

Youth Matters: Next Steps Implications for Island Services - An Initial View

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Something to do, somewhere to go, someone to talk to...

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of developing a joint strategy for the Youth Matters agenda with neighbour Local Authorities and South Central Connexions, this paper attempts to provide a current operational view and define possible future options at a service level. It is an initial view of Youth Matters implications for Island services, taking into account the Joint Area Review (JAR) and the Youth Service Enhanced Ofsted Inspection outcomes and planned developments within the Isle of Wight Children and Young People's Plan 2006 to 2009.

We must view our services for 'youth' through a different lens and consider what outcomes we want for our young people. There is a need to continue the shift from acute to preventative services and to reinforce the desire to be innovative and creative about building a package round individual young people. This is about Youth Support Development and it is our chance, a golden opportunity, to really embed joint working practices.

'Youth work skills will be central to engaging with young people, to the personal, emotional and social development of young people, and to ensure that young people's voices are heard in shaping both the demand and supply sides of provision. Over recent years the Transforming Youth Work Agenda has strengthened the contribution youth work can make. The skills of the Connexions workforce will be essential in providing expertise in a range of areas including delivering IAG and targeted support.' (Youth Matters – the next steps p8.24)

It is about not being precious but offering to give before asking to take and about how we can share. It is not about this service or that service, 'Education' or 'Connexions' or the 'Youth Service' but it is about what we do together to move towards delivering a more integrated service for all young people on the Isle of Wight.

It is also about recognising and building upon the excellent work that is already being delivered by individual services. There is the need for strong, robust frameworks to ensure the ongoing and sustainable delivery of high quality, responsive services. These frameworks must encompass the ongoing provision of professional training, support, supervision and management of all the processes necessary for innovative but safe work with young people. This will include ensuring that successful approaches, methods and the skills inherent in these are sustained.

Voluntary and community based organisations similarly have a crucial part to play in the success of the Youth Matters agenda on the Isle of Wight. The Children and Young People's Trust, including the Youth Service and Connexions, has taken seriously its responsibility to engage with

voluntary agencies working with young people – through providing networking opportunities, grants, training, information and support. A central objective of Youth Matters on the Island should be to build on this firm foundation to support the development of a strong, vibrant and influential voluntary and community sector (VCS) that has the desire and the increasing ability to improve the quality of young people's lives.

A key strength of our approach to date, and one that we would do well to take into the future, is that of thinking beyond the immediate age silos to which funding, legislation and guidance would, all too often, have us retreat. There is no better example of this than the nationally recognised development of Extended Schools on the Island. This projects partnership with Family Learning has further enhanced the approach, recognising that young people do not exist in a vacuum but live, grow and develop as part of a community.

By working together the VCS, Youth Service, Connexions, Extended Schools, the Children's Fund and other partners have already had a significant influence for good on services to young people. Youth Matters gives us the opportunity to create a strategy to ensure we develop our working relationship to the next stage.

2. ACHIEVING THE VISION

Services on the Isle of Wight are determined to make the vision described above a reality. This vision is one of the process through which Youth Matters could transform the life of every young person on the Isle of Wight.

We have, with the help of well-informed consultants (otherwise known as the JAR Inspectors) identified key gaps in service provision. Our Youth Service has also been the focus of a similarly helpful process, commonly known as Ofsted.

The recent Ofsted Inspection of the Youth Service found 'the Isle of Wight has a good youth service that provides good value for money'. It provides 'a broad range of opportunities which enable young people to learn new skills and achieve well. Contact and participation rates are high, with significant seasonal increases during the holiday season.'

The Youth Service Enhanced Ofsted Inspection (May 2006) not only contributed to the Joint Area Review but, in its own report, recommended we:

- Develop the role of detached work to take better account of seasonal variations that affect delivery adversely.
- Improve the use of needs analysis and local mapping to better inform generic youth work practice.
- Improve aspects of performance management at strategic level.
- Clarify the structural positioning of the Youth Service within the Council structure.

In addition Ofsted identified that formal accredited learning is offered through a broad adventure curriculum and some project work but is under developed in generic youth work. This has now been addressed through subscription to AQA (The Assessment and Qualification Alliance).

The Ofsted report on the Youth Service could, equally, apply to Connexions. Despite achieving one of the lowest 'unknown' figures in the country in the recent national activity survey (0.12% validated) and consistently the lowest local authority 16 – 18 year old NEET figure (Hampshire 7.14%, Isle of Wight 5.92%, Portsmouth 10.27%, Southampton 11.00 % - MI 31st October, 2006), there is much that remains to be done.

Our Extended Schools provision, and that of partners in the CVS sector, is equally well regarded and contributed significantly to the successful components of our recent JAR – especially, ‘Make a Positive Contribution’.

The services we describe are not failing but good. It could be argued that the shift from good to outstanding is even more challenging than moving from service provision that is failing to that which is adequate. We will only achieve the lasting and positive change for young people that we are seeking, from the impressive foundation already in place, if we place them at the centre of our policies and services. In some instances this may mean equipping them to play a part in the delivery of services and the design of provision. It will also mean giving them genuine purchasing power – not just empowering and supporting them to make decisions but giving them the means by which to implement these.

The radical reform of universal services, the removal of barriers that young people with disabilities can face, the creation of affordable transport options all feature in the pages that follow but thematic to the development of our Children and Young Person’s Trust is genuine consultation of young people. On the Isle of Wight, this essential research will also usually be led by young people...

3. THE CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Youth Matters, being based on a comprehensive consultation process, offers a great default framework for development. It provides excellent prompts and encourages sound methodology. The Isle of Wight is at the forefront of national good practice in the participation of young people, however, and would never take the lazy option of assuming that their needs can be easily categorised or remain static. The Island’s professionals already work hand in hand with our young people in the consultation process and this will continue, breaking new ground in consultation on implementation and impact.

A good example of a project through which this strand of our work has been further developed appears over the page. There is a sense in which this example is multi-layered – while the specific project is new, the setting is that of the Big Day Out, which was a new project just a few years ago but is now regionally recognised and firmly embedded good practice. We are working hard to find the resources to make the excellent new project work created this year a sustainable and thematic ongoing consultation activity.

'Reach out with Research Group'

Background

Michelle Vaughan (Educational Psychologist) and Terri Baker (Children & Young People Participation Adviser) planned that a group of young people should have the opportunity to undertake comprehensive training as researchers. The target of their research was to be service provision for young people on the Isle of Wight. The proposed timescale would see their readiness to undertake extensive research with young people visiting the 'Big Day Out' on 8th October 2006 at Ventnor Botanical Gardens, at which up to 5000 visitors were expected.

Introducing the Project

All young people on the Connexions Young People's Sub Committee were sent packs with information about the project, a list of the training dates that had been set, venues and consent forms. A deadline for return of consent forms was given and a first planning meeting scheduled. Michelle, Chris (Michelle's PA) and Rachel Bunting (Connexions Young People's Worker) got together to plan how we would conduct the sessions and what equipment might be required.

Planning the Project

The potential young researchers were briefed about the project and what would be expected of them should they commit to participating in it. Their ideas were gathered by use of a flipchart but there was also a suggestion box in case they preferred to record their comments that way. All participants were given research diaries.

The group went through the 42 articles in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and discussed which ones were the most relevant to them. They completed exercises focusing upon being ethical, systematic and sceptical – all pertinent issues to when producing a questionnaire or survey. They also named themselves the 'Reach out with Research Group'.

The group designed the format of how the young people were going to be asked the questions. They decided to have a short tick box survey and a longer interview questionnaire, all participants being able to do one, the other or both.

Piloting the Project

The young researchers attended a session at the Isobel Centre, a voluntary youth centre on Pan Estate. Here they trialled the questionnaire on the young people attending the session. They used both the survey questionnaire and the interview questionnaire and the young researchers were filmed when asking questions. The young people were asked to comment on how they thought the questionnaires were written and whether they understood the questions fully.

The following week the researchers watched themselves on video and helped each other to recognise their strengths and work to improve other areas of their research techniques. They also looked at the answers that had been given and fine tuned questions, taking into account the comments that had been made.

Big Day Out – 8th October, 2006

The group discussed where they would be best sited at the event and it was decided that the survey should be carried out around the event, with the interviews taking place in a tent to avoid young people being embarrassed or overheard. 85 surveys were carried out and 15 interviews conducted at the event. In order to achieve an appropriately balanced sample, the young researchers have subsequently undertaken 10 surveys and 5 interviews with students at St George's School, Thompson House and the Clatterford Centre. They are about to embark upon a detailed analysis of the answers received.

The Way Forward

We will collate and present the information obtained to inform service delivery over the next 12 months, at all times keeping the 'Reach out with Research Group' informed of the use and impact of their work.

Our approach to ongoing consultation is illustrated by the central role afforded young people in the development of programmes of activity in youth centres and with Youth Service projects. Each centre has a management committee, on which 50% of the places are reserved for young people. The management committees are also responsible for the financial management of centre funds and the general running of the centre. The inclusive, consultative planning involved helps ensure that the Youth Service curriculum is very broad and covers all aspects of a young person's life – activities include sporting, cultural, the arts, educational and socialising in places which give a warm, safe and friendly environment with people to listen.

Local feedback from previous consultations mirrors that recorded in 'Youth Matters: Next Steps' – that 'Young people put forward many suggestions for activities in their area but some simply wanted somewhere to 'hang out' where they would not be perceived as causing trouble.' While it is, understandably, unacceptable for us to provide places where under aged people can go to smoke and drink, we have recognised good practice in street youth work.

We will, over the next 12 months, endeavour to secure funding and strategic support to develop existing good practice in street youth work both geographically and in terms of availability. This would have the benefits of helping young people to stay safe, encouraging them increasingly to be healthy and could, by their voluntary engagement, lead to them greater involvement in their communities – making a positive contribution and with an increased likelihood of enjoying and achieving.

To grow in our responsiveness, ambition and innovation will require additional resource but additional will not always mean extra. In many cases, we will simply need to work more coherently. The travel towards this efficient use of resources has been significant over recent years, especially in the relationship between the Youth Service and Connexions, which has embraced joint training, innovative initiatives like equipping young people to become interviewers on selection panels, and collaborative work to address the NEET group. They have not developed a monopoly and one of the most innovative and best targeted of recent collaborations has been between Extended Schools and the Youth Service, the 'Active 8's Summer Transition Programme 2006'.

Both the Youth Service and Connexions have developed mutually supportive and effective relationships with the VCS. Connexions support for Wight Wheels has, ultimately, benefited their clients greatly – as has its relationship with the Hampton Trust, making feasible the development of the latter's 'Interact ED' mentoring programme. The Youth Service has, in some cases, gone one step further – effectively planting voluntary sector organisations like MY-I, the Mobile Youth Initiative, from which we have the Fathers First Project working with young parents, in particular teenage fathers, to help them understand and come to terms with their role and responsibilities as parents. The project works in partnership with the Teenage Pregnancy Board and complements the development of provision being achieved by Connexions, Teenage Pregnancy and a major local training provider – a development itself based upon a consultative model focusing upon young people.

Good practice is already established – the exciting and engaging 'Soapbox Derby' was created and led by voluntary sector partners. While a collaboration between Connexions and the Youth and Community Service has maintained and developed one of the most innovative consultation and communication exercises in the country ('Wight 2B Heard'), this project, too, was the brainchild of a VCS organisation – the Isle of Wight Youth Trust.

These relationships with the voluntary and community sector are echoed by Extended Schools, which has also developed a highly inclusive model of service delivery. However, it has been the appointment of a Development Officer (funded through the Children's Fund programme), with a specific remit of developing the capacity of the voluntary and community sector within the Children and Young People's Trust, that has begun the shift from an effective (though occasionally

disjointed) approach to one of specialist professionalism, which will ultimately create an efficiency across all sectors. Representing the VCS on the Trust's board was highlighted in the recent Isle of Wight JAR as evidencing the local authority's commitment to developing the relationship with this sector.

At present three voluntary organisations are commissioned by the Isle of Wight Council to provide services to children and young people. Of these three organisations, two fall within the Youth Matters remit of young people, Isle of Wight Youth Trust and Spurgeons Young Carers. Increasingly Government is looking to the key role the VCS can play in the planning and delivery of a wide range of public services. It is recognised that the sector has a unique contribution to make in terms of achieving positive outcomes for young people – particularly recognising the work of specialist groups, often small and working with very marginalised young people. Good practice has been developed in a number of areas of the country in terms of capacity building models of commissioning, which could be implemented on the Isle of Wight to develop the sector and ensure its sustainability.

Perceived obstacles to better engagement between the voluntary and community sector and the Youth Matters agenda/Children and Young People's Trust include:

- Lack of time
- Budget/resource constraints
- Not a homogeneous group – difficult to have a unified voice
- Lack of clarity around roles of key players supporting VCS youth sector (Council of Combined Clubs/Children, Young People and Families Network)
- Needing more support in terms of understanding ECM, CAF, Information sharing Index and how it can be implemented across VCS.
- Lack of long term funding, makes projects unsustainable.¹

Youth Matters and the developing Children and Young People's Trust provides the opportunity to develop a strategy for involving the VCS, focussing on improved working relationships between VCS and the statutory sector, to overcome the barriers to better engagement and in providing quality services to young people in their communities.

There is an opportunity to develop an effective independent infrastructure body for the VCS, mirroring that of the Children and Young People's Trust (i.e. to support and represent voluntary organisations working with 0 -19 year olds). This would build on the firm foundations developed by the combined council of youth services, Connexions support for the VCS and the Children, Young People and Families Network. It would draw together existing good practice and make best use of resources and knowledge and experience.

The key areas of development for infrastructure body would be:

- INFRASTRUCTURE/CAPACITY BUILDING
- COMMUNICATION
- NETWORKING
- PROMOTING BEST PRACTICE
- REPRESENTATION
- VOLUNTEERING

¹ Data drawn from initial mapping exercise conducted by Kathy Marriott, Children and Young People's Trust Development Officer (Voluntary and Community Sector). Developed through the use of existing database held at the council and questionnaires sent to VCS.

²Research conducted with members of the Children, Young People and Families Network. Sept. 2006.

We will, over the next 12 months, set in place a comprehensive programme for developing the contribution of the voluntary and community sector to the aims and objectives of the Children and Young People’s Trust and Youth Matters agendas.

Area of Work	Making it happen
<p>Infrastructure/Capacity building/Communication.</p> <p>Ensure the support necessary to develop and maintain the VCS working with children, young people and families</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enable those groups and individuals who work with children, young people and families to access relevant information, guidance and/or advice, and resources through the dissemination of good quality electronic and hard copy information as well providing a phone support and signposting service on organisational development and good practice; 2. Build upon the strengths of Combined Council Youth Service newsletters/CYP & F network updates to develop a website (linked to C&YP Trust) to increase the availability of information for individuals/communities around work with C, YP and Families particularly within rural settings; 3. Enable voluntary and community organisations to have access to high quality workforce development programmes/opportunities (including support for young people wishing to become young leaders), their volunteers and their paid staff; 4. Seek additional resources to increase the capacity of the sector to undertake development work to expand and enhance the services offered in the voluntary and community sector; 5. Seek to develop a capacity building model of commissioning within the CYP Trust; 6. Support Organisations/Groups in the development and implementation of Assured Quality in Youth Projects (AQYP) standards to support the delivery of high quality work, whilst providing opportunities to share best practice; 7. Supporting organisations in the development of safeguarding policy and practice through advice and training; 8. Raising awareness of the NCVYS/NSPCC safeguarding standards for voluntary and community organisations; 9. Work with the Children and Young People’s Trust/LSCB to ensure that groups can access CRB checks for those individuals who work with children and young people.
<p>Representation</p> <p>To enable the VCS working with children, young people and families to have a voice and influence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate and support consultation processes that are inclusive and meaningful; 2. Exploring and establishing mechanisms for children and young people from voluntary organisations to play an active role in decision making for the sector as a whole and for the voice of young people from the Isle of Wight to be heard; 3. Facilitate members participation in partnerships and other multi agency structures; 4. Being the voice of the sector, developing effective two way information structures to facilitate meaningful consultation processes with a range of agencies including the local authorities, community development bodies and governmental departments; 5. Promote and lobby for the common and diverse interests of the sector; 6. Ensure that members are aware of the developments around the compact (and Children’s Code of practice) and monitor and report on its effectiveness.

<p>Networking</p> <p>To support, develop and promote collaboration and networking</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and facilitate effective collaboration and joint working; 2. Build upon existing network structures to promote and develop collaborative working; 3. Bring together interest groups to share good practice and information sharing for mutual support.
<p>Promoting best practice</p> <p>To strategically build and enhance internal policy and best practice</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Broadening and increasing the membership base to include representatives from a wide range of community based organisations engaged in working with children, young people and families; 2. Developing the skills of young people who wish to participate in the decision making structures of VCS for children and young people and facilitating their involvement; 3. Undertake and disseminate research around the needs and interests of the sector; 4. Lead the development of sector strategy and high quality performance; 5. Monitoring and participating in the development of and implementation of the governments infrastructure strategy at Local and Regional level; 6. Building alliances at Local, Regional and National level to en-sure better co-ordination and membership services.
<p>Volunteering</p> <p>To develop volunteering opportunities and accredited training for young people and adults.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement a volunteering strategy in line with Russell Commission proposals; 2. Lead the development of a volunteer bureau for opportunities to work in VCS with children and young people.

It should be clear that we recognise that complacency is not an option. Alongside radical developments in the engagement of the voluntary and community sector, we are making great strides towards youth democracy through our Youth Council, we enjoy an engaging, innovative and highly regarded Youth & Community Service (OfSTED 2006), we have a Connexions Service daring to do things differently to the benefit of Island young people – including the appointment of a Children & Young People Participation Adviser, and we must not forget we have a nationally recognised Extended Schools Initiative. The next consultation that will be generated by them will, again, seek to address that difficult crossover period – both between services and, in this instance, in physical time – i.e. the needs of the young person in that difficult late afternoon/twilight time.

We will, over the next 9 months, engage in a significant piece of action research that aims to unpick the issues of childcare provision for middle school aged children and above.

After School Provision: Action Research Proposal

What?

A one term, 12 week, trial of drop-in after school provision running from 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m. three days a week, open to all middle school aged children attending Ryde Middle Schools or living in the Ryde area.

Why?

Childcare provision has developed rapidly over the past five years driven nationally by many Government initiatives and locally by the demand from communities. On the Island this development has been supported by funding from Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative and Children's Centres as well as other sources. The Island now has a good network of provision for the primary age and below.

The issue of childcare for the middle school age children and above is more complicated. Some of these young people access places in primary school after school clubs or take up places at private providers. Some access after school clubs but these tend to be interest specific, leader dependent, short term in delivery (termly or finish before 5.00 p.m.) and subject to cancellation with little notice. In response to this current climate, it is proposed to run a trial of an alternative type of after school provision for older children (9yrs +). The purpose of this will be to gauge demand for this type of provision and consult with the young people attending over the design and shape of this provision.

Where?

Ryde is the largest town on the Island with over 22,000 inhabitants. Its three middle schools (Mayfield, Swanmore and Bishop Lovett) accommodate over 1100 young people in school years 5 – 8. The close proximity of all three middle schools to each other and the central location of the proposed venue make it ideally placed for such a trial. It is proposed to use the Ryde Youth and Community building at the top of the High Street, corner of Well Street, to run this trial. This will facilitate the building of further relationships between young people and the Youth & Community Service.

How?

This provision is proposed to be for young people aged 9yrs plus and, as such, need not be OfSTED registered. It will, however, follow the guidelines issued by OfSTED and will comply with all Children's Services policies on child protection (including Criminal Records Bureau checks on all staff used). It is envisaged the facility will run with one lead member of staff and 3 sessional workers; all will have experience and skills with working with this age group. It is anticipated that, as this is a trial, these will be made up of existing employees (Teaching Assistants, LSAs, Youth Workers) working on additional hours/secondments.

These drop-in sessions will operate between 3.00 – 6.00 p.m. for three days a week and no places will be guaranteed or pre-booked. It will be a first come first served policy, with only young people who have a parental consent form completed before hand, given spaces. All middle schools will be given information and registration forms to send home with young people the term before and during the trial.

Activities on offer could include: quiet area for home work and the use of computers, music rehearsal space, sports hall space, arts & crafts activities, coffee bar and social space

Costs include staff, venue, activities, marketing and promotion - £7,000.

It is, quite rightly, an expectation of national guidance, underpinned by legislation, that children and young people will influence the strategic direction and priorities of the Children's and Young Persons' Trust and the design, delivery and evaluation of services. Their participation and involvement will also be advantageous to our schools and partner organisations.

As part of the development of the Children's and Young Persons' Trust, the Central (ex-Medina) Cluster identified the need to map the current level of Participation and Consultation by the young people within Island organisations.

We will, over the next 9 months, introduce and employ the nationally recognised 'Hear by Right' Mapping and Planning tool to obtain feedback from all organisations on the Island working with young people from 4 -19 years of age. The results of this audit will inform the Participation Strategy which will be completed in draft by May 2007.

4. EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE: THINGS TO DO AND PLACES TO GO

The Isle of Wight is a leader in the development of its Youth Council and role of the Youth MP. Ofsted said 'The Isle of Wight Youth Council, developed and supported by the Youth Service, is a strongly representative campaigning group with an impressive record for promoting the issues for young people. Connexions also has a highly effective Young People's Sub Committee, which complements the politically attuned Youth Council, by its inclusive, activities based projects like 'Make a Difference Day' and function as a focus group – for example, providing a consultative testbed to facilitate fine tuning of the Island's 'Learner Entitlement'.

While Connexions employs 2 Young People's Workers (young people helping to engage other young people in accessing and shaping services) and an Apprentice, Youth Work Assistants already help to run junior youth clubs and serve on Youth Centre Management Committees.

Connexions and the Youth Service, in partnership, are now the leads in the highly effective and rated Wight 2B Heard Annual Conference for young people. This Conference gives young people the opportunity to meet with and discuss with the Island's decision makers issues that affect them. This Conference, together with the Youth Council, was a major influence in the introduction of the 50p bus fare for young people.

Children and young people who do not normally get involved in 'committee' activities should be central in establishing the criteria for the allocation of Youth Capital and Youth Opportunity Funds, within the boundaries set by the DfES, and in the fair and effective distribution of these funds.

We will, over the next 6 months, establish a young people led process (designed by young people) for the distribution of Youth Capital and Youth Opportunity Funds.

Plan for Establishing Youth Capital and Youth Opportunities Funds

Project managed by the Youth Service, with support from Connexions, the following meetings have been put in place in order to provide a facilitative framework within which young people can develop a process for distributing funds to causes that fit the five outcomes and are high on their list of priorities for the Isle of Wight.

4.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. Wednesday, 15th November, 2006 - Orientation Meeting for Young People. At this meeting, we propose following the programme below:

- Introductions: How to Spend a £99 Note
- Youth Opportunities Fund & Youth Capital Fund: The Basics
- Criteria for Success: Who Makes the Rules...?
- Getting the Message Out
- Work Plan for Professionals

4.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. Wednesday, 22nd November, 2006 - Process Meeting for Young People 1. At this meeting, we propose following the format below:

- Introductions: From Jamboree to Graffiti Wall
- Refresher: The Journey So Far
- Putting a Process in Place

A professionals meeting will be scheduled before 5th December, 2006 to assist services in collaborating to provide young people with the support they need in order to bring their plans to fruition.

4.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. Tuesday, 5th December, 2006 - Process Meeting for Young People 2. At this meeting, we will have an input from Sarah Bellairs, Development Officer of YouthBank UK (Please see Appendix 1 . We also hope to consolidate and agree the processes for distributing the YOF and YCF funding and to agree a pattern of meetings from this point. It may well be that, by necessity, the process for distribution of funding for 2006/07 is different to that planned for 2007/08.

4.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. Tuesday, 16th January, 2007 - Provisional Business Meeting for Young People. Provisional because, by this stage, the young people may have already put in place other ways of working. This is simply a date that acknowledges the need for ongoing work to ensure the fair and effective distribution of funds and upon which both George and Andrew are available to provide support as needed.

Meetings are scheduled after 4.00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at the specific request of the young people who attended the introductory meeting. At the suggestion of these young people, on each of the dates above light refreshments will be served from 4.00 p.m. as it is anticipated that a number of those attending will have come directly from school or training.

5. YOUNG PEOPLE AS CITIZENS: MAKING A CONTRIBUTION

Young people are often accused of not taking up voluntary activity within their communities, a perception that is far from the truth. Young people put in many hours of voluntary work through a wide variety activities – as Isle of Wight Youth Councillors, School Councillors, Youth Work Assistants helping to run junior youth clubs, serving on Youth Centre Management Committees, in a range of activities generated by the Connexions Young People's Subcommittee, and many other ways too numerous to list here. Many uniformed voluntary youth organisations, as part of their programme of activity, undertake work in their communities. Young people are to be found more commonly than popular mythology would have us believe in the ranks of volunteers in the 90 or so voluntary and community sector organisations working with young people on the Isle of Wight – as well as the many additional groups, which focus upon other priorities like the environment.

Young people currently make a huge contribution to the Island's community by volunteering in a variety of ways. It is important to note that almost all engagement with the Youth Service and Connexions is on a voluntary basis. Such activities are increasingly well captured and recorded.

Young people are able to have their contribution and participation accredited by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which provides three levels of accreditation – Bronze, Silver and Gold. Young people can achieve one, two or all three levels between the ages of 14 and 25 years. The Youth Service is currently developing a scheme of formal accreditation through the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), which can cover activities from making a cup of tea to making a complicated journey.

Youth Arts Awards are also being developed for those young people involved in music and film making. Sports qualifications can also be achieved through the National Governing Bodies such as the British Canoe Union (BCU), the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) or Sports Leader Awards including Basic Expedition Leader through the Sports Council. Other qualifications such as First Aid and Food Hygiene are also available to be gained. In addition 'recorded outcomes' of individual achievement can be made – these refer to activities where a young person undertakes and can recognize growth and learning, which is not part of a formal qualification, like positive behavior change. The Youth Service, through Resourcing Excellent Youth Services, has targets set by the DfES for both Accredited and Recorded Outcomes.

Millennium Volunteers, facilitated by a Connexions VCS partnership, provides an even more accessible recording mechanism. Furthermore, Millennium Volunteers can also use their hours towards their Duke of Edinburgh's Award, for which the Youth Service acts as the Licence Holder upon behalf of the Isle of Wight Council as the Operating Authority.

An example of young volunteers influencing service delivery can be seen in the Youth Service project, 'Streets Ahead'. Here young people have been supported to make a DVD/video, 'Dr Ug's Experiments', which is a drugs education film for young people. It has also been viewed by many professionals involved in the delivery of services to young people. A second project 'Time Line' is currently in the making, which depicts 2000 years of Island history.

Of course, a key contribution that young people can make is through a very specific form of voluntary work – that is, becoming a peer mentor. The APAUSE project, which equips young people on the Isle of Wight to make informed decisions about their health, including relationships and choices about sexual activity, has been led by Teenage Pregnancy Unit with support from Connexions. It is, in part, responsible for rates of conception amongst teenagers that place the Isle of Wight amongst the most rapidly improving areas in the South East.

We will, over the next 12 months, endeavour to achieve sustainability for APAUSE by establishing the links between teenage pregnancy and school performance and encouraging “buy in” from Island High Schools.

Connexions has, upon behalf of the local authority inspectorate, recently mapped all education based mentoring activity that takes place with High School age range students and above. Academic mentoring and peer mentoring are already well developed in some institutions and others recognise the benefits of these approaches.

We will, over the next 12 months, work with the local authority inspectorate and Young Chamber to further develop mentoring activity with, by and for young people on the Island. We will achieve the extensive dissemination of good practice and provide a proactive conduit for additional funding, sourced from outside of the local authority, to extend this activity.

Another critically important application of mentoring is its use to support those who have experienced bullying. Partnership working on this theme between the Youth & Community Service, Connexions, Safer Communities, Healthy Schools and the Education Welfare Service has been inspired by 'Wight 2B Heard', a project jointly led by Connexions and the Youth & Community Service. So far, this has created an effective lobby, led to initiation of wider training in 'Protective Behaviours' and support for High Schools to effectively communicate the work they are undertaking to address bullying.

We will, over the next 12 months, endeavour to establish a clearer relationship between the successful Connexions, Extended Schools, VCS and Youth Service provision that exists on the Isle of Wight and the 14 – 19 strategy. Each of our services will, through existing meeting structures and our relationships with learning providers, continually reinforce the relationship between educational attainment, inclusion and engagement – majoring on issues like citizenship, information, advice and guidance, teenage pregnancy, offending and bullying.

6. SUPPORTING CHOICES: INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

'Youth Matters: Next Steps' presents clear expectations for the minimum information, advice and guidance that young people and their parents/carers should receive. Key to these expectations, as highlighted in 'The Specification for Services Funded through the Connexions Grant 2006 – 2008' (DfES 2006), is the role of the Connexions Personal Adviser. This is critically important, and an

extremely high a priority on the Isle of Wight. The background information to which we refer appears as Appendix 2.

Unlike many areas of the country, Connexions South Central, particularly the Isle of Wight Area, has resisted the dilution of IAG skills. In fact, not only do we retain a very high proportion of Personal Advisers – Careers Guidance but every one of our Personal Advisers – Personal Development is also qualified to Level 4 in Guidance or currently undertaking in this qualification.

Integration into schools is second to none, with a fully developed Connexions Centre in each of the High Schools and The Isle of Wight College and one planned in St George's School. While regular management observations of practice, recorded using the 'Key Steps' model, and similar numbers of peer observations maintain quality of one-to-one interaction, a flat management structure and extremely efficient running of the Isle of Wight as a cost centre helps ensure we have the highest Year 11 penetration rates in the country.

We will, over the next 9 months, as well as completely fulfilling our statutory obligations to Statemented students in Year 9, establish an ambitious pilot in Cowes High School and Medina High School whereby we will provide one-to-one guidance for all Year 9 students considering vocational options in Year 10, too, in order to inform their choice and help maximise retention. If this proves successful, we will seek to resource the roll-out of this initiative to all High Schools.

A refined and respected partnership agreement process is in place between Connexions and 14+ educational establishments on the Isle of Wight. Helpful ancillary agreements exist between Connexions and Education Welfare Service and between Connexions and Looked After Children 16+ Team.

Connexions also has three staff with a university qualification in Careers Education, who work with local schools and the LEA Inspectorate in order to achieve greater economies of scale and create a collaborative approach to curriculum development. For example, one of the staff from the Isle of Wight attending the recent regional Gateway Event on Specialised Diplomas was the Connexions Team Leader – Education.

Support for parents is also well developed. Connexions enjoys a very high penetration rate for parental involvement in one-to-one interviews. Meanwhile, a successful collaboration with the NextStep guidance service for adults means that parents, whose career thinking is often triggered by the decisions that their children may be making, can be simultaneously supported in planning their futures.

Superb labour market knowledge and proactive developments in provision for the hardest to help clients – led by Connexions, in collaboration with YOT, Teenage Pregnancy Unit and a major local provider, will help lower the NEET group even further. A less than ideal opportunity structure (with double the national average of micro businesses), a low pay economy (with the weekly wage for adult males typically £70 less than for those living in Portsmouth), low aspirations in our young people – especially girls and significant disruption created by seasonal employment, it would be easy to see why our 16 – 18 NEET percentage should have followed those of Portsmouth and Southampton into double figures. Instead it is currently one of the lowest in the SCC region at 5.92%. Although this falls short of our self-set targets, considerable activity is already underway to address this – both through the direct efforts of Connexions and excellent partnership working with the Youth & Community Service, YOT, Looked After Children 16+ Team and, of course, providers of education and training. The report on work to reduce the NEET group, by achieving positive outcomes for individual clients, in the second quarter of 2006 – 07 appears as Appendix 3 to this document.

Access to high quality IAG outside schools and colleges is key to this approach. As well as regular outreach work in all of the age-relevant housing association hostels and The Foyer, and occasional outreach in other areas like West Wight and Ventnor (recognising that young people are often loath to return to school), in each of the full time youth centres there is a Connexions point giving relevant information and job vacancies. Connexions has raised enough funding to pay for young people's travel to the Connexions Centre in High Street, Newport – an approach many prefer.

To refer to the Connexions Centre is, in some ways a misnomer, as the property used is jointly leased with the Youth & Community Service. Our collaborative initiative has made it an increasingly innovative and holistic provision. Although much needs to be done to complete this work, caller figures suggest that developments to date have been a success. Certainly, young people now feel a far greater degree of ownership – to the extent that a significant minority now use it as that 'place to hang out' to which 'Youth Matters: Next Steps' refers.

Quarterly Statistics: Isle of Wight Centre, July – September, 2006

	Telephone Calls	Callers to the Centre
July	455	387
August	589	440
September	750	433

We will, over the next 12 months, extend the range of services provided from this centre beyond the current drugs and alcohol counselling, pregnancy testing and midwife support for teenage mums to be and their partners. Together, Connexions and the Youth Service will establish the ground floor of 29 High Street, Newport as a 'one-stop shop'.

Supporting choices, as defined in 'Youth Matters: Next Steps', is largely about quality information, advice and guidance. Though a major component of this is that work in which the expertise of the Connexions Service has been paramount, it also encompasses the support of young people in the maintenance and development of their physical and emotional health – areas in which the complementary expertise of a wide range of partners has been essential to our success.

There is also a sense in which many young people need to be 'prepared' in order to achieve maximum benefit from the information, advice and guidance accessible to them. One way in which this happens is through Careers Education and related curriculum in our High Schools. For those who are already disengaged by this stage, Connexions own preparatory inputs are effectively supplemented by the informal work of the Youth & Community Service. The well established role of local authority Youth Services to advocate on behalf of young people and empower them to influence decision making, especially about the services they receive, is a further essential in this process.

The Government recognises the work of the Youth Service and in recent years have commissioned a great number of reports and publication about it. All the reports accept the value of youth services. It can reduce antisocial behaviour and crime, help reduce training, and tackle social problems such as drug misuse and teenage pregnancies. Most importantly, good youth work involves young people, makes them active citizens and gives them an opportunity to debate not just society and international affairs but how tangibly they can effect local government'. (Paddy Tapping MP – 17.10.2006)

The Isle of Wight Youth & Community Service is critically important in the equipping of young people as citizens, as informed consumers of services. Its informal reach ensures that even those

least engaged with formal universal, and even less formal targeted services, have a means by which they are proactively encouraged to gain these life skills.

Connexions does not hold a monopoly in the delivery of information, advice and guidance. As stated, genuine partnership prevails even here. As well as the superb contribution of the Community Chef and nationally recognised work around healthy eating – not least that driven by Healthy Schools, the Fathers First Project (which is an integral aspect of the work of Mobile Youth Initiatives [MY-I]) deserves special mention.

Nationally, the focus on young mums and mums to be is a worthy one, and our collaborative work with Teenage Pregnancy Unit shows that we recognise its importance in our actions as well as our words. Young dads and fathers to be can be every bit as needy, equally vulnerable and sometimes disruptive to the health and well being of their partner and child. The comparative lack of focus on this group nationally should not detract from the excellent work being undertaken through the Fathers First Project. Its help for teenage parents, especially 'dads', in enabling them to understand and come to terms with their roles and responsibilities is both critically important and complementary to the support available from other services.

We will, over the next 12 months, seek to raise the necessary funding to purchase and equip a new vehicle to bring sustainability to MY-I.

The Youth Service, through the normal course of work – whether it be in a building, on the streets or on a bus provides, through their voluntary association with young people, informal information, advice and guidance on many aspects of young people's lives. Effectively, they offer 'someone to talk to' about health, work, school, sex and relationships, and bullying. This is complementary to the services of Connexions in both delivery methodology and access in ways that the casual observer may not suspect. For example, the Youth Service Multi Agency Group Services (MAGS), in partnership with CAHMS, offers a group work experience to young people at school who for one reason or another are struggling to reach their full potential. It may be bereavement, break up in the family, being bullied (or a bully) but, whatever it is, the group work experience enables the young person to understand what is troubling them and to build and work out coping strategies.

Again, complementary to the services of both Connexions and the Youth Service is the contribution that the voluntary and community sector makes. An excellent example is the counselling service provided by the Isle of Wight Youth Trust, a registered charity that, as well as providing discreet professional services from its Newport base, has now ventured into offering specialist services to young people attending festivals and also access to comprehensive relevant information via the internet.

7. ALL YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVING: REFORMING TARGETED SUPPORT

The Youth Service provides many targeted approaches to young people. Fathers First and MAGS have already been mentioned; other projects include Challenge & Adventure, a crime prevention project working with young people at risk, or at risk of offending and re-offending, in partnership with the Youth Offending Team and Early Interventions.

IYWAC provides water sport activities for a number of high schools for students who are disengaging with school, and a similar project operates at Newport Youth Centre using cars and road craft as their medium.

The Connexions Additional Support Project has been mainstreamed over the last two years and offers an unsurpassed level of one-to-one support for young people in education (some of whom

are retaining this status 'by a thread'). Positive outcomes for this group are excellent. Support from voluntary sector provision, like the 'Interact ED' project run by the Hampton Trust, and Youth Service provision referred to above is essential – as is supplementary, off-site educational provision. The Car Project, based at Newport Youth Centre, is a good example of this. It offers schools an alternative to the curriculum for half to one day a week, providing for small groups of young people (who are usually on special time tables) the opportunity to gain both practical and theoretical knowledge about cars. They can learn basic car maintenance and the Highway Code and driving skills literacy and numeracy are both integral to this project.

Targeted support should not only focus upon the young person but their family and this is where the Extended Schools Project adds an entirely different dimension to our work. In fact, the potential for involving whole communities is already beginning to be realised.

On the Island, the Extended Schools programme has been a priority since April 2004 when the Full Service Extended School was identified as Downside Middle. Since then a carefully planned programme of roll-out to all schools has been established with waves of training including facilitated workshops. Other services and organisations, including the voluntary and community sector, are always invited to attend these days and often act as supportive trainers. The training programme is fully evaluated. The networking generated between partners has been identified by both schools and other services as the most useful aspect of the programme.

The Isle of Wight Strategy for Extended (services in and around) Schools describes fully the process by which schools may provide access to the five elements of the Government's core offer:

- Year round childcare from 8.00 a.m. until 6.00 p.m.
- Varied menu of activities including study support
- Community access to facilities including adult learning
- Parenting support including family learning
- Swift and easy referral to specialised support services

Key factors in the process are consultation with the community (this includes pupils, parents, staff, community members, parish councils); audit of community need; identification of ways to meet need; planning and commissioning of services; monitoring and evaluation of the provision. It is vital to highlight concrete examples of where the concept of Youth Development within the two agendas, Youth Matters and Extended Schools, dovetail and, in particular, link with the voluntary sector.

Recent developments include the 'Active 8's Summer Transition Programme 2006', an evaluation of which is included as Appendix 4. Also, the introduction of school based Youth Workers and Social Workers.

Similarly, the voluntary and community sector has much to offer – not least, through projects like Spurgeons Young Carers.

We will, over the next 12 months, in addition to the major piece of VCS work already referred to, endeavour to support the short to medium term sustainability of projects directly impacting on important minority groups of young people who, without them, would be disempowered. We will achieve this by sharing existing expertise, including time, to support their applications for funding and by drawing upon networks like the Isle of Wight Learning Partnership, which have access to information about potential funding streams that could complement that already provided by the RCC.

8. MAKING IT HAPPEN

Those contributing to this paper represent, to use the most appalling of jargon, some of the most “can do” organisations we have on the Isle of Wight.

A myriad of examples of proactive co-operation and collaboration already exist. These range from the small but important, like the Youth Service taking over Connexions minibus to achieve an economy of scale that makes it viable to loan it at no charge to VCS organisations, to those of major significance. Here we might cite Extended Schools funding of innovative collaborative work with the Youth Service – in such a way as to optimise the chances of embedding the ‘Active 8’s Summer Transition Programme’. We could similarly relate Connexions funding and supporting the new Children & Young People’s Participation Adviser, who has already had a major and most positive impact on the work of the Children and Young People’s Trust. In short, we have a track record.

Joint training is now common place: Connexions and LACES, Youth & Community Service and Connexions, Connexions & Education Welfare Service, Youth & Community Service & VCS organisations, Extended Schools and the whole host of service providers – including schools, Family Learning *and* all of the above! This brings with it growing trust and a working together to dismantle barriers and remove duplication.

A number of significant challenges remain and we will address these – together...

We will, over the next 12 months, use the model created by Extended Schools to engage schools, including High Schools, in the delivery of the Youth Matters and Children and Young People’s Trust agendas. We will utilise the more holistic approach it takes to raising standards and developing a culture of learning in the community, working together to generate increasing confidence in the efficacy of this approach among the senior management teams of Island educational institutions. In doing so, we will focus on partnership working and, most specifically, the active engagement of children and young people in all stages of the planning-delivery-evaluation cycle.

This is not only aspirational but extremely practical as we will be building upon the Island’s strategic approach to Extended Schools (itself developed from the highly successful and sustainable Healthy Schools programme), which has been singled out as a strength for the local authority in a recent Joint Area Review (May 2006). This approach has been cited as exemplar practice on a number of national web sites, in two Masters Degree courses and, most recently, in a national DfES guidance document: ‘Planning and funding extended schools: a guide for schools, local authorities and their partner organisations’. A credible framework is, therefore, guaranteed.

At stake here is more than the engagement of organisations where the focus to date has been, understandably but sometimes unhelpfully, different. The delivery and development, to meet the needs of our young people, of some of the most critically important, credible and respected services on the Isle of Wight is at stake.

We will, over the next 3 months, create a draft specification for the services delivered by Connexions and project how these might be further amended, enhanced and developed to best serve the needs of Island young people from April, 2008 onwards.

We will, over the next 12 months, review the sharing of information by partners to benefit the young people they serve – drawing upon the good practice generated by the ‘Active 8’s Summer Transition Programme 2006’ and also the developmental work currently being undertaken by South Central Connexions and likely to be published on the internet in early 2007.

9. CONCLUSION

We are not starting from a basis of inadequate service provision but from one of nationally recognised good practice in the delivery of services to young people 13-19 years, much of which has already been generated, enhanced and refined by extensive consultation with young people themselves. The Youth Service, Connexions, Extended Schools and the voluntary and community sector already work effectively together in a variety of ways, alongside other statutory services. This is not to say that these services cannot be improved by an even greater understanding of the needs of young people and their relationship to working methods and culture.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Individual services retain their own positive and well established identities, offering their own unique ways of working with young people and providing genuine choice of how, where and with whom 13 – 19 year olds engage.
- We develop and enhance the role of the VCS to complement these services increasingly effectively in order to benefit our mutual clients.
- We explore further other avenues, which can be developed through the Extended Schools funding, to support young people 13 – 19 years and plan for the sustainability of these activities beyond March, 2008.
- We continue to create ways by which individual services can partner each other in both generic and specialist environments.
- We position the Youth Service/Connexions partnership at the heart of Youth Matters, as outlined in the 'Youth Matters: Next Steps' document, meeting the 'areas for development' identified in the Youth Service Ofsted Enhanced Inspection and sustaining and developing the good practice created by each service.
- We use YCF/YOF funds creatively, with young people at the driving seat in deciding on the criteria and methods of distributing these funds. We further support this process by helping young people to explore more fully the opportunities offered through the YouthBank. We appoint (until 31st March, 2007) a 'youth worker' to facilitate the development the Youth Panel.
- We further establish the processes by which all agencies involved with young people are able to work together in close liaison, making top priority the development of protocols and systems for the sharing of information.
- We support young people to produce an accessible but comprehensive guide to what is available on the Isle of Wight, utilising existing publications and mechanisms to achieve an efficient as well as effective and attractive result.
- We encourage and enable young people to volunteer and ensure that their efforts are both recognised and, where appropriate, accredited.

APPENDIX 1

1.1 Proposal: To develop a YouthBank model on the Isle of Wight by which the Youth Opportunities Fund and Youth Capital Fund, or a significant proportion of these, could be distributed.

1.2 Background: Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund

1.2.1 The Green Paper 'Youth matters' was published in the summer of 2005. It said that 'there is much that is good about services for teenagers but there is a lot that could be better. Two of the ways they could be better are:

- Services do not always meet the needs of individual young people

- Teenagers and their parents do not have enough say in what is provided.’
- 1.2.2** Youth Matters outlined new funds to involve young people in decision making – ‘our first challenge is to put young people themselves in control of the things to do and places to go in their area. We don’t want government agencies second guessing them.’
- 1.2.3** **The Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF)** is funding for local projects that young people want. **The Youth Capital Fund (YCF)** will be available to provide capital resources to support the activities funded by the YOF.
- 1.2.4** The Youth Opportunity Fund is allocated via Local Authorities. **The Isle of Wight have been allocated a total of £162 267.** Funding is available for two years from April 2006, so in that sense this is a one off opportunity.
- ❑ **£90 000 YOF**
 - ❑ **£57 267 YCF**
 - ❑ **£15 000 administration.**
- 1.2.5** The YOF’s key aim is for ‘young people themselves to decide how the fund can be spent.’ The Isle of Wight need to ensure that we:
- ❑ Give a voice and influence to young people in relation to things to do and places to go.
 - ❑ Improve things to do and places to go in local areas in line with what young people want.
 - ❑ Draw in other sources of funding which can work in a complementary way.
- 1.2.6** The Youth Capital Fund (YCF) aims to enable Local Authorities to develop, in conjunction with young people, new approaches to strategic investment in youth facilities – ‘we want them to think creatively about what is available for young people locally, with particular focus on facilities in deprived neighbourhoods.’
- 1.3 The Youth Offer**
- 1.3.1** Much of the emphasis in Youth Matters is about creating more things to do and places to go for young people which will include sporting, cultural and recreational activities, ‘opportunities cards’, volunteering opportunities and ways of ensuring that young people have their say about what is on offer. The YCF will help improve facilities to complement things ‘on offer’ locally.
- 1.3.2** Does this money affect the funding of the Youth Service on the Isle of Wight?
The funding for the Youth Service will continue to come from the education sub block and be distributed through the Children and Young People’s Trust. The YOF and YCF are intended to complement this work.

More information is available on Youth Matters
www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth
www.nya.org.uk

1.4 What is the YouthBank Model?

- 1.4.1** YouthBank is an innovative grant making initiative run by young people for young people. Local YouthBank’s provide grants to fund young people’s good ideas to benefit their own communities. It is a unique model in that it is the young [people themselves who make the decisions about who receives the money, about how their YouthBank is managed and run.
- 1.4.2** But YouthBank is more than just a way of giving out grants – it is about supporting and training young people to enable them to reach their full potential. The YouthBank model

puts money directly into the hands of young people, enabling them to contribute to the regeneration of their own communities and to ensure priorities are being met.

1.4.3 YouthBank UK supports a growing number of local YouthBank's throughout the UK. They provide a range of services, support and information – from help getting started, places at residential and training courses to information briefings, a toolkit, access to their website and opportunities to meet/network across the UK. It is a not for profit organisation hosted by the National Youth Agency.

1.5 Options for the Isle of Wight

1.5.1 It is proposed that the Isle of Wight consults Island young people to establish whether an Island YouthBank/Panel should be established in order to distribute a proportion of the YOF/YCF.

1.5.2 The Isle of Wight can either set up its own Youth panel and buy in one off training from YouthBank UK or it can become a member of YouthBank UK and receive on going support and training.

1.5.3 If we develop our own youth panel we could buy in training from YouthBank UK. One training day for support workers would cost in the region of £700. The young people on the panel could also receive one day's accredited training (Open College Network) which would be tailored to their needs again the cost would be in the region of £700. We should not under estimate the support the group of young people would require in setting up and running their young people's panel. Building on the experience of existing YouthBank's, they have discovered that a successful YouthBank needs one person to lead its development – this does not mean they have to do all the work. Rather someone needs to take responsibility to ensure the work gets done. YouthBank strongly recommend a half time post.

1.5.4 The alternative to setting up an independent Youth panel is to become a member of YouthBank UK. The cost of becoming a full member is £250 for the YouthBank UK license (lasts 2 years) and then £750 per year membership.

1.6 What will we get for our money if we adopt the YouthBank Model?

1.6.1 License Fee

- Your license to operate as a YouthBank and use the YouthBank name*
- Use of YouthBank logo and branding*
- A contract between all partners (YouthBank UK, host organisation, fundholder, partners and young people).*
- A taster session for young people and workers to explore the principles and initial ideas (facilitated by YouthBank UK staff).*
- Support and help with your License application from a Development officer*
- A comprehensive information pack (extra copies available)*
- Enabling young people from the YouthBank UK Advisory Forum to look at and make decisions on your license application*
- A 1 day training course on setting up and running a YouthBank (within 6 months of obtaining your license)*
- The YouthBank UK Toolkit (training manual to help you set up and run your Youth Bank).*
- The YouthBank UK Evaluation Toolkit*
- Access to your own mini website as part of the YouthBank UK website*
- Access to the YouthBank UK on-line community*
- A Co-ordinators induction pack*
- Access to YouthBank UK's Management Information system.*

1.6.2 Membership package

- ❑ *The on-going chance to be part of a young person led organisation and to be involved (through the advisory panel) in the governance structure.*
- ❑ *The chance to influence relevant national policy*
- ❑ *Access to £5000 development grant to help with start up costs/support costs Deadline 11 October 2006).*
- ❑ *Opportunity for young people to attend at least one residential per year (free when possible)*
- ❑ *Access to a range of free training opportunities.*
- ❑ *Support and advice on how to access and deliver YouthBank Grantmaker award.*
- ❑ *Publicity from YouthBank UK about you and your YouthBank.*
- ❑ *Support and advice from YouthBank UK staff*
- ❑ *Co-ordinators meetings*
- ❑ *Management information systems updates, helpline and support.*
- ❑ *Toolkit updates*
- ❑ *Regular newsletters*
- ❑ *In going support for mini website and on line community*
- ❑ *Promotional materials*
- ❑ *Networking opportunities*
- ❑ *Access to funding other opportunities when available.*

1.6.3 Our young people's panel might initially be made up of young people who are involved in various existing groups such as the Youth Council, Connexions sub-group and CAST/16+ young people's panel. However, there would be a need to develop the panel in order to ensure it represents a wide cross section of young people – particularly 'hard to reach' groups (e.g. young carers, young people who are disabled, homeless young people etc), contact could be made through VCS.

1.6.4 The young people would, with support from various agencies develop their criteria for funding. This would need to be advertised across the Island with applications put to the panel by a certain date. Applications would come from young people themselves (perhaps with supporting reference from an adult). Arrangements about payments would need to be developed (who are accountable bodies? Could this, ultimately, be a role for parish councils, along with a mentor role to support the individual groups of young people applying?) The panel would also need to develop monitoring and evaluation methods (use of participatory monitoring and evaluation methodology). Thought will also need to be given to the sustainability of the Youth Panel beyond the 2 years funding (i.e. linking into the Children and Young People's Trust, establishing the role of young people in leading commissioning structures, etc.)

1.7 ACTIONS

1.7.1 ***We need to establish a platform of informed participation that enables our young people to decide whether we just use the YouthBank model to set up an Isle of Wight Young People's Panel, or become a member of YouthBank UK***

1.7.2 ***The amount of funding to be allocated to the YouthBank and how the rest of the funding will be distributed needs to be agreed.***

1.7.3 ***We need to establish who will lead/co-ordinate the work? Are we looking at a secondment/allocating existing staff time or recruiting a new worker (if so how will the position be paid for)?***

- 1.7.4 We need to support young people in developing the criteria for the funding in such away as to avoid conflicts of interest. (E.g. Do we need to be explicit about the need for young people's ideas for projects to meet elements of the Children and Young People's Plan, link up to Parish Councils/Extended Schools initiatives, etc).**
- 1.7.5 We will need to help the Panel to decide, when young people apply, what information will they need to submit – do they need to have an accountable body's support, do they need to have referee (or an appropriate adult to support them), do we allocate workers to groups who do not have contact with an appropriate agency, etc?**
- 1.7.6 We will need to further develop our timeline/action plan to include at least some of the following:**
- Establishing the Young People's Panel**
 - Applying for a license from YouthBank UK**
 - Training staff and workers**
 - Appointing a lead officer/co-coordinator, plus admin support**
 - Developing funding criteria**
 - Launch and promotion of grants to young people**
 - Creating appropriate deadlines for submission**
 - Allocating grants**
 - Establishing monitoring procedures**
 - Establishing evaluation processes and end of year showcase of projects**

APPENDIX 2

SECTION C - Guidance on the role of the Connexions PA

C1. The statutory provisions set out in Section B encompass the scope of the service delivered by the Connexions PA role. This is unique and has been pivotal to the success of the service. This section of the specification provides guidance on the main characteristics of the PA role in a Connexions partnership setting.

C2. Qualifications, training and professional development

- PAs have been drawn from a range of professional disciplines – many are ex-careers advisers but there are others from the youth and social work professions.
- As a minimum a Connexions PA must have, or be actively working toward an NVQ level 4 (or equivalent) in a relevant discipline and have undertaken relevant appropriate assessment framework training.
- Priority in the PA's professional development is given to the use of a robust framework for evaluation of professional practice together with ongoing professional supervision to inform reflective practice.

C3. Key elements of the role

The PA's work with young people can be divided into three main areas: **(i) direct work** with the young person and parents/carers, **(ii) brokerage** and **(iii) review**.

(i) Direct work with the young person and parents/carers

(a) The Assessment stage will typically involve comprehensive information gathering on the young person's situation and then using the assessment framework to determine the young person's level of need. It may also require provision of information and early referral to specialist help agencies.

(b) Planning and Intervention: At this stage the PA works with the young person to agree the key issues and negotiate an action plan for change and moving forward. The PA will have a thorough working knowledge of the local labour, education and training markets. It will involve the provision of impartial information, advice and guidance on the full range of issues such as careers, further education, training, relationships, physical/sexual health, housing, substance misuse; and placing into employment, education and training. It may also include working with the young person on their own personal development and preparation for work and adult life. This may include help with job applications, preparing for the transition to work and developing self-reliance in the work place and/or generally building confidence and self-esteem.

(c) Planning and working with parents and carers: This will involve the PA in providing information about the service to parents and carers; encouraging their involvement in school/college and related decisions and may mean visits to the home. It can, on occasions require the PA to act as a mediator between the young person and their parents where the relationship has been strained or is in danger of breaking down.

(ii) Brokerage and Advocacy

PAs can perform in a number of roles in relation to a range of organisations – the LLSC, employers, schools, colleges, training providers, agencies providing specialist forms of support, and voluntary and community organisations who can provide support and development opportunities for young people. These roles are:

1. Enabling the individual young person to gain access to specific education training, employment and personal development opportunities. Sometimes this will involve using a straightforward referral route probably governed by an existing protocol. At times it may involve extensive advocacy on behalf of the young person to overcome reservations held by the receiving organisation and to ensure that the organisation has appropriate expectations and appropriate provision for the young person.

2. Enabling the young person to overcome difficulties during the course of education, employment, training or while undertaking a personal development opportunity. Sometimes a PA will need to intervene to help a young person to continue to participate – this may involve restoring the relationship between the provider and the young person or it may mean securing alternate provision.

3. Working with organisations either directly or through committees with their representative bodies to promote the interests of young people and to identify how individual organisations can join the range of organisations offering opportunities and support for young people.

4. helping individual organisations either directly or through committees with their representative bodies to plan their provision of opportunities and/or support to maximise the chance that the needs and aspirations of young people in the area are met.

(a) Working with employers, schools and colleges: There is a role here for the PA working both in the interests of the individual young person and in the interests of groups and communities. On both levels, systematic on-going professional liaison is required to secure improved responses to and enhanced resources/opportunities for - young people. Another important function – working in close liaison with the local LSC, will be to identify and respond positively - to perceived gaps in education and training provision and to look beyond the local area for suitable employment opportunities.

(b) Working with other agencies: Once again this element of brokerage has a PA and a wider partnership dimension. Both need to engage in joint needs assessment and planning with other services for children and young people - plugging gaps and influencing the development of new specialist provision as required. PAs will work to appropriate protocols in referring young people to specialist support agencies. There is also the important advocacy role – championing the young person's best interests to a range of other agencies.

(c) Informal and community networks: The voluntary and community sector is an important partner to Connexions not least because in many areas it is engaged with small communities that the public sector has had trouble reaching. It provides a range of services to young people: from large faith based and uniformed organisations to small local community based innovative provisions. The PA and the partnership as a whole need to be fully engaged with a wide range of individuals and organisations to enable young people to access community resources and to secure their participation in personal development activities, leisure, arts, cultural, sport; and not least promoting involvement in volunteering.

(iii) Review

(a) Tracking young people's progress: The PA will be fully trained in the mechanics and front line use of the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) or other tracking/ information delivery system which meets the CCIS specification.

(b) Monitoring: it is vital that the PA monitors the young person's progress against mutually agreed plans and works with the young person to refine plans and re-define objectives and milestones – facilitating them in building suitably stretching but realistic aspirations.

(c) Gathering and reviewing outcome information: The ultimate aim of the PA role is to secure positive outcomes for the young person. An important element in this is to gather "customer feedback" from young people and parents/carers on their satisfaction with the service provided and on the quality of the outcomes achieved. This also forms an integral part of the partnership's local evaluation strategy. The PA will also gain feedback from other stakeholders, schools, colleges, employers and other agencies to which the young person has been referred.

(d) Capture and maintenance of management information: The PA needs to be fully conversant with the partnership's arrangements for gathering and reporting local and national management information in the appropriate format.

The Personal Adviser within Connexions publication is a study which aims to highlight good practice in the Personal Adviser role and has been developed by NACP and supported by DfES, SCYPG. Copies are available to download from the NACP website at www.nacp.co.uk/pdf/parolefinal.pdf

APPENDIX 3

TARGET 3: ACTION TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE INTO TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

QUARTER 2 REPORT: JULY - SEPTEMBER, 2006

Upward Pressures

- **Migration** – The Isle of Wight is an attractive place to spend the summer and we have experienced a significant number of young unemployed moving to the area – from the Midlands and even mainland Europe.
- **Provision** – The stock of training provision is continually improving but ultimately needs further development in two key areas. Firstly, opportunities for teenagers who are pregnant and young mums (at times this group now accounts for 20% of our register!) Secondly, provision suited to the needs of those with a history of offending.
- **Financial Rewards** – The move towards funding trainees on e2e through the EMA system has significantly reduced take-up. Although the initial impact of this shift was less than expected, it is now a major barrier to our efforts to move young people into EET.
- **Currency Rules** – Probably because of our high penetration rates in Year 11, the lapse in currency of those whose last destination was Education has had a lesser impact on our NEET figures than is the case elsewhere. It has still had a significant adverse effect. At the same time, however, we have moved extremely quickly to reduce the large number of “unknowns” created by those leaving Year 11 and Year 12 equivalent provision, bringing the artificially inflated adjusted NEET figure down from 7.8% to 6.3% in the last week of September, 2006 (unofficial figures).

The official NEET statistics for August, 2006 appear below. Official figures for September, 2006 will be supplied as an update to this report when verified.

Aged 16-18	
NEET Total	187
EET Total	3014
PDO Total	7
Not Known Total	79
% Not Known	2.40%
Connexions Target Definition	
Adjusted NEET% (CX Definition)	6.02%
Adjusted NEET	194
Adjusted EET	3026
Local Authority Target Definition	
Adjusted NEET% (LA Definition)	6.24%
Adjusted NEET	201
Adjusted EET	3019

Provisional figures produced by South Central Connexions' central MI Team on Monday, 2nd October, 2006 indicate that the Isle of Wight had the lowest NEET figure of any area or district in Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight at the end of September and also the lowest number of young people recorded as “unknown”.

Action

- **Expand Opportunity Structure** – There has been a significant increase in the numbers of young parents who are on the NEET register. Statistical analysis now shows us that, at any one time, up to 20% of our NEET register is made up of young parents and teenagers who have become pregnant. At any one time, another 10% can be made up of young offenders and those with a history of offending.

- ✓ Over the last quarter, in addition to activities planned, we have consulted a representative sample of young offenders. We have also undertaken a telephone survey of young parents and arranged a focus group discussion attended by 12 young families.
 - ✓ With better quality information on the training needs of young mums, pregnant teenagers and young offenders, we are now holding meetings with partner organisations, Teenage Pregnancy and YOT, and also the largest local training provider to review and develop provision. If necessary, this will include co-writing a proposal to the LSC.
 - ✓ Following the first of these meetings, which focused on provision for young offenders, we have scheduled a focus group of young offenders and those with a history of offending or considered to at risk of offending. This will be facilitated by a specialist Personal Adviser in partnership with key training officers. It will help refine the design of this new provision, creating a “buy in” from participants, with a planned start date for the first cohort of 13th November, 2006. It is hoped to write up this development as an example of good practice in meeting the needs of a diverse group of young people who have traditionally proved very hard to help.
- **Marketing of Support & Opportunities to NEET Group** – Additional to mailings that have been undertaken as part of our ‘Results Service’ and ‘Year 11 Activity Survey’ we have continued to develop our stock of vacancies such that a fortnightly newsletter to NEET clients is now being planned. It will be introduced in the third quarter.
 - **Enabling Fund Scheme** – This is now up and running, with Personal Advisers accessing funds via a simple application form. Separately accounted for, the introduction of an enabling fund has required a major change to our financial systems – with a move from our standard petty cash system to local banking arrangements supported by Connexions HQ Finance Team.
 - ✓ Early examples of the use of this fund include the equipping of a client who was NEET to join the Merchant Navy and funding of the first week’s ferry travel for another client who was taking up a place at a mainland college.
 - ✓ By way of good preventative practice, South Central Connexions has found an additional £6,000 to provide a separate pre-16 enabling fund as well. It is hoped that this will help prevent a significant number of young people becoming NEET in the first place.
 - **Introduce Incentive Scheme** – While the introduction of a blanket-type incentive scheme has been relatively low priority in our objectives, we have focused on targeted incentives with some early success. Providing an incentive for young people choosing the new ‘ESP’ taster programme has resulted in 3 young people taking up this opportunity, which we hope will create a bridge for them into a mainstream EET opportunity. Recognising the adverse impact of a shift in e2e funding towards an EMA basis, the tailored training provision for young offenders will use LPSA2 pump-priming funds to complement the rewards possible through the Educational Maintenance Allowance system in order to maintain the enthusiasm and commitment of trainees.
 - **Improve Transport Options for Clients** – We continue to lobby for access to the 50p flat rate bus fare for those who are NEET. Working through the local authority this has reached Chief Executive level. A parallel approach, taken through the Isle of Wight Learning Partnership, has enlisted the support of the Deputy Leader of the Isle of Wight Council. Those on e2e can now access this scheme. Meanwhile, we have extended the refunding of fares and are utilising relationships with the voluntary sector, particularly ‘Wight Wheels’, to provide additional assistance to clients in the NEET group – especially where an ongoing solution is needed.

Andrew Preskey
10th October, 2006

APPENDIX 4

Please see the separate document, '@Isle of Wight Active 8's Summer Transition Programme 2006 Evaluation Report'.