

DEVON YOUTH SERVICE (SOUTH HAMS) – UPDATE
Report of the Head of Child & Adult Protection

Recommendations: That the committee notes the update.

1. Devon Youth Service Restructure

Devon Youth Service restructuring came in to effect in mid August 2011. This has resulted in South Hams and Teignbridge forming the Southern Team, with our Area Youth Workers now covering two market towns rather than one.

The South Hams now has two Area Youth Workers: one covers Ivybridge and Kingsbridge and surrounding areas and the other covering Totnes and Dartmouth and surrounding areas. Both Area Youth workers are new to their respective areas, having been moved from other parts of Devon.

2. Staffing

Revenue is an ongoing issue with many of our sessions across the District being run with only 2 or 3 paid staff and supplemented by volunteers. Area Youth Workers are also spending a lot of time travelling between centres. One concern is that with progression routes for volunteers now limited and the work becoming increasingly demanding, we are beginning to lose volunteers. Where this is the case we are perilously close to having to review the safety of sessions.

We currently have no capacity to cover any staffing sickness and holiday and as a result of this we have had to close a number of sessions at short notice. This can impact on the young people we work with and the communities they live in.

3. Programme

Totnes and Dartmouth:

Totnes remains a vibrant place for young people to access. Young people are actively involved in the planning and often the delivery of these sessions. Pulse Youth Centre has a strong group of young volunteers who, having completed senior member training (an accredited qualification in volunteering), continue to attend monthly training sessions to further develop their volunteering skills. Many of these young people are still volunteering in their youth club over 3 nights a week.

Dartmouth has a strong commitment to outdoor education, with weekly outdoor education sessions running to compliment the open access youth work sessions that run twice a week. Dartmouth also has 2 Ten Tors teams currently training within the centre. The completion of lengthy electrical works in the Dartmouth centre means that the state of the art kitchen area can now be utilised for the development of life skills work with young people.

Ivybridge and Kingsbridge:

Numbers in the senior session at Ivybridge have dropped significantly; however, the outreach provision is addressing this issue. Successful projects targeted at the surrounding areas of Ivybridge continue to provide much needed support for young people in isolated communities.

Kingsbridge is a very busy centre which attracts many young people. The centre offers excellent music making facilities which works well alongside the open access programme. The centre also offers a specific session for young women. Out reach work in Kingsbridge is becoming regular and it is anticipated that this will further increase participation of young people within the Youth Centre.

Youth Leisure Nights

Youth leisure nights continue to create an alternative to drinking and anti-social behaviour for young people in South Hams. Although not without its problems, the partnership with Tone Leisure is still working to benefit young people. A meeting has been set up with Tone Leisure to address various issues.

4. Working with schools

Good links are made with local schools in all cases with the exception of Ivybridge. Historical issues with Ivybridge schools have made partnership working difficult but the Area Youth Worker for the town is pursuing a relationship with the school and is hopeful that the outcome will be positive for young people

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ELECTORAL DIVISION: ALL IN SOUTH HAMS

Local Government Act 1972:

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