

## The Youth Offer/Positive for Youth

Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board – 15 March 2012

PFY is the coalition government's policy for young people aged 13-19 and was published in December 2011 following a lengthy period of consultation and evidence.

As the document title suggests, the essence is around creating a society that is positive for youth, that invests in young people, and that learns the lessons of the summer riots looking to reverse low aspirations, poorly held community ties, non-participation, disadvantage and vulnerability.

Key to the vision of a society that is positive for youth are:

- Supporting parents and families
- Promoting achievement and aspirations
- Promoting young peoples' rights and responsibilities
- Recognising the unique and diverse needs of different young people
- Improving opportunities and early support
- Reaching out to those with fewest advantages and protecting the most vulnerable.

The policy particularly acknowledges the gaps in outcomes between the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people and the rest, and it commits to narrowing these gaps. To do this, there is emphasis on early and sustained help in the teenage years.

Some key links to this policy are:

- Troubled families
- Working families everywhere with family champions to support family members
- Pupil premium providing extra funding for those from deprived backgrounds
- Education, Health and Care plan from 0-25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities
- New Ofsted framework
- Volunteering – National Citizen Service
- Preventing offending and supporting those in the YJ system

The policy promotes local partnership, and drawing on the resources of communities, charities, voluntary groups and local businesses. It recommends that local councils and partners involve young people actively to develop their local offer and ensure that local services meet their needs.

Local authorities have strategic responsibility for co-ordinating the overall local offer to young people and making best use of public resources, while setting its own budget for this. The Local authority also continues to have a duty to secure sufficient recreational and educational activities for the wellbeing of 13-19 year olds (Education Act 1996). We are waiting for new statutory guidance on this duty, but are told it will reflect Ofsted's 2011 report on commissioning young peoples' services and will set out the expectation for all local authorities to publish its own local youth offer.

To reach a meaningful Youth Offer, PFY states that young people must be involved at every stage of a commissioning process:

Clarifying local outcomes, needs, resources and priorities

Planning how the desired outcomes can be achieved effectively and efficiently

Reviewing and monitoring delivery and impact against expected outcomes.

We now need to translate this policy for the benefit of young people in Torbay and we need to do it in a climate of reduced funding.

Torbay has identified 150k to be spent on services for young people. The money will sit within a grant pot which can be accessed by communities, groups or young people themselves to provide a diverse and innovative range of provision that will support the priorities within the strategic needs assessment while building capability within the communities themselves.

To make this happen, a raft of consultation will now take place with young people, communities and organisations and we will begin to look at how the pot will be set up to allow individual and collaborative approaches and to cover the full range of need.

**Richard Williams**