. By September all management posts will be filled which would then allow this to occur.	Ongoing.
7	Undertake a review of grant-aid arrangements to the voluntary sector and investigate models of commissioning and contracting work to voluntary and community providers where specialist expertise 'adds value' to services.	ALL	The youth service has introduced service level agreements with voluntary youth partnerships who have staff attached to their projects i.e. BYL, PKYF, ACCDF etc. The youth service recognises the need to review all grant aid systems and has built this into the youth service operational plan for the end of this calendar year. There has been a growth of voluntary organisations using youth service buildings due to the sla procedure.	Ongoing.
8	Improve the service's MIS systems to provide accurate statistical data to	RJ	New system introduced and piloted between Jan – Apr. Paper based system rolled out to all projects from Apr 04. Paper	Services across the country are

	meet the requirements of the NYA audit and of the OfSTED performance indicators.		based system will be updated to reflect YOUTHBASE the preferred MIS systems for all youth services. IT system in place from March next year. Computers and IT access to all ft staff in place from June 04 with all part time projects from Jan 04. A termly statistical summary sheet currently being developed and expected to be in place from Sep 04. Funding received from transforming youth work to employ a ft admin worker in a developmental roll including MIS.	experiencing wide ranging problems with YOUTHBASE. The strategy for LBC is to ensure a paper based system is in place and have the computer based system running parallel
9	Accelerate the delivery of 80% of Youth Service provision to the 13-19 years target age range and address the gender imbalance in the service by targeting more provision to girls and young women.	NC	Current figures are showing that there is an approximate split of 50% under 13 and 50% over 13 years. The service has opted for a continued phased emphasis on increasing resources and targeting the 13 – 19 age range, rather than a big bang approach of cutting services to the under 13's. Once the statistical summary sheets start to emerge we will have a clearer picture of how successful this has been.	
10	Ascribe a higher priority within the service for a focus on training, staff development curriculum leadership and quality assurance, particularly with part time staff.	NC	<p>The service need is for a dedicated full time trainer to deliver youth work training to ft, pt and voluntary organisations. The service is currently reviewing the position of a training co-ordinator who sits across the division. A decision on this will occur this month.</p> <p>The youth service introduced compulsory comprehensive training in Feb and March this year for all part time staff covering curriculum leadership and the related topic of quality assurance.</p>	It is a service priority to ensure the issue of training regarding the need of a dedicated trainer for the 100+ staff is resolved and in place by September 04



11	Develop the curriculum 'toolkit' training and peer observation work to improve the quality of youth work practice especially through training and support to part time staff.	ALL	The curriculum document and toolkit has been phased in since October last year with all projects on line since April. Now the final printed copy is available we will launch at the next part time staff conference in July.	
12	Increase the sharing of good practice, peer visits to centres, publication of curriculum materials amongst staff.	ALL	It is in the operational plan to produce a termly newsletter for staff focusing on excellent projects across the borough. Staff have built into their objectives this year around supporting staff in club swaps and visits. The admin support is being built up to ensure the curriculum resources are kept up to date and are accessible.	
13	Accelerate the development of project work, detached/outreach youth work and advice, information and counselling provision across the Borough to lessen the dependency on youth centre delivery.	ALL	Detached work has been rolled out with, from October, a dedicated full time senior member of staff. This area has used short term funding to recruit part time staff for specific periods of work and to link with other detached workers from different organisations. Building the level of Information and advice available to young people has been high on the agenda and is in the youth service plan and built into individual staffs objectives for the year. The issue of the recommendation of providing counselling services has not been embraced at this time.	

## **APPENDIX 2 - Ofsted Self-Assessment Report – Quality Statements**

### **Key aspect 1: standards of young people's achievement and the quality of youth work practice**

- a. Young people's success in responding to and achieving challenging targets set and negotiated for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- b. Young people's personal development, including their attitudes, values and self-confidence.
- c. Young people's ability to function socially and politically as both autonomous individuals and responsible members of a community.
- d. The quality of youth work practice and the extent to which it meets the needs of all young people.
- e. The leadership exercised by youth workers in supporting, guiding and challenging young people.

### **Key aspect 2: quality of curriculum and resources:**

- f. The range and quality of the curriculum.
- g. How far the curriculum is based on a coherent rationale and meets the needs of young people.
- h. The effectiveness of the management of the curriculum.
- i. The extent to which the curriculum observes and promotes the principles of equality, inclusiveness and diversity.
- j. The qualifications, experience and appropriate deployment of youth workers and support staff.
- k. The adequacy, suitability and use of specialist equipment, resources and accommodation.

### **Key aspect 3: strategic and operational leadership and management Strategic leadership and management**

- l. The effectiveness with which the local authority establishes a clear sense of strategic direction, ensures the provision of an appropriate curriculum, carries out its quality assurance responsibilities for the

youth service, and ensures that these are clearly understood by staff at all levels.

- m. The sufficiency of resources available to the youth service, the efficiency and effectiveness with which these resources are deployed, and the local authority's effectiveness in securing additional resources.
- n. The effectiveness of the local authority's approach towards equality, inclusion and diversity through the work of the youth service, particularly with respect to statutory requirements and legislation concerning the Special Education Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA), race relations and child protection.
- o. The extent to which young people are actively involved in the specification, management, provision and quality assurance of the youth service.
- p. The range and impact on achievement of the partnership arrangements entered into by the local authority, including those with Connexions partnerships, to support the work of the youth service.
- q. Whether the local authority provides workers and young people with a healthy and safe working environment.

### **Operational leadership and management**

- r. The effectiveness in practice of the assessment of need, the identification of priority groups, and the strategies devised to promote equality, inclusiveness and diversity.
- s. The extent to which young people are involved at the operational level in the planning, management and evaluation of the provision.
- t. The efficiency of the direct, day to-day management of the service, the quality of leadership, and the contribution made by both to high standards and good morale of staff and young people.
- u. How well quality assurance arrangements and the collection and interpretation of local and national service performance indicators contribute to judgements made on standards.
- v. How well the service measures its cost effectiveness.

### **APPENDIX 3 – YOUTH REFERENCE GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

- Andy Calvert – LuBYA
- Councillor Asif Iqbal
- Craig Smith – Connexions
- Darra Singh – Chief Executive Luton Borough Council
- Councillor Hazel Simmons
- Councillor Lawrence Patterson
- Ray Westcott – Head of Community Education and Development
- Tony Dessent – Corporate Director Lifelong Learning
- William Clapp – Head of Resources and Performance Review
- Councillor William McKenzie
- Nick Chamberlain – Principal Youth Service Manager