



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Consultation: DE - Priorities for Youth
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Eddie Jackson, Children and Young People Manager and David Purchase, Policy and Business Development Officer

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Council have been asked to respond to the DE's policy "Priorities for Youth: Improving Young People's Lives Through Youth Work." The strategic aims of youth work will be:
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To contribute to raising standards for all and closing the performance gap between the highest and lowest achieving young people by providing access to enjoyable, non-formal learning opportunities that help them to develop enhanced social and cognitive skills and overcome barriers to learning; and
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To continue to improve the non-formal learning environment by creating inclusive, participative settings in which the voice and influence of young people are championed, supported and evident in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes.
1.4	The principles that will underpin all aspects of Youth Work are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Participation in youth services is voluntary and should enable young people to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to tackle the issues that are important to them;- The active participation of young people should be fostered, supported and evident across all youth settings;- Equality and inclusion should be fundamental to planning and implementation and the values of equity, diversity and interdependence should be at the heart of youth work;- Young people, their families and the wider community should be involved in youth work in a meaningful way, with expectations managed within the resources available;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Young people should expect high quality services, which follow best practice including the highest standards of child protection; – Collaborative working between the statutory, voluntary, uniformed and faith-based sectors should play an important part in securing improved outcomes for young people and the continued commitment from the youth workforce, including volunteers; – Resources should be used to achieve priority outcomes for young people in the most cost effective way, according to best practice principles (public value); – The needs of the young person should be the key focus at each stage of development; – Activities should be fun, enjoyable and planned to deliver improved outcomes.
1.5	<p>The priorities for action are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Raising Standards for All – Closing the Performance Gap, Increasing Access and Equity – Developing the Non Formal Education Workforce – Improving the Non-Formal Learning Environment – Transforming Non Formal Education Management
1.6	<p>There are several specific questions for the consultation as shown in Appendix 2.</p>
1.7	<p>The full proposal is attached as Appendix 1 and further background information is available online: http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/19-youth_pg/19-priorities-for-youth.htm</p>
1.8	<p>Community Services were made aware of the consultation on 3rd October and comments are required to be returned by the 10th December 2012.</p>
1.9	<p>The consultations document was distributed to officers across Council and their responses have been included in the provisional draft response attached as Appendix 2.</p>

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>The response is required via an online form or by filling in a fixed PDF template. Therefore there is limited scope to raise issues outside of the scope of the consultation, such as highlighting the range of children and young people provision the Council makes.</p>
2.2	<p>The main focus of the document is to ensure effective alignment between the formal and informal educational activities supported by the DE. The proposals appear sensible to our children and young people support staff.</p>
2.3	<p>The proposals in the consultation have no direct impact on the services currently provided by Council. However, there may be implications as a result of changes to DE's approach to funding. For example, it is possible that changes in funding to local groups could create extra demand from those groups for support from Council. Additionally, the increased alignment and focus on educational issues may enable the Council to intervene in other areas.</p>
2.4	<p>With regard to funding the proposals state "Education and Skills Authority (ESA) will carry out a baseline audit of currently funded/supported provision to identify</p>

	gaps and potential for over provision to inform the development of the needs assessment.” And “Planning, funding and delivery of youth work will be based on the ESA composite (local and regional) assessment of need and will support requirements linked to the DE key priorities at local, sub-regional and regional level.” “DE will allocate the global youth work budget to ESA on the basis of a funding distribution mechanism, weighted according to disadvantage, which will determine a notional distribution amount for each District Council area. This funding mechanism will replace the existing population based Youth Assessment of Relative Need (ARNE) exercise used for the Education and Library Board’s (ELB), and the non-ARNE ELB and Youth Council NI (YCNI) allocations.”
2.5	It is important that any needs assessment does not penalise an area because it has other sources of funding or support available. For example, downgrading Belfast’s needs rating because the Council provides play services.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no resource implications attached to this report.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations implications attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to approve the draft BCC response to the consultation and raise any additional issues, relating to the consultation document, that they would like to be included.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline:	10 th December 2012 Reporting Officer: David Purchase

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 “Priorities for Youth.” DE. September 2012. Appendix 2 “Consultation: Draft Response DE Priorities for Youth.”	