

To: City Executive Board

Date: 12th. September 2012

Report of: Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee - Youth Ambition Panel

Title of Report: Implementation of the Council's Youth Ambition Programme

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present comments from the Scrutiny Panel on the report outlining the start up of the Youth Ambition Programme.

Key decision? No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Mills

Executive lead member: Councillor Curran

Policy Framework: Corporate plan and Budget

Recommendation(s): For the City Executive Board to say if it agrees or disagree with the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

That a clear outcome framework for this programme is set now. This should include long term aims and short term measures and targets towards those aims. This framework should provide for links to each investment made through both expectations for the individuals involved and overall.

Recommendation 2

That the steering arrangements for the project are concluded as a matter of urgency to allow for clear focus.

Recommendation 3

A minimum of a three year programme is set that has a mixture of sustainable provision and space for one off activities linked to clear need and outcomes. These principles should be passed into the consideration of all matched or grant funded activities that are commissioned.

Recommendation 4

To have robust and clear commissioning processes that ensure programme providers share our ambitions, have the skills to deliver and can demonstrate they have the pathways and trust of the communities and individuals we want them to work with.

Recommendation 5

To identify at the earliest opportunity isolated groups of young people outside of the target areas and bring forward suggestions of how support can be provided to these in a cost effective way.

Introduction

1. The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee set a Panel to consider progress within the Council's Youth Ambition Programme. The Panel consists of Councillors Mills, Rowley and Canning with Councillor Mills taking the lead.
2. The lines of inquiry given to the Panel by the scrutiny committee are to consider over time:
 - The direction and rationale for our spending plans.
 - Opportunities to increase investment through grants and partnership working.
 - What are our target groups, areas and outcomes?
 - What are our measures of success and how will we judge performance.
3. The Panel met to consider the start up report going to the City Executive Board on the 12th. September and offer the following recommendations.
4. The Panel would like to state that they see this as a good and positive body of work and look forward to seeing good quality outcomes for our communities. They further hope that if steered and managed effectively our success can be used as a lever to other funding partners for the future.

Conclusions and Recommendations**Outcome Measures**

5. The Panel recognised that tangible outcomes from programmes working with young people outside of the mainstream are likely to take time to both deliver and measure. This does not mean to say that we should not articulate what these are and in support of these set short term measures to ensure our investment is providing the

“right” support towards our aim. The report sets outcomes in terms of the current Corporate Plan which sets a broad ambition with a measure linked to Play Schemes. This is insufficient for this programme.

6. The Panel would like to see long term outcomes and short term measures and targets set now to ensure that investments are considered and made within a focused and clear framework that can be articulated to all providers. The Panel heard about the assessment process used within Positive Futures to track the progress of individuals and the overall success of schemes. This was extensive and would be difficult to fully implement within the funds available but gave a good starting point for discussion.
7. The Panel heard that the steering and management of the programme is still under consideration and ideas around a member and officer board supported by an advisory group were discussed. This is key to setting the framework, measures and drive of the programme and the Panel felt this should be agreed as a matter of urgency.

Recommendation 1

That a clear outcome framework for this programme is set now. This should include long term aims and short term measures and targets towards those aims. This framework should provide for links to each investment made through both expectations for the individuals involved and overall.

Recommendation 2

That the steering arrangements for the project are concluded as a matter of urgency to allow for clear focus.

Mapping

8. It was clear to the Panel that the mapping is incomplete and officers outlined that more work was planned to ensure that the Council understood what was already provided in an area, the success of this within our target groups and what “gaps” needed to be bridged. This is essential work in putting together a programme and deciding how best to deliver.
9. The approach to provision linked to this programme needs to be carefully considered. We need to avoid short-termism, encourage good partnership working and win and maintain the trust of the communities and individuals we are working with. The Panel understood the fickle nature of grant funding for much of this type of work and therefore the need for a degree of flexibility but also wanted to see some sustainability in our approach so that communities can rely on an on-going level of provision.

10. The Panel wanted to see a 3-5 year programme that provided for a clear baseline of provision in areas with “one off” programmes or events clearly labelled as that from the outset and linked to a defined need and set of outcomes.

Recommendation 3

A minimum of a three year programme is set that has a mixture of sustainable provision and space for one off activities linked to clear need and outcomes. These principles should be passed into the consideration of all matched or grant funded activities that are commissioned.

Partnership and commissioning

11. The Panel discussed who our delivery partners might be and the need to ensure value for money within commissioning. Partners need to have the skills to deliver on the ground, have a focus and culture that matches our programme aims and be able to engage and have pathways into the communities we are focusing on. Partners should be viewed and sourced as supporters as well as providers potentially providing pathways through which to refer young people into education, training, work and mentoring.
12. Setting or aims targets and ambitions and understanding what is needed through mapping have already been discussed but are essential in commissioning activities and partners. The Panel would like to see a clear and robust process in this area to protect the Councils ambitions, reputation and deliver value for money.

Recommendation 4

To have robust and clear commissioning processes that ensure programme providers share our ambitions, have the skills to deliver and can demonstrate they have the pathways and trust of the communities and individuals we want them to work with.

Deprivation outside of target areas

13. The Panel understood the need for focus and the “urgency” of issues within some of our deprived communities. The report however does not recognise that deprivation does not always relate to geography and there will be young people outside of our target areas that are in need of our support.
14. The mapping exercise will be City wide and should identify these young people. The Panel would like support provided to these groups if at all possible and would like those steering and managing the programme to bring forward suggestions of how this can be achieved in a cost effective way.

Recommendation 5

To identify at the earliest opportunity isolated groups of young people outside of the target areas and bring forward suggestions of how support can be provided to these in a cost effective way.

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**List of background papers: City Executive Report 20th. September 2012 –
Implementation of the Council's Youth Ambition Programme
Version number: 1**

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