

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15th November 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director
Children & Young People

SUBJECT: Youth Opportunity & Youth Capital
Funds; Youth Bank update

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members of the progress of the Youth Bank in appropriately distributing the Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund.
- 1.2 To inform members of the government's decision to continue these funding streams to at least 2011.
- 1.3 To seek a decision on the recommendations below.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) This report is accepted and its contents noted.
- 2) The Board accept a presentation on the 15th November from the young people operating the Youth Bank about their work and achievements
- 3) The Board note the government's intention to continue these funding streams and resolve they should continue to be administered by the Youth Bank
- 4) The Board consider the appropriateness of other funding focussed on delivering positive activities for young people being channelled through the Youth Bank

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 In March 2006 the DfES announced the roll out of the Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund which had been described in the Youth Matters green paper published in July 2005. In Halton the combined fund totals £179 914pa for two years. The main purpose of the funds is to *"..give a voice and influence to young people, particularly disadvantaged young people, in relation to things to do and places to go and to convey a powerful message to young people that their needs and aspirations are important.."* DfES guidance notes p3.
- 3.2 In July 2006 the Executive Members Board adopted the follow statement;

'Halton is committed to the continuing development of the voice and influence of young people on services, youth activities, and the structures within which decisions about communities are made. As a part of this commitment the Borough welcomes the introduction of the Youth Opportunity & Youth Capital fund and intends to ring fence these monies so that young people can make the key decisions around which places to go and things to do they wish to fund and have developed. This new initiative will involve the development of a Halton YouthBank run for young people by young people. It will build on, and link into, the Boroughs recent success in supporting the introduction of the UK Youth Parliament, Borough Youth Forum Cabinet, and area based Youth Forums.'

- 3.3 The Borough Youth Cabinet recruited young people to the Youth Bank through a publicity campaign in the media, in all schools and by talking to groups of young people throughout the borough including in the more deprived areas. These young people went through a selection and training process assisted by their Youth Worker, Rob Warburton, and trained through Youth Banks UK. By September 2006 the Youth Bank was established and registered with Youth Banks UK as an accredited Youth Bank.
- 3.4 From September 2006 to October 2007 the Youth Bank have:
 - 3.4.1 Agreed criteria for the allocation of grants and commissioning of services, compiled a grant application pack for young people seeking funds, and developed a freepost Youth Bank postcard to distribute to young people on the streets so they too can access these funds.
 - 3.4.2 Recruited a further 24 young people onto the Youth Bank panel as decision makers. A year later **28** young people are still actively involved in grant making.
 - 3.4.3 Secured an additional £5,000 from Youth Bank UK for personal development.
 - 3.4.4 Received applications for grants from 48 groups of young people in the first six months. There were 131 young people involved in applying for the Youth Opportunity strand and 67 young people for the Youth Capital strand.
 - 3.4.5 Enabled 2007 young people to benefit from the Youth Opportunity grants awarded in the first six months, and 360 from the Youth Capital grants made.
 - 3.4.6 To date spent or committed **£283,489.34** as grants to young people through **89** separate applications with more applications being processed. Of these applications the Youth Bank estimate **65%** came from young people living in areas of deprivation and will benefit young people living in these areas.

- 3.4.7 To date seen **501** young people being involved in making applications to the youth bank on behalf of their organisations, their friends, or themselves.
- 3.4.8 Secured 'places to go and things to do' for **5,774** young people in Halton through these funds.
- 3.5 In setting the criteria for Halton Youthbank, the young people made the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes a priority for funding, and applicants had to demonstrate in their applications how they are, or will, meet at least 2 of the 5 outcomes.

Projects that have received funding are reflective of these and include Community Sports facilities to promote the 'Be Healthy' and 'Stay Safe' outcomes; Community Cafés to promote 'Economic Well Being'; School Youth Councils which encourage and enable young people to 'Make a Positive Contribution'; and a variety of smaller projects such as events; trips and access to learning opportunities which allow young people to 'Enjoy and Achieve.'

Data is gathered through site visits; reports from funded projects and presentations that groups give to the Youthbank Panel.

The young people on Youthbank are involved in the monitoring and the evaluation of funded projects.

- 3.6 Some examples of funded projects are;

- 3.6.1 **'C'**

'C' is an individual young man with disabilities. Youthbank helped 'C' by partially funding a new wheelchair for him. 'C' has since written to Youthbank to say 'thank you' and to say how the wheelchair has changed his life, allowing him to access more places; get involved in more things, and generally give him more independence and confidence.

- 3.6.2 **Canal Boat Adventure Project (Wheelchair Lift)**

The Canal Boat Adventure Project is a unique Canal Boat based Youth project based in Halton. Youthbank provided funding to allow them to have a Wheelchair Lift fitted to one of their boats so that young people with disabilities could access the boat and enjoy the same experiences that able bodied young people do.

- 3.6.3 **Kingsway Bike Project**

Youthbank was able to support this project and provide partial funding. The Kingsway Bike Project is encouraging young people to repair old bikes. It is in its early stages but is already engaging a number of young people, in a particularly deprived ward in Halton. The young people are gaining some excellent skills, and are now receiving bikes

from all over Halton. The project is also encouraging more young people to get involved in cycling.

3.6.4 Murdishaw Gym Project

Murdishaw is a particularly deprived area of Halton with high levels of alcohol and drug use, and anti-social behaviour. Some of the young people accessing the local youth centre wanted to start their own Gym, open to all young people. Youthbank has funded this project – both equipment and instructor, and young people are now regularly training in the Gym.

3.6.5 Ashley School - Anne Frank Project

Ashley School is a school in Halton for young people with disabilities. The School has an Anne Frank Committee and funding was provided for them to purchase a Bench in memory of Anne Frank. Youthbank in providing this funding, asked the young people to consider developing the project further, by making a DVD showing young people on the bench, reading excerpts from Anne Frank, and encouraging other young people to read about Anne Frank. This is something the YP from the school have taken on, and looks to be an excellent project.

3.6.6 Ashley School – ECO (Eco-Logical Awareness) Committee Transport DVD

As above, the school also has an ECO Committee. Youthbank has provided partial funding to enable the young people to make a DVD around transport and issues that young people with disabilities face in accessing public transport. This DVD is to be made available across the borough.

3.6.7 The Brindley Youth Theatre – Drama School

Youthbank was able to fund this group to hold a week long drama and theatre workshop which allowed young people to explore drama and consider how the Bridgwater Canal and it's boats could inspire them to produce effective drama.

3.6.8 Free 2 B Me

Youthbank provided funding for this group of young people with various disabilities. The funding paid for Cookery sessions; Sports sessions; a Cultural Awareness Workshop; a Trip to a Museum along with some additional experiences chosen by the young people themselves.

3.6.9 Ditton Youth Centre – Yoof Café

This funding paid for young people to attend a Food Hygiene Course and First Aid Course so that they could run a Healthy Eating “Yoof Café” in their Youth Centre and encourage other young people to eat healthily.

3.6.10 G-Space

G-Space is a group in Halton for young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender. This funding provided transport for them

to be able to access a safe group and to go on trips of their choice i.e. bowling.

3.6.11 **Weston Point Youth Club**

Funding paid for a 6 week course for young people to experience MC'ing. At the end of the course the young people were able to make their own CD.

3.6.12 **HITS**

Activity Residential for Young Carers.

3.7 There is a further **£46,338.66** remaining in the budget to be allocated by year end. There are applications totalling **£57,232.26** already being considered by the Youth Bank.

3.8 In terms of quality monitoring and financial regulation the following is done. The quality of work undertaken is measured through youth service quality assurance and health and safety risk analysis. The Youth Bank receive financial and outcome reports from the projects they have funded and are doing site visits to quality assess the outcomes promised within applications. Spend is authorised by the Youth Bank and then by the GM Connexions finance team. Each year the spend is checked and signed off by Halton's Chief Finance Officer for Government Office on behalf of the Borough.

3.9 The Government has confirmed in its recent Comprehensive Review that the **Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund will continue to be available in its present form and at its present level to all local authorities until 2011**. This development is in line with the 10 Year Youth Strategy "Aiming High for Young People" and the new PSA targets to be introduced in Autumn 2008 where local authorities will have a "number of young people involved in positive activities" target.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None at this time.

5.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

None.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

Until 2006 the usual process for decision making within council structures revolved around adults whether they be elected members, officers, or members of the public. Often funding streams are blended or matched to further affect their value and effectiveness. Although good practice dictated the involvement of young people in this decision

making process the practice is improving but patchy. The Youth Bank has been very successful in decision making and administrating these large funding streams due to their dedication and having the unique insight of being young people themselves. Recognising, continuing, and further developing this process fits into the Council's commitment to the involvement of young people in all aspects of council business and local governance

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The Youth Bank members have increased confidence and gained nationally accredited qualifications from the training they have undertaken. Young people writing bids and receiving grants have had their lives enhanced through the process of learning how to bid for money and the empowerment that involves, together with the skills developed in managing and negotiating the funding acquired. These skills increase "job readiness" and team work.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Many of the grants given will enhance the health of the young people involved including the 12 community sports projects funded and healthy eating community cafes for young people.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Many of the grants were to develop projects in areas experiencing high levels of youth anti-social behaviour. More young people have been engaged in positive activities through these projects. Community based projects like the Kingsway Bike Project have also been funded where adults and young people come together with similar interests.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

One of the criteria for evaluating funding requests was whether the grant would benefit young people in deprived areas and especially the three Neighbourhood Management Areas.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None at this time.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The criteria agreed has ensured the inclusion of all young people who wish to have a say on how and where this money is spent. It is envisaged that groups of young people that face special difficulties will be encouraged to bid to form a mini-YouthBank next year to ensure funding goes to young people who face similar difficulties or have similar life experiences as they do. The criteria agreed will also take into account disadvantage, deprivation, and gaps in other youth provision which have left young people with little to do in their neighbourhoods.

9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

That the grants are administered excluding young people. This is viewed as both less effective and would give poorer value for money.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

| Document | Place of Inspection | Contact Officer |
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| 'Youth Opportunity Fund & Youth Capital Fund Guidance Notes' | Youth Curriculum & Resource Centre. 107 Albert Rd Widnes, or at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk | Dave Williams Head of Youth Service |
| "Aiming High for Young People" – The 10 Year Youth Strategy | as above or www.hm-treasury.gov.uk | |