

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL  
30 JUNE 2010**

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**Bracknell Forest Youth Service – Overview, plans for Summer, developments in Great Hollands and Mobile Provision.  
(Paul Crawte – Youth Service Manager)**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Youth Service offer a brief overview of highlights current work being undertaken, along with plans for services being delivered over the summer. An update on progress on the creation of a Youth Centre in Great Hollands is offered, along with information regarding mobile provision utilised as a base for offering youth work in the borough.

**2 SUGGESTED ACTION**

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel note the content of this report.

**3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Youth Service Overview**

- 3.1 The Youth Service continues to offer a wide range of projects and activities for young people. These range from the universal services (such as youth clubs) through to more targeted provision. The need for brevity makes it impossible to offer a full picture of the current work of the Service.
- 3.2 The Youth Service aims to engage young people in informal social learning opportunities. The quality of the services offered is regularly inspected and measured in terms of young peoples learning, including the achievement of accreditations for individuals accessing projects.
- 3.3 The Service operates 6 youth centres across the authority. The Ways Youth Centre is now operated (through a management committee) by Berkshire Association of Clubs for Young People. The Youth Service commissions much of the work that takes place there.
- 3.4 In addition to youth clubs operated through youth centres, the Service also offers activities and drop-in sessions from the Talk Shop, a community shop front in the Great Hollands Neighbourhood Centre. Work also takes place in Easthampstead Park School.
- 3.5 The Service delivers street based work. Some sessions are supported by the “Silver Bus”, others have seen the Street Based Development Team utilising bicycles to negotiate distances between the geographical settings where they regularly meet groups of young people.
- 3.6 For young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) the Service operates a twice weekly drop-in service offering information and advice. NRG is located in Coopers Hill, near the town centre.
- 3.7 The successful Sexual Health Drop-in services continue in three school locations each term time week. This popular and necessary service is funded through a grant from the local Primary Care Trust, funds which also support a successful service for young parents and young parents to be.

- 3.8 The Youth Forum has consulted widely with young people and become the Youth Council, inviting representatives from other youth groups, such as School's Councils, to help in their role. This group also host and support the local Member for Youth Parliament.
- 3.9 The Duke of Edinburgh Award continues with its success. As well as eight Award projects (including a specialist provision for young people with moderate learning difficulties), five schools also operate the award with the direct support of the Service, as well as Sandhurst Guides. By the end of the summer period 16 groups of young people will have taken part in expeditions this year with the direct support of the Youth Service. A further 13 groups have done so through school Duke of Edinburgh Award projects supported by the Youth Service.
- 3.10 As well as direct delivery the Youth Service has worked with staff at South Hill Park to commission work to support young carers and looked after young people. The project, "Art Plus Me", works with the target group to help build their self esteem and social skills. This in turn enables those attending, with support, to access more mainstream youth orientated provision.
- 3.11 The Service continues to support the Young Carers project operated by Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action (BFVA). This is done through the provision of a youth worker to one of the youth clubs operated by BFVA, and through free use of a youth centre for another project.
- 3.12 The Service supports other youth groups in the area. The Vineyard Church offer youth activities through youth centres managed by the Youth Service. In addition management and training advice is offered to help with the development of these projects. A recent Youth Service staff conference hosted members from the faith community who offer youth work style services in the area, sharing ideas and offering training to them.
- 3.13 Throughout the year the Service has engaged in an "In House" inspection process to assess and monitor the quality of its work. This has involved the Youth Service Management Team assessing delivery, inspection teams made up of the qualified youth service staff team, and a series of inspections conducted by young people. The results are currently being collated for review and indicate that the service offered can be considered a good service in line with previous Ofsted standards.

### **Youth Service Summer Provision**

- 3.14 The summer period has historically been associated with a significant change in attendance patterns amongst young people accessing services offered through the 6 dedicated youth centres managed by the Youth Service, as well as the services offered through other locations and methodologies. As a result the normal pattern of youth club operation is modified during the summer holiday period.
- 3.15 Each of the youth projects managed by the Youth Service consults with its members on a regular basis and develops a programme of delivery based around the views expressed by young people. To this end each centre offers a relatively distinct programme reflecting these views.
- 3.16 **Sandhurst Youth Centre – The Spot:** will be offering a day time drop-in facility throughout the summer period on a Monday. Throughout the holiday period the youth centre will offer a performing arts course; a babysitting course; and a moped training course.
- 3.17 Staff at The Spot will continue to support the Friday evening opening of the centre by the Vineyard Church, as well as operating a once a month film club on a Friday evening.
- 3.18 The street based team will continue to work in the area on a Tuesday evening, utilising the mobile vehicle when available.

- 3.19 **The Edgbarrow Youth Centre:** This twice weekly youth club will remain open in the first two weeks of the holiday period. It is anticipated that numbers will be low. Staff leave will be encouraged for the last two weeks of August. Those staff not on leave will redeploy to the local parks to work with the Street Based Development Team.
- 3.20 The service will continue to support the Friday evening opening of the youth centre by the Vineyard Church. In particular, following recent issues associated with this project the Church have been offered training for their volunteer team and assistance developing their aims, objectives and programmes.
- 3.21 It is anticipated that the Friday evening Street Based Development Team will continue to primarily focus its efforts in this area on a Friday evening, following a request from local police. The Youth Service is encouraging the Crowthorne Neighbourhood Action Group to facilitate the development of a delivery strategy amongst the various organisations offering youth work style interventions in the area. It is anticipated that a meeting to do this will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> June
- 3.22 **Priestwood Youth Centre:** The youth club is currently operating a young women's group and the programme developed by its members will continue through the holiday period.
- 3.23 Youth Workers will again deliver the Transitions programme; working with young people with moderate learning difficulties to improve their life skills, helping them with their transition from school to college and beyond. This project is funded through the Extended Services fund.
- 3.24 The centre will continue to offer its Friday night project for young people with moderate learning difficulties. This is a project run in conjunction with the Social Care team.
- 3.25 **Whitegrove Youth Centre:** Previous experience demonstrates a significantly low level of attendance at the centre in the first two weeks of August. This centre, staffed entirely by part time staff, will close for staff leave for this period. In the latter half of the month staff will offer a service from the centre, or from the local park, depending on demand.
- 3.26 **North Ascot Youth Centre:** As with Whitegrove, this centre will close for the first two weeks of August as previous years have demonstrated a low level of attendance. The second part of the month will see the centre offering a targeted programme to engage young people in the area in a variety of "off site" activities. This is funded in part by the Positive Activities for Young People grant.
- 3.27 Staff from the centre will continue their work at the local skate park and surrounding area on a Friday evening.
- 3.28 **NRG:** This day time project, principally aimed at providing services for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), will continue to operate as normal during the summer period.
- 3.29 The Freeways project, offering a targeted service to young people identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered, will take a break over the summer period in response to member's advice on their availability during this time.
- 3.30 **Great Hollands:** The evening provision offered from the Talk Shop in the Neighbourhood Centre will continue throughout the holiday period. Should attendance be low staff will redeploy onto the streets and parks to work with young people.
- 3.31 The staff team will support and attend the activity days funded by the Youth Service and offered through Bracknell Forest Homes. This project targets young residents of BFH properties in the area.

- 3.32 Consultation activities with young people will continue through the holiday period.
- 3.33 Additional provision is currently being explored with a group of young people in the area. This is likely to produce a Friday evening project at the Talk Shop.
- 3.34 **The Wayz:** Although no longer managed by the Youth Service, this is included for Members information as the main evening club provision from this centre is commissioned by the Youth Service.
- 3.35 The Ways will continue to offer its normal programme through the summer period, although the Junior Club session is cancelled in this period.
- 3.36 The highly successful “Day Camps” continue, offering daytime activities for children and young people aged 8 – 13 years through the week.
- 3.37 **Street Based Development Team:** The team will continue to work in the Birch Hill area on a Wednesday evening, and are programmed to support a football tournament in the area organised with the local PCSO.
- 3.38 The team will continue to support the twice monthly drop-in youth club organised by the local PCSO and local churches in Birch Hill.
- 3.39 The team will continue to focus on the Crowthorne area (as advised above). Attention will also be paid, in particular, to the grounds of South Hill Park.
- 3.40 The team have a limited capacity to respond to other geographical areas should consultation with other agencies (such as the police) suggest it is appropriate to do so.
- 3.41 **Duke of Edinburgh Award:** This project has a number of groups out on expeditions throughout the summer months, most notably a Gold Award group during the summer holiday period.
- 3.42 **Youth Opportunity Fund:** As in previous holiday periods the Youth Council, who manage the Youth Opportunity Fund, have released funds to allow young people to utilise vouchers to access a variety of purposeful activities over the holiday period. This includes access to golf, ice skating and also bowling activities amongst others. This approach to enabling engagement in positive activities has proved very successful and popular in the past.

### **Great Hollands Youth Centre Developments**

- 3.43 Members may be aware that the building and alterations work to the premises which are to become the new Great Hollands Youth Centre have been delayed due to necessary utilities works.
- 3.44 The Borough’s Building Surveyor advises that National Grid have completed their works and that Scottish and Southern Energy are anticipated to complete their works by 25<sup>th</sup> June.
- 3.45 This would allow the contractors to start their works from 28<sup>th</sup> June. Allowing for some contingencies the Building Surveyor anticipates the centre being opened at the end of September or beginning of August.
- 3.46 The Youth Service has recently employed a full time qualified youth worker to continue the work in the Great Hollands area. Debbie Coleman is continuing to operate the youth club and other services in the area. In addition she is working closely with Berkshire Association of Clubs for Young People (BACYP) who have been commissioned to carry out a full consultation with young people in the area regarding the new provision.
- 3.47 This consultation process has involved young people from the local school, including those on a behaviour modification programme. Regular youth club attendees have

been involved, and additional consultation undertaken with children attending the local community lead youth club operating from the Community Centre.

- 3.48 A residential experience is being delivered in the New Forest as part of this consultation process for a representative group of young people. This will take place over the weekend of 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> July.

### **Mobile Provision**

- 3.49 Currently the Youth Service offers two youth work sessions that utilise the “Silver Bus”. These are in Sandhurst and in Birch Hill.
- 3.50 This mobile facility has proved to be very successful and has increased the opportunities for young people. The current vehicle is old and subject to frequent breakdown which results in periods of time when it is off the road. In addition, the driver of the vehicle requires a specialist licence. This greatly reduces the flexibility available in the operation of the vehicle.
- 3.51 Plans are underway to replace the current double decker bus with a significantly smaller vehicle. This is to be funded from the money allocated to enhance youth service provision across the area south of Bracknell Town Centre, funds released through the housing stock transfer.
- 3.52 A suitable vehicle and design have been identified. The vehicle will be more manoeuvrable, will not require a specialist driver, and will come as a new vehicle and coachworks with suitable warranties.
- 3.53 The final stages to purchase this vehicle are being undertaken following approval from the appropriate Chief Officer.

### **Background Papers**

None

### **Contact for further information**

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### **Doc. Ref**

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