

## Annex A – Covering Template for Responses

Please complete the attached cover sheet when sending evidence, indicating the set of questions to which a response is being provided and contact details of the person for any follow-up queries.

Contact details for respondent	
Name	
Job title	County Youth Officer
Do you represent an organisation?  (if so, name of organisation and type: e.g. voluntary, public body, private company).	Hampshire County Council  Youth Service
Postal address	The Castle Castle Avenue Winchester S023 8UG
Telephone number	
Email	

	Which area of the review are you responding to? (please mark X)
Prevention strand	
Review of disabled children	
Strategy for youth services	X
Review of high cost, high harm families	

1. What is the current distribution of youth services and youth engagement activities available across the country? How is that likely to evolve following the Youth Green Paper?

Local authority youth services and youth work have historically been influenced by Government reports and policy. The agenda has led to the development of local provision established in response to local needs. Current services have been influenced considerably by Resourcing Excellent Youth Services and the Transforming Youth work agenda. This was expected to lead to a 'step change' in youth work, but was not followed through and diverted by the development of the Connexions strategy.

Local flexibility enables responses to be made to local need, but the lack of definition of a sufficient youth service and led to Local Authorities providing very different services. This is further exacerbated by the level of resource allocation and there are significant variations in what is counted within the S53 funding block and the cost per head figures vary considerably. There needs to be clear guidance provided to support the implementation of the education and inspection bill to minimise these variations.

There is a major concern in the timing of this request as local authorities are experiencing major change as part of the implementation of the *Every Child Matters* agenda and the development of Children's services. Youth services are experiencing significant change as a result of *Youth Matters* and Next Steps papers, the piloting of Targeted Youth Support services, the development of Children's Trust arrangements for commissioning youth work and the development of Local Area Agreements. These initiatives are having a major impact on services for young people especially local authority youth services. The review needs to take into account the impact of these initiatives and their impact on the role and function of youth services in local authorities.

2. Building on the Youth Green Paper, is there more that could be done to improve and sustain the effectiveness in the delivery of existing services and activities?

Considerably more can be done to improve and sustain effectiveness. Initially there needs to be an agreed understanding of effectiveness, which sits alongside national standards. The standards and targets within *Resourcing Excellent Youth Services* need to be revised and updated. This will enable services to develop effective responses as well as providing a framework for both delivery and inspection.

To deliver effective youth work workforce development is crucial and a clear national strategy for this is essential. The loss of central funding allocations for staff development has had a major impact on the delivery of quality youth work.

The development of an improvement partner model, similar to that developed for head teachers, would be a positive way of supporting the development of youth services.

Capital and revenue investment has been limited for the development of youth provision. There has not been a sustained building programme for youth projects. The development of a sustained programme similar to School and Children's Centre Building programmes would be welcomed by young people and communities.

3. What are the particular barriers faced by different groups of young people, including disabled young people, in accessing services, and what are the policy issues that arise?

There is an inherent conflict between universal services, which are accessible to all, and targeted services focussing on the needs of specific groups. Whilst both take place there is not the capacity or the level of resources within existing services to do both at an acceptable level.

4. What is the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of different types of services and activities in terms of better life outcomes?

There is little empirical evidence, but the DfES research report RR606 *An Evaluation of the Impact of Youth Work In England* provides the most up to date evidence. However, there is much anecdotal evidence which demonstrates the effectiveness of youth work and its impact on young people. Currently this is not nationally monitored or gathered in a comprehensive manner. The attached Hampshire County Youth Service annual report highlights work with young people and gives an outline of the impact of youth work has on the lives of young people.

5. How can we best combine demand led provision for young people with provision that is planned and structured to have the best impact on outcomes for children and young people?

There needs to be greater flexibility in the delivery of youth work. Current approaches are developed in response to needs and demands which are limited to the available resources. The result is that youth provision tends to deliver discrete pieces of youth work well, but not universally.

6. What more can we do to support and enable young people to exert a strong demand side influence on provision? What would we expect in return from young people – their rights and responsibilities?

Young people's involvement is the cornerstone of the youth work. At a local level youth programmes are strongly influenced by young people with youth work leading the engagement of young people in a variety of ways such as: youth forums and councils; conferences engaging local politicians; lobby groups; and formal structures such as the United Kingdom Youth Parliament.

Youth work has much to offer other institutions in listening to and involving young people and in working with young people to develop appropriate provision. Young people are generally aware of their rights and responsibilities.

7. What principles and priorities should guide the allocation of current and future resources? And who do we need to target?

The targets outlined in *Resources Excellent Youth Service* need to be updated and revised to establish clear bench marks for provision. Resource allocation should be developed taking into account demographic data with clear financial targets such cost per head and number of youth workers per young people and level of resources allocated.

There should be a focus on those young people who chose not to or find it difficult to access existing provision. This will provide them with a supportive environment and peer group.

8. What measures and milestones need to be in place to ensure that performance can be assessed and delivery monitored at a local level.

Most youth services operate a comprehensive quality assurance programme, which links to the requirements of Ofsted, these processes need to be strengthened and linked to revised national standards.

#### **Supplementary questions posed as part of the 'call for evidence':**

1. What are the barriers and enablers of effective Third Sector provision, including statutory commissioning capability?

Reluctance exists within the sector because of the fear of becoming a quasi public sector organisation losing existing flexibilities. There is a danger of 'mission drift' as organisations change to chase the available resources rather than their key objectives. The richness of the sector is its diversity, which can also be viewed a weakness. The strategic co-ordination of the sector should not be an aim as it will lose its diversity, flexibility and opportunity for innovation.

2. What can be done to improve the ability of universal provision to identify and provide a service to those with greater needs?

In Hampshire approximately 60% of resources are targeted at those with the greatest need. Universal services develop around the needs of the young people involved, by implication these services will develop to meet the needs of the majority. More opportunity to create universal services would be welcomed, especially through the development of an

adequate building programme supported by a national long term and sustained strategy, with adequate finance.

3. Which projects and programmes in the last five years have had a proven and sustained impact and brought innovation to delivery of services for young people?

Youth work has been at the forefront of innovation as it is responsive to the needs of the young people. There are no other services which regularly meets with young people on their territory such as on the streets. The development of community based youth focussed information and advice services, youth clinics, performing arts, alternative curriculum, personal development programmes focussed on self, support for Gay, Lesbian Bisexual groups, involving young people in determining programmes are all examples of innovative youth work. Specific examples of innovative youth work in Hampshire is included in the attached County and district annual reports.

4. What encourages young people to try new and different kinds of activities from those they already do?

New activities with good well trained and qualified youth workers who are enthusiastic and encouraging who enable young people to feel safe in an environment of trust where they can be challenged. Residential opportunities are valued by young people and provide an excellent environment for young people to explore their attitudes, values and behaviour.

5. What evidence is there of the benefits that arise from young people's involvement in design and provision of their activities? What evidence is there of how outcomes have improved as a result?

Youth surveys, considerable anecdotal evidence, personal testimony of young people and Ofsted inspections of good services. Again this is an area where further co-ordinated national research would be beneficial.

6. What attracts people to the youth work workforce? What is less attractive about membership of this workforce?

Most youth workers enter youth work because they believe youth work makes a difference to young people's lives. There is a tendency for youth workers to like their independence and autonomy, to be innovative and not want to be part of a bureaucratic processes. Youth workers who do youth work because it makes a difference to young people know they achieve that goal because they experience it from those they work with on a regular basis, those who don't experience that personal satisfaction, leave. Youth work training is highly valued and many youth workers, especially those who are part-

time, use training as way of returning to learning and a springboard to other careers in the caring professions.