

## Appendix C

Youth Offer Report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Appendix C – position and plans re young people's involvement in decision making

### T3:

Following its re-launch in July 2007, T3 has attracted new interest from young people from schools, who had not been involved previously. Longfield, Hummersknott and Polam Hall are all represented on T3 and their attendance has been ongoing since the event in July 2007.

The current position of T3 is, it has developed 4 sub-groups, these sub-groups are looking at the following areas:

- Health – Various issues that affect young people
- Transport – Linking with local motion, looking at young people and buses travel
- Social Aspects – Links in with Youth Offer developments (things to do, places to go)
- Communication – Responsible for responding to the Free post cards

All sub-groups are very focused and busy, as you would expect, developments are slow, but progression in the continued development of T3 is gathering momentum.

The future for T3 is very much down to what comes from the sub-groups and issues raised by other young people. The transport group will be focusing on transport in the New Year with support from the local motion team, social aspects will be supporting the development of the Youth Offer and Newblood live, all focused on young people and the issues that affect young people in Darlington.

### Hear by Right:

Hear by Right is a standards framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. The youth service is committed to ensuring this is not a tokenistic process and has an officer level post to support and take forward the agenda. The officer, Andy Whittam, is currently working with a group of young people who have received training to moderate organisations who are adopting the Hear by Right standards. The youth service is mapping provision by the Hear by Right standards and Andy is supporting other organisations to undertake the process (Housing Services, Looked-after Team, Groundwork)

The youth service will continue to promote the Hear by Right standards framework and support organisations who want to ensure young people's involvement is built in and not just bolted on. We will also continue to recruit and train young people to the Hear by Right Youth Board, as it is important to ensure the group has the skills to progress their role.

### DOSH (Youth Opportunity/Capital Funds)

In this financial year DBC was allocated £155,000 DOSH (Youth Opportunities/ Youth Capital Fund). It was agreed that there could be carry over of under spend from 06/07, £36,506, giving £191,506 for 07/08. Youth service is working in Partnership with Changemakers and Keyfund to allocate the funds, with a management charge of £15,000 for their work. This gave us a balance of £176,506 to allocate to project identified by young people aged 13-19 (up to 25 with disabilities).

This year has been very successful by the end of January 2008 we will have allocated all of the £111,000 Youth Opportunities Funds, funding 32 projects. We have also allocated £57,970 Youth Capital Fund (YCF), funding 20 projects. There is currently £22,436 YCF remaining, which

the Youth Board will allocate in February 2008 in a Dragon Den style event where young people can turn up and pitch their ideas. Some of the Projects funded included International Exchanges, Community Safety initiatives, Young Carers Project, Young people from PFU, Young Parents, Young People with disabilities and Young Bengali Young Women Project.

The Government announced that the fund will continue for the next 3 years from 2008 onwards, at the current allocation of £155,000 per annum. Government have not yet said if there will be any changes to how the fund is to be spent. We propose to continue and strengthen the current successful Partnership arrangement with Changemakers and Keyfund. We also propose to increase the active involvement of young people in the allocation, evaluation and management of DOSH.

#### Council of Secondary School / College Councils:

The initial proposal for a Council of School Councils came from Councillor McEwan (lead Member for Children's Services), and the youth service Participation Team was tasked with taking forward the project. It was agreed from the outset that young people should determine the precise 'Terms of Reference' for the Council (when, where, how long to meet, what to discuss, how to communicate, are aims and outcomes above appropriate). The benefits of a Council are seen as: -

- To give young people the opportunity to discuss issues of shared concern on being a school council/school councillor.
- To give young people the opportunity to discuss issues of importance to young people re education (and/or related issues in the Borough e.g. exclusions, attendance, attainment, Children and Young People's Plan etc).
- To give decision-making bodies the opportunity to bring information to the Council of School Councils for debate, discussion, feedback etc.
- To provide a forum for mutual support on operation of councils (develop a web site or on line forum for communication) and council elections (link to Mi Voice).

All secondary schools, including the private sector, and colleges were invited to the inaugural meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December. Out of twelve schools and colleges invited only four were unable to attend. All the young people who attended thought the idea was positive and several asked that the schools who did not attend were still included in a decision as to the format of future meetings.