

Committee: Community & Leisure
Date: 7 June 2005
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: Forward Programme
Author: Diane Burrige (01799) 510580

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of the known reports that are to come before this Committee during the year. It recommends that the Committee note the programme and advise of any further reports that it would wish to receive.

Background

- 2 Each Committee is invited to consider, at the beginning of the new Committee year, a forward programme of the reports that it requires to come before it during the year.
- 3 Officers have drafted a programme which includes reports that are required to come before the Committee e.g. budgets, and those that the Committee should consider as part of its role in over-seeing the work that falls within its remit.

Background Papers: None.

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY & LEISURE

FORWARD PLAN 2005/06

June 7	Sept 6	October 25	January 10	March 7
Work Programme (DB) Best Value Review of Young People (GB) Cultural Festival (GB) Bridge End Garden Project (GB) INSITE Project Update (GB) Children Act (AS)	Cultural Partnership Developments (SMcL) Museum Resource Centre Project (CW) Museum Service Strategic Plan (CW) Museum Service Marketing Strategy (CW) Q1 Performance Monitoring: PI's Service & Financial Planning (TT, PO'D), Public Health (TT)	Leisure & Cultural Strategy (GB) Community Sports Outreach Workers Review (GB) Cultural Festival (GB) Museum Service Acquisition & Disposal Policy (CW) Museum Service Education Policy (CW) Museum Service Access Policy (CW) Q2 Performance Monitoring: PI's. Service & Financial Planning (TT, PO'D)		Leisure Centres Annual Presentation (GB) Q3 Performance Monitoring: PI's Service & Financial Planning (TT, PO'D) Community Development Strategy (TT) Rural Strategy (TT)

Committee: Community & Leisure Committee
Date: 7 June 2005
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: National Asylum Support Service - Accommodation Strategy 2005
Author: Gaynor Bradley (01799) 510348

Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members that a Regional Consultation Strategy is being carried out in the East of England regarding the development of a National Asylum Support Service Accommodation Strategy for 2005.
- 2 This report has been compiled by taking extracts from the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) Draft Position Statement in response to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) Accommodation Strategy 2005. The report, therefore, represents EERA's views. It is a brief synopsis of the Position Statement, the full document is available on the EERA website www.eera.gov.uk

Background

- 3 The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) is responsible for dispersing and accommodating asylum seekers whilst their claims for asylum are being decided.
- 4 During Summer 2005 NASS will be agreeing contracts for the provision of accommodation and support to asylum seekers within the East of England from 2006. The contract will specify the locations and numbers of asylum seekers to be accommodated within the region. It will also specify the process by which asylum seekers are to be dispersed.
- 5 The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) has been invited by NASS to provide a view on suitable locations for the dispersal of asylum seekers. EERA has produced a draft position statement that identifies four potential models for dispersal ranging from concentration in a few areas to a more balanced spread across the whole region. A consultation event will be held on the 25 May 2005 at Robinson College Cambridge and Councillors from Uttlesford will be attending this event. The event objectives will be
 - To assess potential models for dispersal of asylum seekers in the East of England region;

- To examine the implications of the NASS Accommodation Strategy 2005 for the process of asylum seeker dispersal and the future role of the EERA Consortium for Asylum and Refugees Integration.

Current Position

- 6 The current system of asylum seeker dispersal is largely controlled at a national level and, therefore, does not take into account local strategies, policies and circumstances. Increased flexibility would allow greater co-ordination between service deliverers and ensure greater sensitivity to a number of important factors such as urban renewal, social deprivation and pressure on local services.
- 7 In April 2004, NASS outlined three potential models for developing the future relationship between NASS and the regions. They were
 - Regional Consortia to be a major contractor and to take responsibility for ensuring the provision of accommodation and support services, either through direct provision or by sub-contracting,
 - A “collaborative” model that would envisage a partnership relationship with NASS that would help shape the dispersal and support system but without the Regional Consortium being a contractor or provider of services;
 - The Region maintaining a liaison relationship with NASS but leaving all decision taking and responsibility with NASS.

Consultation Process

- 8 The NASS Accommodation Strategy 2005 is primarily concerned with the future dispersal of asylum seekers in receipt of NASS accommodation and support.
- 9 The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) Consortium for Asylum and Refugees Integration is one of eleven Regional Consortia and includes a wide range of stakeholders across the public, voluntary and private sectors.
- 10 EERA organised a stakeholder consultation event on 26 April 2004 to consider the implications of the three models and the prevailing view of the attendees was that the “collaborative” model would be the most suitable for the East of England and this view was subsequently endorsed and agreed at the Regional Assembly Executive Committee meeting on 14 May 2004.
- 11 In preparation for developing a more co-operative relationship with NASS within the region, EERA employed a part-time consultant from 1 October 2004 to 31 March 2005 to undertake discussions with regional stakeholders (**Appendix 1**) to develop potential models and locations for the dispersal of asylum seekers from June 2006. In addition, a regional consultation event was held on 23 November 2004. In response to information provided at consultation events EERA has developed the draft Position Statement.

- 12 Attached at **Appendix 2** is an explanation of the NASS Accommodation Strategy 2005 which contains the key factors that NASS will seek to achieve through negotiation of contracts.
- 13 In June 2005, NASS will begin the process of negotiating a new round of contracts for the provision of asylum seeker accommodation and support to take effect from June 2006.
- 14 To assist in the contract negotiation process, NASS is inviting each region to provide a view on the capacity and potential location for the dispersal of asylum seekers. Due to the NASS timeline for negotiating the accommodation contracts, EERA is seeking responses by **Friday 24 June 2005**. Final recommendations will then be considered by the EERA Asylum and Refugee Integration Panel at its meeting on 13 July 2005 with a view to forwarding an agreed response to NASS thereafter. It should be recognised, however, that the Assembly does not hold any powers in relation to determining the dispersal of asylum seekers within the region, the responsibility for which remains with the NASS.

East of England Dispersal

- 15 The East of England region has one of the lowest numbers of asylum seekers per head of population the UK. The total number of asylum seekers currently located in the East of England is approximately 2,600 in a population of 5.5 million. The greater availability and lower cost of accommodation in the North and Midlands regions is one factor for dispersal of asylum seekers away for the Greater South East. The location of asylum seekers within the East of England is determined to a significant extent by the type of support being provided. There are five main categories of support currently in operation:
- a) NASS accommodation and support
 - b) NASS subsistence-only support
 - c) 'Interim' cases – supported through local authority
 - d) Unaccompanied asylum –seeker children (UASC)
 - e) Newly arrived asylum seekers accommodated pending NASS support.
- 16 NASS proposes that the number of asylum seekers to be dispersed in normal circumstances to the East of England in June 2006 should be 800 of the predicted UK total of 35-37,000. This remains the lowest number of any region/country in the UK excepting Northern Ireland, representing 2.2% of the UK total. In contrast, NASS has proposed that the Yorkshire and Humber region, with a similar population size to the East of England, accommodate 7,500 asylum seekers representing 20% of the UK total.
- 17 Within the target contacts, NASS will also be seeking to include contingency provision for unexpected increases or decreases in the number of asylum seekers requiring accommodation and support. It has been proposed by NASS that a contingency allowance of +/- 30% be applied to all dispersal figures, which in the East of England, would translate to 240 above or below

the proposed regional capacity of 800. Variations beyond 30% would involve additional consultation nationally and regionally and may not occur on the same proportionate basis. It is currently anticipated that any temporary increases in dispersal that occurs from the transfer of “interim” cases to NASS support would be contained within the agreed contingency allowance.

- 18 In addition, via the Gateway Protection Programme (the UK’s contribution to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees scheme that confers refugee status in refugees centres abroad), participating countries agree to take an annual quota and resettle refugees on a long-term basis. The UK has agreed to accept 500 refugees a year under this scheme and there is an expectation that each region will participate in the programme. NASS has indicated that refugees received through the Gateway Programme will be an additional component of the Accommodation Strategy 2005. The guidance for the Gateway Programme recommends that each placement should consist of a minimum of 60 refugees. It is proposed that the East of England consider offering 60 places under the Gateway Protection Programme.

Key Issues for Consideration

- 19 The active “cluster” areas for dispersal of asylum seekers in the East of England of Ipswich, Norwich and Peterborough were determined by NASS in 2000 with the availability of housing being one of the key criteria. The NASS Accommodation Strategy 2005 provides an opportunity to review the current “cluster” areas and also potentially include a wider range of factors in considering additional or alternative locations for dispersal of asylum seekers. The EERA consultation process to date has identified the following key issues as being particularly important:

- Availability of housing and impact on local housing markets;
- Provision of public services;
- Access to support networks for asylum seekers – particularly from existing communities with shared ethnicity, language or religion;
- Community cohesion/safety – host community tolerance/support for asylum seeker/refugee communities;
- Refugee Integration – potential for those granted asylum to integrate into local community e.g. labour market demand.

Dispersal Options

- 20 **Appendix 3** lists the four options for dispersal and sets out advantages and disadvantages identified to date. It is noted that there may be other models for dispersal that will emerge during the consultation process.

Consultation Questions

- 21 The EERA consultation strategy is seeking responses to the following questions:

- Q.1** Should the EERA Consortium for Asylum and Refugee Integration (EERA-CARI) seek influence and involvement concerning the
- a) Designation of dispersal areas in the region;
 - b) Numbers of asylum seekers in each dispersal area;
 - c) Process of dispersal to individual locations/properties in each area?
- Q.2** Is 800 an appropriate number of asylum seekers to be dispersed and accommodated within the East of England region?
- Q.3** Is +/- 30% an appropriate contingency allowance for the East of England region?
- Q.4** Is 60 refugees an appropriate number for the East of England region to support through the Gateway Protection Programme?
- Q.5** Please comment on and prioritise the key issues for consideration in assessing potential models for dispersal of asylum seekers. Please identify any additional issues that have not been noted?
- Q.6** If any new locations are identified for dispersal of asylum seekers please comment on the process that will need to be undertaken to prepare for dispersal?
- Q.7** Please comment on and prioritise each dispersal option? It would be helpful if comment were also provided on the potential distribution of asylum seekers between locations.
- Q.8** What locations might be particularly suited to resettlement of refugees through the Gateway Protection Programme?
- Q.9** Is there scope for developing the "Faiths Groups" model in the East of England (see Appendix 4)?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested

- a) to express views on the issues outlined in this report and the questions posed,
- b) to agree that, following attendance at the Consultation event on 25 May 2005, officers formulate a response for submission to EERA by the 24 June 2005.

Background Papers: East of England Regional Assembly Draft Position Statement on NASS Accommodation Strategy 2005

APPENDIX 1

This draft Position Statement has been developed by the East of England Regional Assembly following discussion with a wide range of stakeholders within the East of England region. A major regional consultation event was held on 23rd November 2004.

EERA has also provided presentations and received feedback from the following organisations and networks:

- ACPO Race and Equality sub-group;
- Asylum seekers in Southend and Essex;
- East of England Dispersal Areas Group;
- East of England Multi-Agency Network
- EERA Consortium Reference Group;
- EERA Asylum and Refugee Integration Panel;
- Ipswich Borough Council, Group Leaders;
- Ipswich Multi-Agency Group;
- London Commuter Belt Housing Sub-Region Group;
- Norwich Multi-Agency Group;
- Primary Care Trust Public Health Directors;
- Southend Churches Asylum Seeker Support Group;
- Southend Social Services Dept.;
- Strategic Health Authority Public Health Directors;
- Suffolk Housing Officers Group;
- Suffolk LGA;
- VSRN-EE Executive Committee.

APPENDIX 2

Chapter 2 – NASS Accommodation Strategy 2005

2.1. The NASS Accommodation Strategy 2005 is essentially the process by which NASS will negotiate contracts during the course of 2005 for the provision of accommodation and support for asylum seekers from June 2006.

2.2. The new Target contracts are likely to be between 3-5 years in length and may be 7 years in some instances.

2.3. In particular, NASS has identified the following key factors it will be seeking to achieve within the new contracts:

- significant cost reductions;
- focus on best value provision that maintains community cohesion, provides overall continuity of service and is flexible enough to adapt to changing demand;
- mixed economy of provision across public, private and voluntary sectors;
- contracts in every region and often with more than one provider in each region;
- provision for Gateway and Sunrise requirements and additional dispersals of 'interim' cases;
- open competition across sectors for contracts with prices to be benchmarked;
- meet local priorities when procuring accommodation and placing asylum seekers;
- access to transport;
- independent support and advice (wrap-around services) to be contracted separately and provided by the voluntary sector.

2.4. The contracts are also likely to contain a range of requirements covering such areas as:

- voluntary and enforced returns/removals;
- integration options if appropriate;
- reporting centre requirements;
- inspection and quality audits;
- price control and audits;
- safety and Child and Adult protection.

Allocating accommodation

2.5. The key change for regional and local partners is that each accommodation provider will match individual asylum seekers to places in the region rather than this being decided centrally by NASS.

2.6. This system has the potential for a more co-ordinated approach to the dispersal of asylum seekers if an effective mechanism can be established within each region to ensure communication and decision-making between accommodation providers, local authorities, voluntary organisations and public sector service providers.

2.7. NASS has proposed that a strategic co-ordination group be established in each region to undertake this function. The group would examine key issues such as language, ethnicity and religion, integration and cohesion. However, NASS will retain the power to place asylum seekers or block their placement.

2.8. At the time of writing, the EERA Consortium for Asylum and Refugee Integration (EERA-CARI) is in discussions with NASS as to how the strategic co-ordination group will integrate with the existing enabling role of the EERA Consortium.

Timeline¹

2.9. NASS has established a 2005 project team to undertake and conclude the Target contract negotiations. The process begins in the first half of 2005 with each region discussing with NASS the number of asylum seekers that are likely to be accommodated from June 2006 in each region. In the second half of 2005, NASS will invite interested accommodation providers to tender. NASS intends to have completed final negotiations by the end of 2005 and for transition from the old to the new contracting arrangements to occur in the first half of 2006. It is likely that there will be one contract open to competition for the East of England region.

- **31 March:** a dedicated project section on the NASS website in place for stakeholders to find out up to date information on the project;
- **6 April:** the first of the Stakeholder Group Meetings takes place to help oversee the implementation of improved ways of working;
- **21 April:** seek initial approval from Home Office Group Investment Board for the Target Contracts and advertise forthcoming competition;
- **15 June:** issue Invitation to Tender and start negotiations with local authority providers;
- **19 August:** receipt of tenders and evaluation process commenced;
- **1 October:** bids evaluated;
- **1 December:** new contracts agreed;
- **Summer 06:** end of transition to new long-term Target Contracts.

¹ NASS – The Accommodation 2005 Project – Information Sheet No: 10 – March 2005

APPENDIX 3

Option 1 - 'Concentrated Dispersal'

Maintain dispersal to the existing three 'cluster' areas of Ipswich, Norwich and Peterborough.

Advantages

- Retains 'critical mass' required by NASS and private sector accommodation providers;
- Builds on strong experience in public/voluntary sectors;
- Enables formation of community organisations and support networks;
- Concentrates in manageable geographical areas.

Disadvantages

- Continuing burden on Local Authorities and other service providers in the active 'cluster' areas;
- Pressure on local housing market from growing refugee communities;
- Impact of destitution of failed asylum seekers concentrated on three 'cluster' areas;
- May cause problems for community cohesion if impacts perceived to be too great on local community.

Option 2 - 'Focused Dispersal'

Dispersal to focus on four or five areas to maintain 'critical mass' but with a greater spread across the region. Locations could include existing 'cluster areas' of Ipswich, Norwich and Peterborough plus Bedford/Luton for example.

The advantages and disadvantages are similar to option 1. The lower numbers in each dispersal area may reduce the 'critical mass' but will also lessen the impacts in each dispersal area.

Bedford and Luton have been proposed as potential dispersal areas due to the:

- High level of knowledge and expertise in public/voluntary sectors based on experience of 'interim' cases and subsistence-only asylum seekers;
- Significant Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities;
- Good community support and existence of Refugee Community Organisations.

Option 3 - 'Concentrated Dispersal with Satellites'

Dispersal to be concentrated on the existing three 'cluster areas' but with a satellite location in each county e.g. Ipswich and Lowestoft, Norwich and Great Yarmouth, Peterborough and Cambridge.

The advantages and disadvantages are similar to option 1.

The participation of nearby 'satellite' centres would help to relieve any pressures on the principal dispersal areas, particularly if there are any short-term increases in the number of accommodated asylum seekers (e.g. transferred 'interim' cases). Co-operation on service delivery between dispersal areas and 'satellite' centres could be facilitated through their relatively close proximity and shared county local authority (except Peterborough and Cambridge as Peterborough City Council is a unitary authority).

Option 4 - 'Balanced Dispersal'

Dispersal on a more even basis across ten locations within the East of England. The model would include the four unitary areas of Luton, Peterborough, Southend and Thurrock and an urban centre within each of the six county areas of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

For example, the ten locations might be:

Bedford, Cambridge, Colchester, Ipswich, Luton, Norwich, Peterborough, Southend, Thurrock, Watford

Advantages

- Fair and even distribution across the region;
- Each area can utilise resources as it sees fit;
- Spreads demand for housing and public services;
- Utilises experience of Social Services asylum teams in each area;

Disadvantages

- Critical mass may not be great enough in each location to support specialist public service provision;
- Unlikely to satisfy NASS requirements for a minimum number of service users in each dispersal area;
- Difficult for a private sector accommodation provider to manage small property portfolios across so many locations in one region;
- Lack of support services and existing communities in some locations;
- May not reduce community tensions in some existing dispersal areas;
- Difficult to administer and likely to involve greater costs overall.

Gateway Protection Programme

6.8. The region also needs to consider suitable locations for refugees resettled through the Gateway Protection Programme. Potential locations are likely to be similar to those proposed for NASS accommodated asylum seekers.

6.9. The Gateway Programme is fully funded by Central Government and aims to be managed in a way which enables both Local and Central Government to work in partnership. Key stakeholders are usually notified of the group profile several months in advance, with details confirmed a minimum of 6 weeks before arrival. This enables key stakeholders, such as local doctors and schools, as well as Job Centre Plus, to be prepared for their arrival.

6.10. The Government has set aside funding for each accepted refugee to cover, where possible, all costs to Local Authorities for the first 12 months of their life in the United Kingdom. The Home Office will also work, for example, with local Primary Care Trusts, Local Education Authorities and Department of Work and Pensions to establish the additional levels of funding required. The consent of the relevant local authority is required before any potential locations for the Gateway Protection Programme can be fully considered.

APPENDIX 4

The “Faiths Group” Model

The model has been influenced by three main factors:

- A need to offer an alternative model from the traditional dispersal system for people who did not find the “one size fits all” approach meeting their needs;
- Experience in Denmark and Canada where there is a great emphasis on “thin” dispersal;
- The particular activities within two Diocese that sought initiatives to further the Churches’ involvement with asylum seekers.

A recent report, commissioned by the Government Office for the South West, highlighted the considerable contribution that faith groups make to the well-being of their local communities and neighbourhoods. Equally, it demonstrated how often this is a resource that is ignored or overlooked when services are being planned and developed.

The Vision

That single families are accommodated within the boundaries of a faith community and that the faith group provide a significant level of direct support to the family and contribute to the integration process within the local community.

Practical Application

Through a process involving the Diocese and the Regional Consortium, applications to be a “Host Parish” would be invited.

Representatives from each applicant parish would be invited to an information seminar that would outline the scheme and clarify responsibilities and expectations. It is anticipated that no more than two families would be accommodated in any one parish.

Parishes selected for participation would identify potential properties in conjunction with the Consortium advisor. Properties might be owned/rented by the church or church member, acquired by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) or rented in the private sector etc.

Training would be undertaken with faith members who would be active in supporting a family and the group would be networked into other support arrangements.

There would be an encouragement to develop inter-faith co-operation. The housing management function could be undertaken by a nominated RSL and the accommodation would be subject to all the specifications and inspection regimes instituted by NASS.

Advantages

- Can be piloted at chosen pace;
- Faiths group model can be used within dispersal areas;
- Offers flexibility to deal with uncertain demand;

- Extends support provision;
- Could create positive impact in communities.

Disadvantages

- Model untested;
- Faiths group model relies on voluntary support;
- Housing costs could be higher.

Committee: Community & Leisure Committee
Date: 7 June 2005
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: Best Value Review – Young People
Author: Gaynor Bradley (01799) 510348

Summary

- 1 A Best Value Review of Young People's services has been undertaken and is due to be completed by the end of June. The final report has yet to be compiled but this report seeks to provide Members with the background information on services provided by, and in partnership with, the Council and the general approach of the review. It also refers to some of the issues that have been highlighted to date.

Background

- 2 The District Council Leisure Team operates direct services for young people in the form of Sports and Arts Development holiday programme courses. The courses are run for five out of the six school holidays per annum i.e. courses are not run during the Christmas holidays.
- 3 However, there is also a large amount of partnership working involving projects for young people (aged 8 – 19) years undertaken as follows:

Community & Leisure Joint Projects

- Motorwise
- Crucial Crew
- Specific Joint Projects with the PCT – Health Improvement Forum
- BEST
- Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
- Youth Initiatives Working Group
- Grants
- Needs Analysis
- Healthy Schools
- Working with Town & Parish Councils

Leisure General

- Monitoring the Private Finance Initiative Leisure Management Contract (contribution towards development of children's activities).
- Support development of village sports facilities
- Support access to the countryside
- Advise on the development of local informal recreation areas

- ❑ Develop and support the Healthy Walks Programme
- ❑ Develop and organise a Cultural Festival
- ❑ Compile information for Website
- ❑ Develop a community information database

Sports Development

- ❑ Provision of 5 School Holiday programmes per annum
- ❑ Provision and co-ordination of development squads for participation in Essex Youth Games
- ❑ Management and development of Community Sports Outreach Workers' Project
- ❑ Development of Healthwise Project
- ❑ Development of Bodycare Project in Schools
- ❑ Development of Disability Multi-Sports Project
- ❑ Support to RESCU Leisure Project
- ❑ Development of Active Sports Programme
- ❑ Enable community use of School Sports Facilities
- ❑ Participation in County Sports Partnership
- ❑ Liaison with District Secondary Schools on Development Projects
- ❑ Primary School Support and Club Link Projects
- ❑ Coach Education
- ❑ Sports specific grant advice

Youth & Arts Development

- ❑ Development of 5 School Holiday programmes per annum
- ❑ Development of z Bikes Scheme
- ❑ Delivery of Prison No Way programme
- ❑ Organisation of the "U" Festival
- ❑ Advice to Community Groups
- ❑ Advice, training and support to Schools regarding provision of services for young people i.e. School Information Points
- ❑ Youth Forum/Young Essex Assembly
- ❑ Administration of Travel Grants Scheme for young people's groups
- ❑ Development of Music Project
- ❑ Support Essex Experience
- ❑ Mobile Information Bus
- ❑ Community Links with Youth Offending Team
- ❑ Advise on the development of Skateboard Parks
- ❑ Development of horticultural education project in Bridge End Garden

(N.B. The above lists are not exhaustive as the Team deals with a number of other projects not related to young people, ad hoc enquires and one-off issues as necessary.)

- 4 In addition, through partnership working the team links at various times with a wide range of services for children and young people. The Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) in particular addresses all areas of children's lives i.e. health, education, social, leisure, crime, and adverse factors that might affect children such as domestic violence etc. Therefore, in

undertaking a best value review it was thought that services provided by other organisations could not be ignored.

- 5 In order to address the existing wide range of partnership working a multi-agency Best Value Working Group was established. The group comprised representatives of ECC Youth Service, ECC Children and Families Care Service, Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services, Connexions and Uttlesford Primary Care Trust. Additionally, the Best Value Member Reference Group comprised Councillors V. Pedder, S. Schneider, A. Wattebot and A. Abrahams.
- 6 A list of agencies providing services to and for children and young people has been compiled as part of the work undertaken by the CYPSP and contributed towards the Best Value Review research material.
- 7 Three questionnaires have been carried out to establish issues of concern for and to young people. Also information collated from youth democracy evenings has been included in the review findings. The Youth Forum has also performed the role of commenting on the consultation results.

8 **Comparison Visits**

Visits were made to Tendering District Council and Colchester Borough Council. Tendering D.C. has a Youth Strategy and whilst it demonstrated that partnership working exists it did not clarify the relationship between the Council and other agencies. Colchester B.C. operates youth provision under the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Strategy.

Visiting these authorities reinforced the view that has been expressed by the Uttlesford CYPSP that there is a need for an Uttlesford Children & Young People's Strategy that encompasses the work of various agencies within Uttlesford.

9 **Initial Outcomes**

Some of the issues identified and action taken so far are:

- **Cheaper tickets and discount card for leisure facilities as well as for use in shops, cinemas and on the railways.** Currently, we are awaiting the introduction of the Connexions Card in Uttlesford and this will be accepted in the Leisure Centres and some shops. At present the Connexions Service is developing this project and Leisure Connection Ltd., the Leisure Contractor, is already signed up to the scheme on a national basis.
- **Establish better links with transport providers.** Through the Youth Forum contact has been made with the County Transport Officer and possibilities for future developments are currently being considered. Additionally, the Youth Forum has worked with the Youth & Arts

Development Officer to organise free transport during the school holidays to destinations of their choice.

- **Soap and cleaner toilet facilities in Secondary Schools.** Young people felt very strongly about this issue and the Youth Forum donated a sum of money from its budget to enable soap dispensers to be purchased for Schools. The Youth & Arts Development Officer progressed this issue and sought commitment from Schools to ensure that soap was provided and that the toilets would be maintained to a better standard of cleanliness.

- 10 The final report will contain a comprehensive list of the views expressed by children and young people together with a proposed action plan and details of the financial implications. However, it was felt that where action could be taken immediately then this should be done in order to demonstrate to young people that their views are being taken into account during the review process.

RECOMMENDED that Members agree to receive a full report on the outcome of the Best Value Review of Young People's Services at the September Meeting of the Community & Leisure Committee.

Background Papers: Surveys and supporting information.