

## "HALF AS MUCH AGAIN PLEASE"

### SUFFICIENT YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION - CONSULTATION

#### *EXTRACT*

*"Without a good Youth Service, good youth work is left to chance or goodwill. "*

*Good youth work makes a very significant difference to the success of national and local policy affecting young people. The outcomes of good youth work include changes in awareness, ability, attitude and achievement which uniquely help young people themselves to take action on major issues which affect their lives. It is not just about realising individual potential or improving social relationships, or even contributing to a process of lifelong learning, valuable though these are. Youth Service organisations believe that they need about 'half as much again' nationally to do this job properly. Local Authorities in partnership with voluntary organisations must submit comprehensive development plans to the Government to secure resources so that the majority of young people are reached by the Service, and 1 in 3 every week.*

#### INTRODUCTION

A Working Group of representatives of major national organisations influential in the youth work field has met on a number of occasions to consider issues, and present a case to national and local government, concerning sufficient levels of Youth Service provision. Co-ordinated and advised by NY A, the group involved the Local Government Association, the Standing Conference for Principal Youth and Community Officers, the Community and Youth Workers Union, the National Association of Youth and Community Education Officers, and the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, and consulted also with the British Youth Council. Representatives from the Department for Education and Employment, OFSTED and the Wales Youth Agency acted as observers to the group. The Working Group recognises that it also operates within the context of the UK Youth Work Alliance, and acknowledges the special contribution to the issues made by the Alliance partners. The group has taken much encouragement from a recent Council for Local Education Authorities' resolution to *"call on the Government to give Local Authorities explicit and unequivocal powers to secure the provision of sufficient youth work services in partnership with voluntary youth work providers"*.

#### Definitions

The Working Group has not revisited definitions of "Quality", already detailed fully by OFSTED. The intention has been to build on the propositions of "Agenda for a Generation" and focus on the range of Youth Service provision necessary in each Local Authority area. In this paper the words "Local Authority" means an authority which is also an education authority, regardless of its departmental location of the Youth Service. The words "Youth Service" refer to the Local Authority Youth Service, operating in partnership with Voluntary Youth Organisations. It is fully

recognised that while the Local Authority may ensure the provision of services, they may be delivered by the Voluntary sector, or other public or private bodies.

### Working papers

The Working Group has generated a number of working papers (available to the Youth Service field on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope), for example a summary of previous attempts to create formulae to calculate necessary levels of provision, a summary of the accounting difficulties inherent in trying to compare budgets between very different Local Authorities, a paper summarising the approach which the Working Group had opted to follow, and a paper on the contribution of Youth Work to Lifelong Learning.

### Building on "Agenda for a Generation"

"Agenda for a Generation" focused on the strategy necessary at national level to ensure an unequivocal statutory basis for the sufficient provision of Youth Services, through consistent public funding based on need and on development plans, and a recognised distinctive place for youth work in delivering national action in fields such as community service, health and training for employment. It also focused on what this should mean for young people, a guarantee or entitlement to a meeting-place, to information, to opportunities to take part in activities and develop personal skills, to the support of a key worker, and to a say in decision-making processes.

The Working Group wishes to reiterate the continuing validity of "Agenda for a Generation", focusing on national strategy and individual entitlement. This document, however, focuses on the range of provision necessary at Local Authority level to achieve the targets at national and individual levels.

The urgency of the proposals in this document is evident from the very serious budget reductions which many Youth Services are facing in 1998-9. Government figures can tell apparently contradictory stories. A DfEE analysis in April 1997 concluded that "Local Authority net revenue expenditure on the Youth Service rose to £281.8m in 1994-5: up by 2.32% in cash terms (a 0.47% increase in real terms) compared to 1993-4" [i.e. after generating non-government income]. "Expenditure in 1994-5 compared to 1990-1 shows a 16.6% increase in cash terms, a 0.7% increase in real terms" [but only from the previous year, not the 4.4% reduction since 1990-1. In fact 1995-6 figures quoted to the LGA Education Working Group show a further reduction of 3.4% since 1994-5 in real terms].

### Good in parts

It is fully recognised by the Working Group that practice is not currently uniformly good across all parts of all Authorities. It is readily admitted that there are examples of poor practice even in Authorities which are comparatively well-resourced, as noted for example in certain OFSTED reports. One of the objectives of the following proposals below is to ensure that such disparities are quickly redressed and become highly exceptional.

Why should the Youth Service be guaranteed a minimum level of resources?

Guaranteed, consistent resourcing is needed:

- **Responding to social needs:** *Because* good youth -work makes a very significant difference to the success of national and local policy affecting young people. It is often pivotal, perhaps even indispensable, in an effective response to personal and social issues which affect young people, from crime and unemployment, to drugs and unhealthy diet, and can play a key part in Government initiatives in these fields e.g. New Deal, Social Exclusion, Health of the Nation.
- **Weathering the transition:** *Because* all young people need some extra help during the protracted and rarely smooth period of YOUTH - the transition

*between social dependence and independence  
between physiological and psychological maturity*

- **Exploring and fulfilling potential:** *Because* (but not just because) a civilised society ought to provide opportunities for young people to -widen horizons, to learn from a wide range of experiences, to benefit from the best available techniques in informal groupwork, to explore the fulfilment of their potential.
- **Equality and bridge-building:** *Because* of the positive effects of good quality youth work on communities: it gradually enables alienated young people to identify with society, builds bridges between individuals and groups of all kinds, and so enhances a sense of social responsibility. At the heart of youth work is a concern for equality: to enable all young people to have access to, and contribute to, the personal development and learning on offer, not only for their own sakes but also to enable all to learn and benefit from each other.
- **Enabling a positive contribution:** *Because* (but not just because) young people need to find constructive channels for their energies, so that they can make a positive contribution and compensate for their often passive roles in society as consumers, spectators, students and often victims, rather than convert these into the more active but destructive roles of thieves, hooligans, truants and perpetrators.

### **The Youth Service and Lifelong Learning**

The central purpose of the Youth Service, to provide opportunities for

**personal development through informal social education**

can clearly be seen as part of a wider aim of lifelong learning. To empower young people to make a positive contribution to society certainly requires a learning process, for example, concerning

#### **awareness**

*e.g. understanding the reasons why others act and think as they do or learning where key decisions are made which affect local services*

#### **abilities**

*e.g. skills informing relationships, negotiating, compromising, assertiveness or competence in information technology, budgeting, personal safety*

#### **attitudes**

*e.g. respect for the needs of others, willingness to take responsibility or wanting to raise standards of personal achievement, get involved, and help others less fortunate*

*It inevitably requires a learning process which is never completed, but is about a way of looking at the world which involves always being willing and able to learn*

***from experience  
from others  
from oneself  
from the changing environment***

*It must also be recognised, however, that the education dimension is only one of many frameworks with which young people have to deal: there are also frameworks concerning work, accommodation, health, friends and relationships, leisure and often the legal system. Good youth work gets young people into a learning relationship with such dimensions of life. Youth Services consequently must play a key part in ensuring that policy in each of these frameworks takes account of the needs of young people, as they perceive and express them. To do this effectively, they need to be at the forefront of corporate and multi-agency partnerships affecting young people.*

### ***How does good youth work achieve social change?***

*Good youth work achieves the changes necessary by enabling learning (awareness, ability and attitude) to be fully internalised, because good youth workers successfully:*

- start from the individual's own perception of the world, "where they are"*
- work at young people's pace, and a place they feel is "home territory "*
- maintain an essentially voluntary, enjoyable and holistic relationship*
- create but also take advantage of opportunities for learning as they arise*
- enable "learning by doing", learning from experience, success and failure*
- are committed to young people as individuals, and partners in learning*

### ***Why does youth work need a Youth Service?***

*The youth work profession needs to be co-ordinated, supported, and under-pinned by a well-resourced, high quality and well-regarded Youth Service. Such a Youth Service, as a partnership between Local Authorities, voluntary agencies, and other public and private bodies, is uniquely placed to deliver the kind of consistent underpinning needed, because of its holistic approach, its flexibility of time and place, and its access to community resources. There has been a growth in new corporate, multi-tier and multi-agency partnership models of provision, often not well integrated with the existing or mainstream. It is not enough for youth work to find its place in a plethora of fragmented strategies and multi-agency projects, in young offender teams, European Social Fund projects, youth training programmes, Single Regeneration Budget outreach, or Lottery-funded leisure provision. Without strong local co-ordination, such ad hoc additional funding can sometimes be disproportionate in comparison with council and voluntary sector funding resulting in imbalance, or distortion of the local picture. Without Youth Service underpinning, youth work outcomes are left to chance and goodwill, and youth projects may be condemned to engage in repeated gradual reinventions of the wheel.*

## PROPOSALS

The Working Group has produced the following proposals, which it now presents for consultation by the youth work field generally. The intention is to amend the document following consultation, and then present it formally to Government and Local Authorities, on behalf of the Working group and the National Youth Agency Advisory Council.

1. The Government should introduce or amend legislation so as to require Local Authorities in partnership with voluntary organisations to ensure the maintenance, within each Local Authority area, of a Youth Service with specific statutory duties, infrastructure, quality, scale, and range of provision and services, with performance indicators and learning and other outcomes, as outlined below. Such legislation must be framed so as to prevent the wide variations in quality and levels of Service which have arisen under existing legislation.
2. Local Authorities, in partnership with voluntary organisations and other public or independent organisations, should be required to demonstrate that they have secured the provision of a Youth Service infrastructure, with staff and resources of sufficient quantity and quality to be capable of sustaining a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated programme of youth work, within reasonable travelling distance, which reaches at least 1 in 3 of the "core" age group of 13-19 on average twice each week, and over time impacts on the majority of those aged 11-21. The status of "youth" is here thought of as a period of transition between physiological and psychological maturity, between social dependence and independence. Where special provision for some aged 8-11 and 21-25 is thought appropriate, this must be funded through additional resources, beyond "bedrock" funding.
3. Local Authorities, in partnership with Voluntary Organisations, should ensure that the Youth Service targets those who have limited opportunities for personal development through family, school or work, though not primarily those with severe difficulties at a point when they need the intensive care of Health or Social Services. Local Authorities and their partners should be required to demonstrate how judgements are made about provision which differentiates between a variety of needs and interests, or about targeting particular individuals or groups or communities. As the recent CLEA resolution states: "Youth Services have a crucial role to play (with) disaffected young people, including those who have been excluded from school. Proper recognition should be given to this by ensuring that Youth Services are closely integrated with other education support services and are not seen as primarily having a recreational purpose". Youth Service processes of learning or personal development should be seen as an entitlement for all and essential for all, but some groups require more direct youth work input than others, to ensure that neither they, nor as a result the rest of society, miss out on the benefits on offer. It was rightly said in a parliamentary debate in 1992 that Sufficiency imposes a "somewhat stronger duty than adequacy" in that

Sufficiency "contains the principle of meeting the reasonable needs of all persons to whom the duty extends".

4. Local Authorities, in partnership with voluntary organisations, must submit Youth Service Development Plans for Government approval (similar to, for example, Early Years Development Plans) linked with Education Development Plans, to achieve:

the availability locally, within no more than a short bus-ride, at least once a week, of a warm, well-run, meeting-place, inexpensive to young people, in either the Local Authority or the Voluntary Sector;

access, where necessary by heavily subsidised minibus provision, to ensure further progression to special interests, events, activities, and regular participation in good quality opportunities for personal development and social education, within the following comprehensive range of options:

- Voluntary action
- Music and dance
- Theatre and video
- Vehicles and crafts
- Residential education
- International exchange
- Environmental awareness
- Visual Arts and computers
- Sports and outdoor activities

a well-trained key worker, paid or voluntary, often able to work in or out of Youth Service premises, to facilitate individual or small group support, for example, a listening ear, befriending, advocacy, mentoring, referral

specialist programmes and methods, appropriately located, including for example information, counselling, detached work, groupwork, training, especially for those facing difficulties, which address the following comprehensive range of issues:

- Leaving home
- Unemployment
- Basic education
- Race and culture
- Drugs and alcohol
- Gender and sexuality
- Health and disability
- Parenthood preparation
- Social exclusion and poverty

## Crime and antisocial behaviour

5. Local Authorities, in partnership with voluntary organisations, must demonstrate to the Government that they have secured the necessary Youth Service infrastructure to ensure quality in the following aspects of management:

Multi-agency and corporate partnership  
Needs monitoring and analysis  
Organisation and administration  
Policy development  
Quality assurance  
Resource management  
Staff review and deployment  
Training and staff development  
User involvement and participation  
Vision and information communication

This infrastructure is expected to include a Principal Youth Officer, a Training Officer, and other Youth Officers depending on the size of the authority (see model below), all paid at the equivalent of agreed Soulbury grades. A Local Authority with an alternative structural proposal must demonstrate to the Government that it is at least as effective as that provided by the above infrastructure.

6. Even a small Local Authority with 20,000 to 30,000 young people should have no fewer than ten full-time staff, plus two youth officers, given the above range of responsibilities, all requiring some specialist training and ongoing professional input. Such staff may be employed directly by the Local Authority or commissioned to fulfil these functions through voluntary organisations or other public or independent bodies. This would be the minimum level, for example, to ensure that staff were able to keep up-to-date with the latest developments. In general Local Authorities, in partnership with voluntary organisations, can calculate the number of full-time staff they need, with reference to the background document "Models of Sufficient Quantity" summarised under point 12 below. The number of part-time and volunteer staff will depend on the authority's proposals to reach 1 in 3 young people each week.
7. Building on the work of many Local Authorities which have recently initiated Reviews of Youth Services, often in connection with Local Government Reorganisation, Local Authorities must demonstrate to the Government how their youth work services are also resourced to play (as they are in practice expected to do) a reliable central, corporate, co-ordinating role in the holistic development of youth policy across the whole Local Authority area, across multi-agency partnerships, across council departments, across all tiers of local Government, including district, town, parish and community level. Local Authorities must show how the Youth Service contributes its youth work

expertise to local and national policy, at least each of the policy areas outlined in the Government-Audit of Youth Service Provision, for example community safety, community relations, health promotion and economic regeneration. (The Working Group would recommend reference here to the NYA publication "Invest in Futures" as an expression of current initiatives required in youth policy). It is expected that there would normally be a Local Authority committee or Working Group dedicated to corporate youth affairs, in which young people are themselves involved. Local Authorities should be required to demonstrate how their structures meet this need. In addition, Local Authorities should outline the local Youth Service contribution to Lifelong Learning. (The Working Group here recommends reference to the background paper concerning Lifelong Learning and the Youth Service, expressing ways in which youth work can set in motion lifelong processes of social education). As the recent CLEA resolution states "The contribution of Youth Services to raising educational achievement should be central to youth strategies and curriculum policies, "..... the development of (which) should be corporate and inter-agency".

8. Following on from the Youth Service Statement of Purpose most recently agreed by national Youth Service organisations, Local Authorities should submit a quality assurance policy, in due course nationally accredited, and detail the personal development, social education and participation outcomes of awareness, ability, attitude and achievement, which they would expect to ensue from the level of resources proposed. They must produce an annual report available to Government and other flinders on their achievements, including unit costs. The Government must strengthen the contingent of Youth Service HMI, with regular visits to youth work provision at least every 5 years, and an annual report. The Output and Performance Indicators, largely statistical in nature, for each Youth Service to be required at national policy level should include:

Numbers in contact, and comparison between years  
 Numbers seeking extra help with personal issues  
 Percentage of target age range reached Attendances  
 and contacts per week Statistics demonstrating  
 response to equality issues Contact time and contact  
 ratio Unit costs per hour and per person Ratio of paid  
 hours to unpaid hours Number of registered voluntary  
 youth groups Statistical satisfaction survey of  
 voluntary groups Comprehensive set of policies (see  
 Audit) Youth Council (or similar) comment on service  
 Representative user satisfaction interview results  
 Representative interviews on learning progression  
 Representative session observation forms analysis  
 Analysis of accreditation of experience documents  
 Evidence of response to statistically proven needs

Widespread implementation of curriculum range  
Geographical and per capita spread of provision  
Range of provision, both activity and issue oriented  
Survey of other agencies on perceptions of service  
Analysis of staff factual survey on communications

9. Development plans should include proposals for a sound staff development policy (such as those accredited by the National Youth Agency), and realistic targets concerning staff development and training at all levels to ensure that outcomes, processes and performance indicators are achieved. This is likely to mean that full-timers, part-timers, and volunteers are fully equipped and supported in fulfilling increasingly high levels of responsibility. Enabling this development is not fully possible within current resources. In view of their professional status as educators, full-time youth workers should be qualified to JNC levels, and part-time and volunteer staff to nationally endorsed, regionally accredited levels.
10. The Government should recognise that some, perhaps only a few, Local Authorities will be able to meet the requirements proposed from existing resources, whereas many will need to have development plans for reaching the targets over three to five years. Some urgently need to redress current imbalances.
11. There should be a national DfEE audit of premises, with a view to a new capital expenditure programme. Most authorities require new budgets to promote capital and equipment development to a high standard, and easier access to funding such as the Private Finance Initiative.
12. In order to meet these requirements, which many would regard as quite modest, and bring the majority of Local Authority areas up to the standards of the best, it is necessary for the Government to increase the resources nationally available to the Youth Service by about **half as much again** in excess of current funding levels, gradually over the lifetime of this parliament, and not necessarily all through the SSA route. The evidence for this calculation is provided in the background summary headed "Models of Sufficient Quantity". Whatever way the analysis of staffing models is done, for example projections from the NACYS formula of 1989 by HMI showing 250 weekly attendances needing 2.8 FTE sessions, the conclusions are broadly the same, even allowing for increasing responsibilities for part-time and volunteer staff. The same conclusion, not just about staffing, but about all resources, can be drawn from a 1994 publication "Planning for a Sufficient Youth Service" which proposed: "at least 2 million funded places for young people between the ages of 10 and 19, and each funded place should provide for 100 hours per annum. This would give 1 in 3 young people informal social and political education opportunities equivalent to just over 10% of the time provided for their schooling". The cost - about **half as much again** as the level currently provided, not including the additional contribution made by the voluntary and other sectors. In other words, if current resources for the Youth Service

(including national organisations) total approximately £250m the need is for an annual total of £375 million, a further £125m, an average of approximately £1 million extra per Local Authority area.

13. Such additional resources should not be applied equally across Authority areas, as some appear to be funded better than others already, but it is clear that no current allocation should be reduced in the short term: critical mass calculations are needed, including areas with longer experience of above average resources. Some Local Authorities of course require a higher proportion of Government funding than others, because of a higher percentage of young people from families unable to afford as much by way of direct contribution to provision costs. Current funding is understood to be based, at least partly, on historical spending totals. The basis for allocation should move over the course of the parliament to a per capita calculation, i.e. based on the youth population, with appropriate weightings to redress social exclusion of all kinds. However, funding should progressively move towards this end by stages, depending on the quality and comprehensiveness of Development Plans in addressing criteria such as those suggested in this paper.
14. Alternatively, the above proposal could be thought of as a proposal for approximately 2% of the education budget, over the lifetime of the current parliament. In the short-term, however, a rapid return at least to the recent high water mark of 1989-90 would be a good start, a rise of perhaps 8% from current levels, which may provide some pump-priming to enable at least some significant development.
15. There should be better co-ordination at national policy level of the various sums available to the Youth Service from the Government, for example through SSA, SRB, the Standards Fund, the National Lottery and from various European funds, so as to improve the currently ad hoc and uneven success of competitive bidding.
16. While it is difficult to envisage the strong support of Local Authorities for hypothecating particular sums or percentages for local Youth Service budgets, they should recognise that the proposals above are likely in practice to require comparable levels of Government funding per capita, and the Government should consider ways of making known the sums allocated for the Youth Service. There is no apparent wave of enthusiasm for a Youth Service Funding Council similar to the FEFC, although the Youth Service view might change if it appeared impossible to increase budgets very significantly through Local Authorities. The Government should require (and be satisfied by) an explanation, if an Authority uses part of its allocation elsewhere, of how the development plan can continue to be implemented.

*Comments or proposed amendments to this document should be returned to the National Youth Agency by Friday 17 April 1998 together with the completed form which follows:*