

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE - EXTENDED SERVICES

MINUTES of a meeting of the Select Committee - Extended Services held in the Swale 3, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 24 June 2010.

PRESENT: Mr R B Burgess (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, Mr A R Chell, Mrs J P Law, Mr R J Parry, Mr K H Pugh, Mr K Smith and Mr M J Vye

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss T Grayell (Democratic Services Officer) and Mr G Romagnuolo (Policy Overview Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

27. Interview with Alan Milner, Service Director, Parents Consortium (Item 1)

Please introduce yourself and describe the roles and responsibilities that your position involves.

I am the Service Director of Parents' Consortium. Parents' Consortium is a parent-led charity, set up to support parents of disabled children and young people and to highlight issues facing parents. My role is strategic and operational, and I manage the resource centre at Allsworth Court. Parents' Consortium has 20 permanent staff, mostly full time, and 60 sessional workers. Last year our turnover was £1.15 million. I sit on four Local Children's Services Partnerships (LCSPs), the County Strategic Partnership for Disabled Children and the team which is reviewing the Children's Trust.

The national context for Parents' Consortium is that Every Child Matters (ECM) did not include disabled children, so we started Every *Disabled* Child Matters (EDCM). On 6 July I will attend an event at the House of Lords to launch a document: 'Disabled Children: an Agenda for the New Government'.

My son, who is now 20, has severe learning disabilities and very complex needs, and his life so far has been a 20-year fight.

What is the Parents Consortium? What services does it provide?

It is a parent-led charity formed in 1996, which now has 1,000 family members. The main areas it covers are Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley. It has a number of operating departments; Leisure Services, Information, and Management and Administration.

The Leisure Services department delivers play schemes, after-school and weekend clubs and offers one-to-one family support services and a siblings group. We are currently developing a 6-bed short break unit, which will make a vital contribution to delivering the personalisation agenda in social care. We get a good level of local support, including from the Youth Service.

The Information department provides timely and accessible information to parents and families on local services— eg Early Bird. We are a well respected and trusted local resource.

The Management and Administration department oversees the running of Allsworth Court resource centre. In 2007, we were commissioned to start a Children and Families Direct Payment Support scheme. This currently helps 600 families, and 80 more are soon to take up Direct Payments. We started this with two support workers, serving East and West Kent, but now we have seven.

In your experience, what are the main benefits - if any - that Extended Services bring to pupils and to the local community?

Let me go back to the start of Extended Services in 2002, when the benefits for the community were set out. At that point, we were concerned that disabled children and their families would not be able to share these benefits. The Government expected that by 2010, all schools, including special schools, would be able to deliver the core offer. After a Parliamentary review in 2007 of services for disabled children, there was a document issued (*shown to the Select Committee*) which set out clear objectives and targets. This document had said that 'services for disabled children are a national scandal' and that 'participation in positive activities gives a good outcome for a child's wellbeing and health, and promotes a good sense of self-worth'. Parents' Consortium's philosophy is that a disabled child's first need is for an ordinary life.

Does your service cover all types of disability?

Yes

In your view, what are the main challenges for schools and other providers when offering Extended Services to pupils and to the local community?

Key messages on this come from anecdotal evidence and from research. Good inclusion is more likely to happen at an after-school club than at an event organised by a leisure centre. Inclusion at the latter is likely to be more sporadic, so we definitely need to improve inclusion. Special schools are often geographically remote from the nearest community, so there is a challenge about how they could be helped to link into community activities.

Attitudes to disability have changed much since the eugenics movement in the early 1900s but still need to change much more. The institutional/segregational attitude to disability has a long history, and elements of it still remain in the ethos of some special schools. People's interpretations and understanding of the term 'inclusive services' vary greatly. The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO) provides evidence of this, and I will supply the Select Committee with details.

A survey of 3,600 schools, undertaken in 2009, showed a big gap between the expectations of Extended Services in 2002 and the reality in 2009.

What are the main challenges for disabled children in accessing Extended Services, and how can all these challenges be overcome?

We need to look again at the history of attitudes to disability, and recognise the extent to which disablism is ingrained in society. All disabled people should be able to integrate, and should be able to have an ordinary life. This throws up a comparison

between the medical and social models of disability. There are a number of key issues to address:-

- Access: the physical design of buildings is not the only issue, and other needs should be considered. Conflict between the needs of disabled and able-bodied people can be broken down by Extended Services.
- Transport: Society should not dictate where disabled people can or can't live their lives. Children attending special schools tend to have to travel further from home, and so are further away from their friends. Community-based activities would help them to integrate more with friends nearer their homes.

Services for disabled children should be one of the KCC's performance indicators. When setting up core offer services, parents of disabled children should be fully consulted on access to information, transparency, assessment, participation and feedback.

When the Riverside Family Centre was being set up in Gravesend, they consulted me on the design of the centre and the facilities for children with complex needs (eg, changing facilities, provision of hoists, and a proper wet room) and good facilities were installed, which take account of changing needs and will serve well into the future. As a result, Riverside is the only place in Kent which fully caters for the requirements of children with complex needs. So many other places fall short of meeting these needs. Part of the problem is that the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) sets out minimum standards for provision, but minimum standards simply aren't good enough. A child or young person with complex needs requires a proper hoist, as manual handling without one can be painful and dangerous.

In 2008, a document (*shown to the Select Committee*) and DVD set out issues around extended inclusion, which I would recommend that the Select Committee read.

Someone needs to take ownership of the disability issues and embed them in mainstream culture. It is known that 7% of the child population is likely to come under the DDA. This might not sound a very high figure, but between 1995 and 2002, the population of disabled children increased by 60%. This is due to two reasons:- recognition and diagnosis of conditions is now better, and more young people born with very complex needs are living on through childhood.

This sounds like a very bleak picture, but the Select Committee has previously heard about the excellent services provided by the Valence School, so there is some good special school provision out there.

Yes, wouldn't it be wonderful if that provision could be replicated throughout society!

In your opinion, which models of provision should be adopted in order to organise and deliver Extended Services in the County?

- They would need to be holistic, and take account of the needs of the whole family. So often family activities have to be structured around the needs of the disabled child, as there is no other option. Simple things can have a big effect.
- They should not be too prescriptive. Information on available services and provision needs to pull together information on services provided by all sectors, including the private and voluntary sector. By having a full range of information, families have the chance to take full advantage of what is available.

- Good consultation with children and young people and their families is vital. The KCC should not assume they know what is suitable and desirable. I will send the Select Committee some case studies which were set out in a report of March 2000.
- The Transforming Lives document covers quality inclusion, starting with inclusive design of buildings. Workforce training is also crucial, so staff fully understand the needs of the disabled. I am disabled not by my need to use a wheelchair but by society's reaction to my wheelchair.

Surely there must be many very helpful people who are willing to offer help to a disabled person?

Yes, and I appreciate the help that people offer, but should I have to rely on accepting the help of strangers? I am limited by the need to ask for help. For instance, if I want to travel by train, I have to ring the station 24 hours in advance to ensure that a ramp will be available to help me get on the train. I shouldn't have to plan ahead and book special help.

For children and young people with complex needs, there is a challenge around deciding if Extended Services should be provided in a special school setting or out in the community.

How might the reduction of Government funding for Extended Services and the possible shrinking of the Extended Services Team affect Extended Services provision in Kent? In your opinion, how can Kent County Council, together with schools and other providers of Extended Services, organise a more efficient delivery of Extended Services and ensure the sustainability of these services into the future?

The challenges are not all about resources; some good Extended Services provision could include disabled children if there were more understanding of their needs and the possibilities available. The cut in government funding is a reality which must be faced. There are a number of statistics setting out the financial and other challenges facing disabled children and their parents:-

- Parents bringing up a disabled child already face financial challenges, as it is three times more expensive to bring up a disabled child than a non-disabled child.
- Many disabled young people are not in employment and so are living on benefits; 17% of disabled young people, compared to 7% of non-disabled young people.
- Parents of disabled children are more likely to separate and become a lone parent; 25% of lone parents are bringing up a disabled child.
- Disabled children are eight times more likely to be excluded from school.
- 80% of disabled children have been bullied, compared to 60–70% of non-disabled children.

This all paints a gloomy picture but it is the reality of the challenge.

Where services are being designed for disabled young people, they and their parents must always be consulted at the outset and at all stages – planning, setting up and monitoring. Local authorities' disability equality schemes place a duty on service providers to do this, but it is known that many schools don't. Many of the Extended Services schemes running now should have been developed in consultation with children and parents, but weren't.

There is also a change in the emphasis of legislation. The DDA looked at disabled people, whereas the Equality Act will look at people first and foremost and their disabilities second. Provision of Extended Services will need to take account of the impact of this new legislation when it comes in.

Kent is signed up to the EDCM Local Authority and PCT Charters and is developing a multi-agency strategy, which will need to take account of the work of C4EO to improve outcomes by improving access to inclusive activities.

This sets out the broad context of Extended Services provision for disabled children and gives examples of good practice. We need collective ownership of the issue to drive forward change.

Your point about the need to consult before designing buildings and services for disabled people is very well made. The Select Committee recently visited the Living Well Centre and the Bridge in Dartford. Did you have any input into the design of these services?

No, I didn't have any input into either of these. The Bridge in particular is a high quality, high specification development, but I would be interested to know what consultation they did with disabled people or organisations. To be truly inclusive, you have to have asked the questions. The Bridge is difficult to get to, there is no car parking for disabled people, and if it rains you get wet travelling from the parking to the building that you want! The Fastrack bus service does not help.

So how should a developer go about designing and consulting on new services which take account of the needs of disabled people?

Parents' Consortium could help to support and guide a developer through the process and tell them the questions they need to ask, so we would be a good organisation to come to. A way of undertaking consultation would be to use 'Aiming High for Disabled Children'.

It seems that we now have to translate the theories into action. You say that you don't want disabled people to be treated as 'special', but to get funding for services you have to have 'special' status.

We deserve equality, and a change in attitude costs nothing.

Every KCC directorate has a strategic equalities/diversity group which includes a 'champion', so the KCC takes this issue seriously.

Parents' Consortium works in West Kent, but is there a similar service across the rest of Kent?

There are many groups addressing disabilities, at both national and local levels. Parents' Consortium is a distinct model, although other organisations try to replicate what we do.

At the Neighbourhood Resources Centre in Canterbury, which was set up with a grant from the City Council, we have a changing room for people with complex needs, which is fitted with a hoist. Also, a local college/special school has a sensory room. There is also a very good voluntary organisation called SNAAP, which runs at the Wind Chimes children's centre in Herne Bay.

Yes, these are good examples of good work, and I hope they are not isolated examples. I know SNAAP and what they do mirrors what Parents' Consortium does.

Family care is very important, as 60% of young adults with disabilities will return to their families for care after leaving school or college.

When planning Extended Services provision, a school must consult the community. Should the rule be changed to say that disabled people should also be satisfactorily consulted?

Yes, and there is plenty of evidence of occasions when they haven't been! Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder or learning disabilities need to have a pictorial timetable, but most schools do not even consider providing these. Other things which are widely used are Widgit, British Sign Language and Makaton. Awareness of alternative forms of communication is vital.

Are most people with a disability ruled by their disability, or do they just cope with it?

It is difficult to say yes or no to this question, and you need to refer back to the social model of disability. I do not call myself 'disabled'; it is society which disables me. I have an impairment. I would rather people use the phrase 'disabled children' than 'children with a disability'. Although some people are very difficult to engage, you must never make assumptions that you know what they need or want you to provide for them.

28. Interview with Marisa White, Head of Extended Services, and Sean Carter, Extended Services Lead Manager, KCC

(Item 2)

Since the Select Committee first spoke to you, it has heard much from other contributors about how Extended Services is being delivered and what problems have been encountered. We have also visited sites at which Extended Services is being delivered in various forms.

We wanted to speak to representatives from KCC Directorates again to talk about our findings and ask further questions which we did not have at the beginning.

(SC) I have prepared a document called 'Beyond the Core Offer – the Sustainability of Extended Services in Kent' (tabled) which sets out where Extended Services is at the moment and what is possible in the future, delivered by whom and using which models. This paper is intended to offer options rather a solution. The previous government had measured the roll-out of the core offer as being 98%, but the quality and suitability of provision had not been assessed. With the new government things will inevitably change, and there is much uncertainty. Ofsted is likely to have a narrower inspection framework, which might exclude the 'community cohesion' category, and more schools are likely to become Academies.

(MW) Looking at the broader agenda, there is speculation that GPs and some independent schools will be given funding to deliver 'community preventative services', which would include Extended Services. A government white paper on this will be issued in July 2010, and the challenge for local authorities will be how to engage with these other partners to take advantage of these resources.

Can you suggest innovative and creative ways for Kent County Council to deliver effective Extended Services in the County, given the substantial

reduction in funding and staff in the Extended Services Team? Who else could deliver Extended Services, if not the KCC?

(SC) Some schools are fully engaged, and Extended Services is part of the ethos of those schools. Quality in Study Support (QISS) is being used by more schools, with collaborative working to increase community engagement. Schools need to build capacity and skills to continue this.

Are schools doing this individually or in groups?

(SC) In community groups, as a collaborative exercise.

The Select Committee has been shown a suggested model for Extended Services provision, which has been put together as a result of what the Committee has heard from other contributors. Can you give us your thoughts on it, and how KCC could help to make it work?

(MW) The Local Authority has a leadership role, with other partners, as part of the Kent Partnership, and as part of Total Place. The KCC could be a lead and a champion but would not necessarily be involved in the actual activity. Work will be undertaken by local bodies, which will differ across the county.

Why is this not happening already? Surely this would be a cheaper way to do it?

(MW) I agree that we could have pushed this forward earlier, but partnership working is complicated and takes time. We thought we had more time (at least another year) to establish and roll out this sort of model, but we have been caught out by the rapid changes this year.

Does the Children and Young Persons' Plan (CYPP) include Extended Services or Extended Learning? Can we press for these to be included?

(MW) Extended Services is not explicit in the CYPP, but is a facilitator of and contributor to several other aspects of the Plan.

Would a policy in the CYPP help to spread the message about Extended Services?

(MW) Yes, it would.

If it can be proven that Extended Services helps narrow the attainment gap, we should emphasise this.

(MW) The broader reference in the CYPP is good, but Extended Services can be all things to all people. A more focused inclusion would have helped to show evidence of the benefits of Extended Services.

How can KCC help schools to work together to find a way forward? How can the model be promoted?

(SC) KCC can promote a model but cannot instruct schools to use it. There is a capacity issue if KCC is to support all schools, which will all be at different stages of implementation, and some area-based posts will be need to help this.

Can you confirm what posts will remain in the Extended Services team, and for how long?

Funding for the project office will end in March 2011, and three officers have fixed-term contracts until then. 21 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) co-ordinator posts will continue until the end of August 2011.

You said GPs might become involved in Extended Services provision. Can you explain how that will work?

(MW) This is speculation, based on the review of Health funding for prevention. We expect the preventative health budget to go to GPs, to be used via practice-based commissioning. They could prescribe physical activity for a child's health and wellbeing. These plans will become clear when the White Paper is published in July 2010. As local government funding is reduced, more of the funding which used to come to the local authority will go direct to schools. This funding method supports the consortium model.

I am concerned that the government believes that 98% of schools are satisfactorily delivering the core offer. What data is there to show that the expected outcomes are being achieved?

(MW) QISS data is used, and at the advanced level of accreditation, schools have to give evidence to show the beneficial impact of Extended Services. It is very difficult to evidence impact nationally, but easier locally, and we have evidence that Extended Services helps attainment.

The timescale caught us out too. We need to focus in building sustainability, and we have until April 2011 to focus effort and direction. We need to identify the position that we want to be in by April 2011 and work towards achieving it. I imagine that we could do this by showing examples of good practice and encouraging other schools to follow these examples.

(MW) I agree. We have the freedom to get away from just the core offer. We need to start now, as we have ten months.

We need to think how to promote Extended Services and get more Head Teachers to commit to their community. We could involve sponsors and local businesses. There is much to do in ten months. KCC should be the link and make Head Teachers realise that they have to do this. As Ofsted's role diminishes, I suggest that we look into KCC taking on the role of regulator. In the meantime, we need to get communities and local businesses on board

To help raise attainment, we need to make children happy. How can we overcome the issue of rural transport to access Extended Services?

(SC) By using the Freedom Pass, and by opening activities up to all in the community, not necessarily a school's own pupils.

(MW) It is important that the Freedom Pass is extended to older age groups, but there will need to be some buses for them to catch! There are some examples of community transport schemes, eg 'Wealden Wheels', which get some KCC funding support, but very little. There is much merit in the social enterprise model, and social enterprise concerns seem to be surviving the recession more successfully than many other businesses, but they need an income generating arm and some inventive thinking.

The Select Committee has thought similar as it has spoken to various contributors; Extended Services could be delivered to local communities rather than local schools, minibuses could be shared, and the Freedom Pass could be extended to include travel by train and taxi. Some District Councils are able to give alternative transport schemes financial backing; we will have to look into that.

MIDES in Dover and the Quartet project in Thanet are both good, sustainable schemes. Can these be replicated with success in other areas of Kent, in the time available?

(MW) Yes, we intend to replicate these successful models, but the details might differ when we apply them to other localities, as every area is different. How could the Select Committee help with this?

(SC) We have seven more co-ordinators on board to help with replicating these models. Good co-ordination and school engagement are both vital to successful Extended Services, and some local Head Teachers need to be challenged to get on board. The frameworks themselves are a good platform but we need people to get together to deliver them.

(MW) The three new co-ordinators won't be in post until September 2010, but some Extended Services managers will still be in post until the end of October, so there will be some overlap and extra capacity for a little while. We have tried to interest schools in models of Extended Services but have gained small return for the time and effort we have put in. We need to re-launch and re-badge Extended Services. Some schools do not want to be in the vanguard, but if they delay in taking up Extended Services until later, they will then be in a weakened position.

With the legislation change that you were talking about earlier, will there be a change to the role of Children's Centres, which are a type of Extended Services in themselves?

(SC) We will know more about this shortly, after a meeting next week. It would be good to have a model in which children's centres and schools link and relate well together. There will always be some overlap between the two, as families do not fit neatly into pigeon holes.

Could Children's Centres ever run Extended Services?

(MW) New legislation might focus attention on vulnerable children, so there seems to be willingness to consider this option.

The Children's Centre at the Quartet project (visited by the Select Committee) was involved in Extended Services.

How can the role of the voluntary sector be enhanced in order to provide and support Extended Services, and how can the energy of this sector be harnessed to help Extended Services?

(MW) It is vital to have a voluntary sector, so we must protect it. It could perhaps be involved as part of a partnership with the Youth Service.

We have come across good and bad examples of partnership working and Extended Services provision. How can we address the differences?

(MW) There are examples of good and bad relationships between Head Teachers, Governors and the local community. Training of Head Teachers has helped them to embrace their role as community leaders, and this has helped, and there are also some new Head Teachers coming into the job with a different attitude. School Improvement Officers and those delivering Governor training need to fully understand the need to spread the Extended Services agenda, and we can get them to help promote it.

I think we should bring together all Head Teachers and Governors with all KCC Members (many of whom are Governors) to raise the issue with them all together.

What are the priorities for the limited timescale that we have?

(SC) The priorities are the five strands listed on page 3 of the document I tabled at the start of this interview.

What about prioritising areas of low attainment?

(SC) Nationally, 50% of schools listed as having low attainment are in affluent areas.

(MW) In Kent, most of the affluent areas tend to be in the West of the county.

Deprived minority areas which are in predominantly affluent areas have a bigger gap in attainment between themselves and their better-performing peers. The picture of attainment patterns is very complex, and new work focuses on narrowing the gap.

29. Interview with Nigel Baker, Head of Kent Youth Service, and Community Lead on Social Care

(Item 3)

Since the Select Committee first spoke to you, it has heard much from other contributors about how Extended Services is being delivered and what problems have been encountered. We have also visited sites at which Extended Services is being delivered in various forms.

We wanted to speak to representatives from KCC Directorates again to talk about our findings and ask further questions which we did not have at the beginning.

There seems to be much duplication of work between the Youth Service and Extended Services providers. How can we link these two together?

I don't think there is necessarily any duplication, and we try very hard not to duplicate. I think they complement each other rather than duplicate. The Community Youth Tutor (CYT) role is very important in the Extended Services agenda, and will increase in importance in the future, and its role will be extended.

We also need to ask where the Youth Service is going in the future, and there are choices to be made about how we deploy our resources. There are currently 18 street-based or 'detached' projects. If we discontinue three of these, we could fund four more CYT posts. We have to decide if the CYT is a better use of available funds.

How can we enhance the role of the voluntary sector?

We currently commission £400,000 worth of youth work from the voluntary sector, and in the future development of the Youth Service we need to decide how to shape the service. There are three options:-

- Collaborate or combine, perhaps with the Youth Offending Service.
- Move to a model similar to that used by the Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT), which is a commissioned service. A central team with a budget of £500,000 pulls in £6½ million of commissioned work. This sort of arrangement takes a long time to establish.
- A 'halfway-house' between these two options, keeping a hub in each district and a head office team, and commissioning out the balance of the work.

Various models have been tried across the UK, and it is important to make the right choice. We will need a very active voluntary sector to work with us, and plenty of them to maintain high quality provision. A decision on this will come later in July 2010.

The Select Committee has been shown a suggested model for Extended Services provision, which has been put together as a result of what the Committee has heard from other contributors. This model would be consortium funded. Could we do the same for the CYTs as we are suggesting doing for Extended Services Co-ordinators?

There are currently 18 CYTs, and there could potentially be 22 in the future. Each is funded partly by the school in which they are hosted, and there is always a risk that the school might have to make cuts in school funds and choose to cancel the CYT post as a saving. The Head Teacher's attitude to the CYT role and presence is vital. I would prefer that the CYTs were 100% funded, but if they were I would not be able to have 18 of them. They are currently funded on a 60/40% split between KCC and the school. I could not take a youth worker away from youth work to place them in a school.

Canterbury High School's CYT asked me for funding help from my annual Member Community Grant. It might be a good idea to spread this suggestion as a way of helping with CYT funding.

The Youth Service has been very fortunate in having had much very valuable Member Community Grant support in recent years, and this has made a huge difference to our work.

I am concerned about losing street youth workers. I am keen to increase Youth provision in Sheppey. Using some of my Member Community Grant, I help fund the training of volunteer youth workers. How would training be prioritised in the new commissioning regime?

The proposed commissioning scheme is only one option. If we go for commissioning, it will cover the head office team and a few core services like outdoor education. The funding left over will be used to commission services via the usual arrangements. We need an intelligent commissioning model, and I am keen to keep the big hubs that we have.

Will you commission from the voluntary sector?

This is unknown as yet. We would seek to engage more small voluntary organisations than a few bigger ones, as smaller, more local ones have more local knowledge. So much of our future service delivery model is speculative at this stage.

What can KCC do to promote and strengthen co-operation amongst schools, and between schools and other organisations involved in Extended Services?

I agree with the answer that Marisa White and Sean Carter gave in the previous interview. You need to test Head Teachers' commitment to community provision, and this will be different with opted-out schools. The 12 new local Children's Trust Boards might have a role in this. This is unknown as yet, but might be an option. Youth Advisory Groups (YAGs) could also be the strategic body to co-ordinate services for 10 – 19 year olds. Schools need to consider and discuss these issues, and for many this will not be a high priority, so it will be a challenge. Local Children's Trusts and YAGs are both possibilities.

Could the private and independent schools in West Kent be added to the Head Teachers' groups, and might these bring some new energy?

They could do. There will be a range of different groups across different areas of the county. The 'Friends of...' charities which exist in local areas could play a useful role.

The 'Provision of Activities for Young People' Select Committee covered the problem of transport to help young people access activities, and this impacts on Extended Services. What progress has been made since then to address this issue?

Transport was identified as a major barrier, but much work has gone on with the Environment, Highways and Waste (EHW) Directorate to liaise with transport providers. Unfortunately we have not been able to make any progress with train companies. We asked them about the possibility of extending the Freedom Pass to include train travel but they were not at all receptive, not even to a localised pass which will cover regular daily journeys between two or three very local stations. I suggest that the transport providers of Kent are invited to come together with KCC Cabinet Members to explore the possibilities around transport provision. I don't see why this sort of meeting should not take place and should not be successful. David Hall is the EHW colleague who was involved in the discussions, and he could provide details of which transport providers were involved. Some rural communities don't have a bus service on which to use the Freedom Pass, but it is possible to look up timetables for minibus services on-line.

Does this service include community minibuses or school minibuses?

It includes any bus. Many schools' minibuses are hardly used after 4.00 pm, so would be available to use to help access to Extended Services. There is an issue, though, about licensing of minibus drivers, as the rules have changed recently. A teacher or youth worker cannot drive a minibus without an additional, special licence, but a volunteer can. Some schools/Youth Services are now switching to running 9-seat people carriers, as this is the maximum size of vehicle which can be driven by teachers and youth workers without the additional special licence.

There is also the same argument about extending the Freedom Pass now going on about extending the Leisure Pass.

Would it be possible to join together the Youth Service and Extended Services 'silos' and combine jobs to make the best use of limited resources? Regarding the effectiveness of the CYT role, there are some children who do not want to go to school and so will not benefit from the presence of the CYT.

Much Extended Services is not in the remit of the Youth Service, and I disagree that there are silos. There are seven Youth Centres on school sites across the county. Youth workers undergo extensive professional training to work with a particular age group, and you could not transfer a youth worker into a primary school, for example, and ask them to work with an age group for which they are not trained.

Perhaps the two roles could overlap a bit, as the Youth Service works with children as young as 10.

To address the transport issue, could KCC leaders meet with the Minister for Transport? The Select Committee will look into the possibility of doing this.

Are there other authorities in the Country with similar funding and staffing issues, which are being successful in providing effective Extended Services with fewer resources? Can you give us some examples of best practice?

There are some good examples of Extended Services and Youth Service working around the country, but really they are not doing anything different from what we are doing in Kent.

What role can other KCC teams involved in Extended Service provision - such as the Youth Service – assume, if the Extended Services Team will be severely reduced?

The Communities Directorate would support a broader Extended Services agenda.

Can the successful “MIDES” model of Extended Service provision, which has been adopted in the Dover District, be replicated with success in other areas of Kent?

I can tell you a good example of positive engagement from Sevenoaks. Young people could not afford to pay to go into a Sevenoaks leisure centre, so used to hang around outside. The manager of the centre arranged for them to be admitted at a greatly reduced rate. By doing this, the young people were able to take part in some positive sports activities and fill their time productively, and the centre removed the potential nuisance of young people hanging around outside. By taking an enlightened approach, two problems had been solved. As I have said earlier, there is a problem with extending the Leisure Pass to allow this sort of access as a regular arrangement across the county. However, we mustn't forget the potential role of leisure centres, and we always need a two-tier approach to youth work.

How could YAGs be involved, and what role could they play?

There is a countywide Kent Community Development Management Group which involves all 12 District Councils. This is a self-help group, but it would be difficult for the Youth Service to work with it as they have different structures and resources.

Is there a District or Borough Council in Kent from which you could take a good example of joint working?

Canterbury City Council is very good at partnership working on youth issues. It works well with both the Youth Service and the YAG.

If it was necessary to select and prioritise the delivery of some Extended Services over others, which services would you choose, and on which areas would you focus your attention?

The 10 year Youth Strategy 'Aiming High' is a good policy document to use, and the Select Committee already has it. National performance indicator NI 110, covering positive activities for young people, is also a good reference point, and of course this and the Provision of Activities for Young People Select Committee are very closely linked. However, the funding allocated to work on the PAYP recommendations is no longer ring-fenced so is in danger of withering on the vine. There were nine youth workers available to work on the implementation of the recommendations and there are now only four.