

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE COMMITTEE

22 May 2008

Implementation of Youth Work Policy - Review
Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Summary

The Programme for Administration (PfA) commits to placing a youth worker in each of the twenty-nine associated school groups (a secondary school catchment area) in Highland. Following consultation with Members at Ward level, this report recommends changes to the implementation of the Youth Work Policy.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the January 2008 Education, Culture and Sport Committee, Members agreed that a hold be put on the recruitment of youth workers and a review be undertaken of the implementation of the Youth Work Policy. The review has emphasised the strength of local groups already providing support for young people. Across the Highlands there are groups running youth clubs and youth cafés; uniformed organisations; sports clubs with youth wings; and clubs providing a large number of social activities for young people. The review also revealed a strong view that Highland Council youth workers must not become desk bound, but must be regularly working face to face with young people. The recommendations of this report seek to acknowledge these points of view.
- 1.2 The Programme for Administration (PfA) commits to placing a youth worker in each of the twenty-nine associated school groups (a secondary school catchment area) in Highland. The current policy reflects this PfA commitment.

The actual distribution of youth work posts is based on a formula adopted by the Education, Culture and Sport Committee on 25 May 2006, 14 of the 29 posts have been appointed, 15 are currently held vacant pending this review. The formula allocated:

- **a 0.5 fte post in each ASG**
- **an additional half post for ASGs with large pupil numbers**
- **an additional half post for areas of deprivation**

The result was that four ASGs were allocated 1.5 fte posts: Wick, Lochaber, Tain, Aness. The majority of the rest were allocated 1 fte post, and some small rural ASGs a 0.5 fte post. Appendix 1 shows the distribution of posts including those currently vacant.

1.3 The policy adopted five priorities for youth work:

- **Support and development of achievement frameworks** – these processes reward young people for non school, non exam based activity, often involving volunteering and working in their community – examples include the Duke of Edinburgh award, the Youth Achievement award, XL clubs and the John Muir award
- **Interventions and targeted developments towards young people in need** – working with schools to identify and work with those young people for whom a positive destination to work or training would otherwise be unlikely. Youth work staff are seen as a key resource to assist the Scottish Government’s recently announced “16 Plus learning choices” initiative
- **Co-ordinating, integrating and developing local provision for all young people** – in an ever changing mix of statutory, voluntary and community based activity, to act as the stable, long term resource which can offer support and co-ordination of effort as well as a basic level of service
- **Support to partner organisations** – partners and Council provision can benefit from each other’s input, supporting the joint capacity to develop services and access funding
- **Engaging with young people and leading on giving them a voice in decisions that affect them** – to support pupil councils in schools, youth forums, the Highland Youth Voice and the Youth Convenor

These 5 priorities make a major contribution to the development of young people in the Highlands and provide a key focus for added value to the work of schools and other agencies.

It was agreed that the policy should be implemented over three financial years, beginning in 2005/6 and being completed in 2007/8. Some 15 posts were in place and the final 14 posts were in the process of being advertised when Members agreed to put the posts on hold and seek a review.

In implementing the Policy the Council is not seeking in any way to constrain existing voluntary youth work organisations but rather to work co-operatively at local level to enhance opportunities for young people.

2. The Current Review

- 2.1 It was agreed that officers should consult with Ward Members, through their business meetings. It has become clear that there is a view amongst some Members that the policy needs to allow for both youth development work as outlined above **and** the promotion of general youth activity, i.e. things for young people to do, through hands on youth activity. Whilst opportunities for sport and cultural activities are available and growing, this does not appeal to all young people, and activities are not always available at times when young people wish to be active. In other words, the consultation is suggesting continuing with the current policy direction, but with a greater emphasis on support for direct provision.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The Scottish Government has allocated additional funding for youth work as part of the Single Outcome Agreement. This money will be available on a permanent basis. It is proposed that this additional finance be allocated to ward level in order to create a pool of cash in each ward (£5,000) which would be available to support each ward's priorities for youth work activity as they emerge.
- 3.2 In addition, four wards were allocated an additional 0.5 fte posts by the initial formula, because they have large schools and are areas of disadvantage. It is further proposed that these wards could choose to use the additional allocation as a cash equivalent rather than a post, thus providing enhanced level of hands on youth activity delivered as seen appropriate in the ward.
- 3.3 The ward budget established through this mechanism could be delegated to the local ward managers to administer in consultation with Members. The process for allocation of funds could be through ward business meetings, involving local ECS staff to ensure clear sharing and understanding of local priorities.
- 3.4 This proposal to establish a ward budget for youth work is seen as providing a focused enhancement to current policy. It gives clear support to additional hands on activity through new work or financial support of existing organisations – whilst bolstering the PFA commitment to youth work.
- 3.5 It is suggested that the impact of this proposal is assessed as part of the regular PFA commitment reviews.

4. Recommendation

4.1 It is recommended that:

a) from the additional resources within the Education Culture and Sport Service, a budget of £5,000 is allocated to each Ward Manager, to be ring-fenced for youth work activity.

b) where, for reasons of deprivation and size, ASGs have an additional 0.5 fte allocation (Wick, Lochaber, Tain and Alness Wards), the decision on whether to use this resource for additional staffing or project work is left to Ward Managers in consultation with Ward Members and local ECS staff.

c) the PfA commitment to have a youth worker in each Associated School Group continues to be implemented.

d) this enhanced approach be reviewed to assess its impact and establish the "added value" provided through the use of the additional funding provided by the Scottish Government as part of the regular PfA commitment updates.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education Culture and Sport

Date: 13 May 2008

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Proposed Associated School Group Youth Worker Distribution

Appendix 1

School	In post	Currently vacant
Ardnamurchan High School	✓ (0.5 fte)	
Dingwall Academy	✓	
Dornoch Academy	✓ (0.5 fte)	
Fortrose Academy	✓	
Golspie High School	✓	
Invergordon Academy	✓	
Inverness High School	✓	
Kingussie High School	✓ (0.5 fte)	
Kinlochbervie High School	✓ (0.5 fte)	
Kinlochleven High School	✓	
Mallaig High School	✓ (0.5 fte)	
Nairn Academy	✓	
Portree High School	✓	
Thurso High School	✓	
Alness Academy	✓	0.5 fte
Lochaber High School	✓	0.5 fte
Wick High School	✓	0.5 fte
Charleston Academy		1.0 fte
Culloden Academy		1.0 fte
Farr High School		0.5 fte
Gairloch High School		0.5 fte
Glenurquhart High School		1.0 fte with Kilchuimen
Grantown Grammar		0.5 fte
Inverness Royal Academy		1.0 fte
Kilchuimen Academy		See Glenurquhart
Millburn Academy		1.0 fte
Plockton High School		0.5 fte
Tain Royal Academy		1.5 fte
Ullapool High School		0.5 fte