

To: Communities Policy Overview Committee

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member and Amanda Honey, Managing Director

Date: 7th November 2007

Subject: **Integrated Youth Support Strategy**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The purpose of the report is to brief Members on work undertaken so far on developing a high-level Integrated Youth Support Strategy and to seek Members' contribution to its development.

FOR COMMENT

Introduction

1. (1) The concept of Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) originated with the Youth Matters green paper in 2005. IYSS is about providing access to services for all young people according to their needs.
- (2) The Youth Matters green paper proposed four key elements deemed crucial in improving outcomes for young people:
 - **Positive activities:** more things to do and places to go
 - **Making a contribution:** More opportunities to contribute to their local community through personal development opportunities such as volunteering.
 - **Information, Advice and Guidance:** better quality and appropriately delivered.
 - **Reformed targeted youth support:** better support when needed to deal with specific problems.
- (3) KCC therefore requires a strategy for Integrated Youth Support Services. A great deal of work is already in place on this, but it needs to be drawn together to ensure a coherent a consistent approach to working across the county with young people aged 14-19 years. The Strategy will reflect a partnership approach and define the required and desired outcomes for young people in this age range.

The Draft Kent Integrated Youth Support Strategy

2. (1) A small KCC cross-directorate group has been set up to begin the initial writing of a short, high-level document to lay out the concepts, and to set the broad tone for what KCC and its partners aim to achieve. The purpose of the document is to form the basis for an agreed approach, on which the next stage of detailed operational developments can be based. The group has met three times.

(2) The group took the draft to a joint Senior Management Team meeting of Children, Families & education and Communities on the 25th September. The draft IYSS was well-received, and both SMTs agreed that the current draft (Appendix A) should be taken to the Children's Trust Board meeting on the 8th October, and should be accompanied by a list of their comments for developing the draft Strategy, which can be found in Appendix B.

(3) The draft IYSS was tabled at the Children's Trust Board meeting on the 8th October, and feedback is being sought from Board members until 31st October.

(4) Comments and input from the Communities POC and the Children, Families and Education POC are also being sought at their November meetings.

Recommendations

Members of the Communities Directorate Policy Overview Committee are asked to:

Put forward their views on the draft Integrated Youth Support Strategy.

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Background Documents: None

Appendix A

Outline Integrated Youth Support Strategy

Why an Integrated Youth Support Strategy?

Kent County Council and its partners in Kent are determined to harness all the resources available within the county to improve opportunities for all young people.

The years from age 13 to 19 are some of the most exciting and challenging in our lives, and when we have some of our most formative experiences.

Yet this is also one of the most misunderstood phases of life— a time of transition when many young people face difficult challenges relating to education, money, employment, health, self-esteem and relationships. Statistics¹ bear this out: one third of stories in the media are about youth crime, and 71% of stories on young people are negative.

However, in reality, only x% of crime is committed by young people², and the small minority who do come into contact with the criminal justice system never will again. And obscured by these negative stories are the vast majority of young people who simply get on with life, contributing to their school and family, working towards their goals and developing their interests in a quiet way that attracts no attention at all, other than from those closest to them.

Some of them even wear hooded tops.

Why then is it that the image of young people that dominates much popular debate is of the infamous 'hoodies'? And in the light of this, is it any surprise that some young people feel frustrated, alienated and misunderstood?

Furthermore, anyone who stops to think about young people among their own and friends' families will easily find truly inspiring examples of young people who excel in academic work, sport or music, who believe passionately in causes, and who give their time to help care for family and friends.

¹ Positive Images campaign – find reference

² Find stat.

Aims of the Strategy

This strategy aims to ensure that young people have access to services and opportunities that will support them to achieve a sound basis for becoming excellent young citizens who contribute to the energy, development and diversity of the county.

There are many services within Kent for young people. Some are targeted and defined by specific areas of activity. Others are broad and universal. The Integrated Youth Support Strategy therefore aims to ensure the availability of high quality, differentiated services tailored to address the needs of all young people.

Changing Attitudes

Through this Integrated Youth Support Strategy, Kent County Council and its partners in the Children's Trust seek to bring about a real change in attitudes on two fronts.

Simply put, young people are our future, but they need to believe in their own ability to make a contribution. In order to stimulate this confidence, we must capture their enthusiasm and energy, and capitalise on their desire to make a difference. We want to encourage their ideals and aspirations, and their willingness to help other people, but importantly, we need to give them the space to do this. Public authorities must demonstrate that they are ready to listen to young people's needs, in order to send the message that society as a whole recognises the challenges they face and that they can aspire to genuinely fulfil their potential in life and expect to be supported in this.

Therefore, the second front concerns the change needed in perception among the rest of society. Young people have an important role to play: their contribution can make a difference, whether it be through wider community activities such as volunteering or youth council, or by personal actions such as taking steps to improve their own health or education, and so improving their life chances. Therefore perceptions must be reinforced that young people out and about with their friends are not necessarily out to cause trouble and that it is the responsibility of all of society to support young people in the transition to adulthood.

Changes on the Ground

In order to achieve this, there will need to be real change on the ground in the way services are delivered, and this strategy aims to lay out the broad principles on which partners will bring their work together to secure the best outcomes for young people in Kent.

The Government's Green Paper *Youth Matters (2005)* identified 4 key areas where public authorities need to support young people. These are:

- **Positive activities:** more things to do and places to go

Insert Here: Case Study Example

- **Making a Contribution:** More opportunities to contribute to their local community through personal development opportunities such as volunteering and peer mentoring.

Insert Here: Case Study Example

- **Information, Advice and Guidance:** better quality, and appropriately delivered.

Insert Here: Case Study Example

- **Reformed targeted youth support:** more personalised, efficient support when needed to deal with specific problems, effectively co-ordinated by a lead professional.

Insert Here: Case Study Example

What Do We Mean by Integrated?

In order to address the above areas through coordinated delivery, it is necessary to understand the different definitions of integrated working, as they will all contribute to effecting integrated youth support services. These include:

- Services and partners working together to provide a team around the young person.
- One partner commissioning another partner to provide a service (e.g. Youth Service commissioning providers in the Voluntary Sector to deliver Positive Activities for Young People, providing targeted support for young people who are at risk of committing crime, truancy and exclusion)

{Add examples/vignettes of these definitions}

Insert Here: example using the Adolescent Resource Centres

- Budget pooling: In order to achieve better service outcomes for young people through joint commissioning, services might want to pool budgets.

Insert Here: Example using the Young Person's Substance Misuse Grant

The Role of the Children's Trust

As a direct outcome of the Children Act 2004 and Every Child Matters, Kent's Children's Trust is tasked with ensuring integrated, child-centred approaches towards delivering coordinated children and young people's services, including the key elements of youth support services. The Children's Trust brings together social care, health, police, education, districts and other services. However, for a county the size of Kent, the planning and commissioning of such services will be devolved to local levels to reflect specific area needs, and will necessitate significant relationships with universal providers, such as schools.

Working in localities based on the geography of school clusters, local children's trust arrangements within Kent will be expected to:

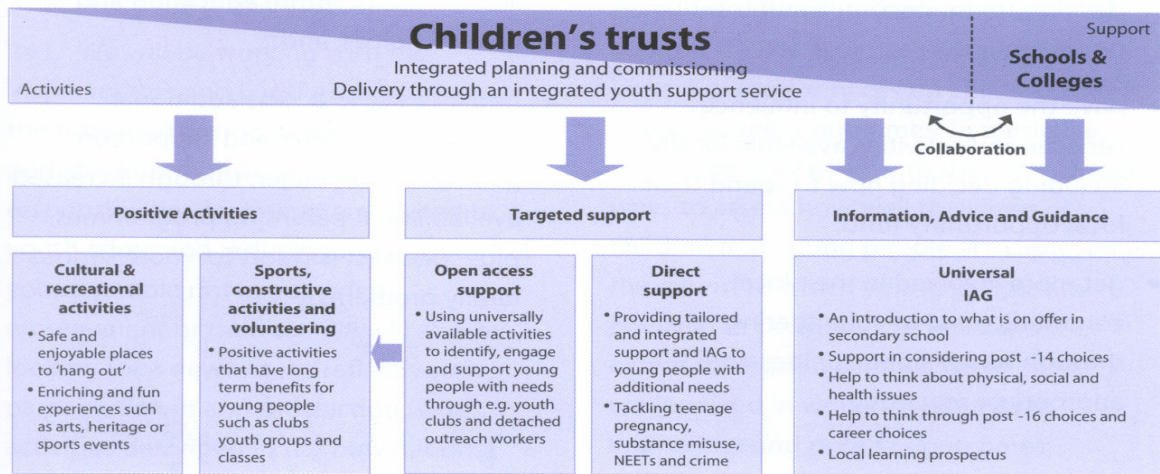
- Build on the extended schools agenda
- Engage with local voluntary and community organisations
- Explore approaches for 'integrated' teams and processes, such as data sharing
- Establish models of participation of children, young people and parents
- Establish joint planning and commissioning for services such as youth provision and children's health

The Integrated Youth Support Strategy will therefore provide a framework for the Children's Trust, which will oversee the rich economy of young people's services to ensure that they are promoted, supported and, where necessary, aligned to meet the needs of young people. This will be achieved by carefully examining what is working, what kinds of provision should be expanded, and identifying the areas where provision no longer matches young people's needs.

In Kent, there are already many excellent examples of partners working together to provide a seamless service for young people.

{Examples: e.g. Youth Strategies delivered at local level with close collaboration between Districts and Kent Youth Service; Rainer Kent 16plus Service for young people who are leaving care; a youth worker deployed to work alongside the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in Shepway; 20 Community Youth Tutors seconded from Kent Youth Service to work in identified schools across the county}

Insert Here: Examples for LLDDs and diverse groups
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Engaging with Young People

In order to ensure provision within Kent is in tune with what young people actually need, real engagement with young people is crucial, and all partners within the Children's Trust will need to commit to this. This Strategy has been developed in consultation with young people, who will continue to be central to shaping the development of future services. Kent is already engaged in actively involving young people with their services. The Kent Youth County Council has played a prominent role in youth participation since 2002, and the Connexions Young People's Board has helped shape Information, Advice & Guidance provision for 13 to 19 year olds. Looked After Children are involved with service development and staff recruitment, and young people with severe learning and physical disabilities and their parents are represented on management boards for Resource Centres. However, this engagement must be evolved further, to create greater opportunity for wider participation of young people from different backgrounds and situations – not just those with an interest in local politics.

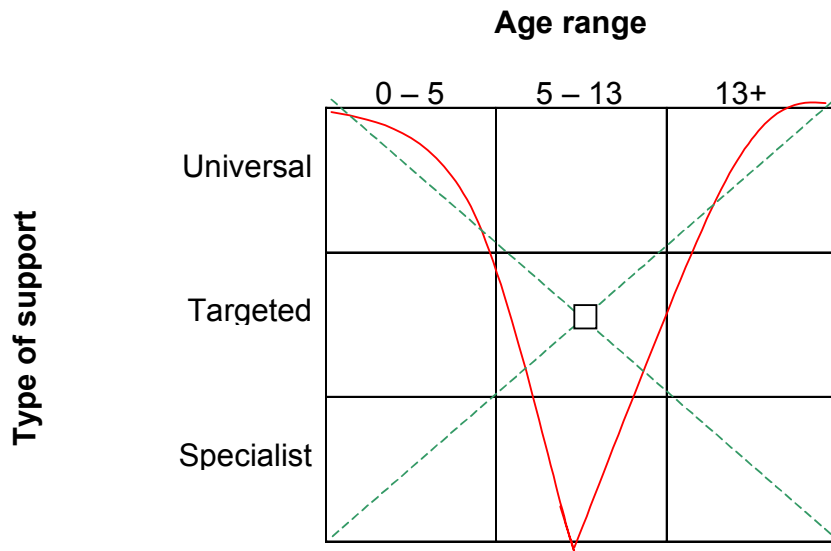
{Insert statement about meeting needs of different groups of young people, such as vulnerable groups and new emerging community groups, e.g. Nepalese community in Ashford}

{Some details on form this might take: On-line consultation; Youth Panels linked to local Children's Trusts; Specialist Forums eg BME, Disabled, Faith}

A spectrum of need

An added challenge to delivering an effective Integrated Youth Service will be to provide a range of services to meet the needs of a range of young people, from universal services available to all, through targeted services, to specialist services where the numbers of young people involved may be very small. An integrated approach to planning and commissioning across partners' services will be essential to make sure that the most effective use of resources is made, right across this spectrum of need.

The level and type of support available to children and young people is illustrated in the diagram below:



{Insert examples of different types of service}

Where we want to be

We will know that we have improved opportunities for young people when we see the following outcomes taking place on the ground:

- a wider choice and better opportunities to participate in more positive activities in young people's spare time;
 - influencing services and activities available locally;
 - clearly sign-posted and accessible services;
 - Impartial and relevant information enabling informed decisions about education, work and leisure;
 - earlier, better & more coordinated support if they have additional problems or needs;
- and
- young people telling us if they have benefited from more integrated and tailored services.

{These are a selection, more will follow in more detailed draft, including Comment made about opportunities presented by the Olympics, Paralympics and Kent TV}

{An outline of how we foresee partners working together in future, including case study material}

{'Before and 'After' diagrams will be inserted to show visual representation of how integrated services will look.}

How will we get there?

A brief section on the operational plan that will follow the IYSS.

Additional Sections for Insertion in IYSS:

- Insert: Young People's quotes from sources such as the NFER Pupil Survey , Youth Service, Vocational programme user survey and Viewpoint will be used through out the text to illustrate points made.
- Appendix detailing list of partners involved in IYSS

Integrated Youth Support Strategy Appendix B

Issues Arising from Joint CMY and CFE SMT Meeting, 25th Sept 2007

1. Surveys conducted within schools have highlighted low levels of awareness of volunteering opportunities that are available. This should be remedied as part of the work on the 'Making a Contribution' strand. The possibility of linking in with the 2010 target on volunteering should be explored.
2. Building Schools for the Future will see 140 purpose-build sports halls available within the county. Work should be undertaken to make sure these are fully employed for out of hours activities.
3. Reference between the strategy and the role in principal of the extended schools model and where they would fit within the service provision.
4. There are many opportunities available for young people outside of statutory provision, such as through Faith and community initiatives. The strategy should ensure that young people are made aware of, and be able to benefit from, such opportunities.
5. The strategy should make specific reference to young people with disabilities.
6. As the strategy is an opportunity to create a positive view of young people, statistics about young people as victims (rather than perpetrators) of crime should be highlighted, and the strategy should also ensure linkages to Community Safety and CDRP agendas.
7. The strategy is also an opportunity to highlight Diversity issues. There are some examples of excellent work within very diverse communities, which are currently not heard about enough. These should be highlighted and built upon.
8. Looked after children should be highlighted within the strategy, since this is both the most vulnerable group, and that for which we have the greatest responsibility. The strategy rightly highlights the challenging nature of the transitions young people make in their teenage years. These issues are even more acute for looked after children and unaccompanied asylum seeker young people, who often have very little idea what their futures hold, and what they may be making the transition *to*.
9. We have large amounts of data highlighting particular issues and areas of need (e.g. via NFER survey and mosaic data). We must show what we are doing in practical terms as a result of such information.

10. Initiatives such as free passes to leisure facilities for particularly vulnerable groups should be considered, and District Councils should be involved in this. The next phase of the Kent Freedom Pass could be employed in this way.
11. Health Bodies also need to consider the way they relate to young people, and make their services more accessible. Is the IYSS a way of raising these issues?
12. Other issues which could be considered for inclusion are young people's involvement in environmental issues, transport and culture and art.
13. Explicit programme of consultation with young people. The strategy needs to address how resources are deployed and are they where young people want them to be deployed.
14. To consider the contribution made by the Police Service across a range of issues that are both directly related to young people's involvement in crime (victims and perpetrators) but also the considerable role the Police play in supporting communities and providing opportunities for young people (Police Cadets?).
15. What are the pledges? Reference was made to the pledges and ensuring they are reflected within the strategy.
16. The strategy should make reference to the linkages between poverty, access and achievement and its relevance to the provision of integrated youth services.
17. A recognition that services to young people should, amongst other worthy outcomes, result in young people having fun.