



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Priorities for Youth Consultation Response
Date:	15 October 2008
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Relevant Background Information

The Department of Education has begun a process to develop Priorities for Youth which build on the current Strategy for the 'Delivery of Youth Work in Northern Ireland 2005-2008'. It has been proposed that the new Priorities will be set within the existing strategic framework rather than emerging from a review of the overall Strategy.

In order to inform the identification of the key Priorities for Youth, the Department has issued three "Priorities for Youth" questionnaires, which aim to obtain the views of those with an interest in the youth service including children and young people; youth workers, leaders and volunteers; and managers in youth or relevant children services

The submission deadline for this consultation is the 15 October, 2008.

Key Issues

In the absence of any evaluation having been undertaken of the impact of the "Strategy for the Delivery of Youth Work in Northern Ireland 2005-2008", it is difficult to comment on the associated priorities and areas of action to be carried forward.

Accordingly, the comments contained within the Council's response provide a strategic overview of what the Council believe to be the key issues impacting upon the Youth Service within Northern Ireland. The comments provided are based on the Council's own experiences, its growing evidence base and reflects the relevant corporate priorities identified for the organisation.

Supporting Children and Young People has been identified as a specific priority area within the Council and significant investment has been made in services targeted at Children and Young People as well as delivering projects and programmes that focus on the personal and social development of young people.

Within its new Corporate Plan for the period 2008-2011, the Council has committed to the development of a council wide Strategy for Children and Young People which will be aligned with relevant funding streams.

There is considerable affinity between youth services and other services already delivered by the Council. Local authorities already have responsibility for good relations planning and produce Good Relations Plans for their area. They are also responsible for the production of Community Support Plans, lead Community Safety Partnerships and provide leisure, sports, cultural and other local facilities. They will also be given responsibility for neighbourhood renewal and facilitating the community planning process which is designed to allow all sectors to contribute to a plan that will advance the economic, social and environmental well being of its area.

The attached **Appendix 1** is a copy of the response outlining that the Belfast City Council in general welcomes the proposal, but some specific concerns and views were expressed.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note and approve the content of the attached consultation response.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Consultation response – Priorities for Youth.