



Report to Cabinet

Subject: Response to “Youth Matters” Green Paper by Gedling Partnership Youth Action Group

Date: 17th November 2005

Author: Cllr Viv McCrossan – Young Persons Champion

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform Cabinet of the response made to the “Youth Matters” Green Paper by Gedling Partnership’s Youth Action Group.

2. Background

Government has produced the ‘*Youth Matters*’ Green Paper to seek the views of Local Authorities; schools and colleges; Connexions Partnerships; Youth Services; the private sector; voluntary and community sectors; the health sector; the wider community; and young people and parents on a number of issues relating to Young people and those agencies that provide services for young people.

The Gedling Partnership Board has asked its Youth Action Group to submit its views in response to the paper and to seek the views of young people in the Borough. This would include the views of local young people through the Gedling Area Youth Assembly.

On 8th September, Cabinet supported this action.

Following that Cabinet meeting the Head of the Cabinet Office wrote to the Chair of the Youth Action Group, urging that a response is made and that it reflects the views of young people in the Borough.

The Youth Action Group held an additional meeting on 18th October to discuss and consider a response to the Green Paper. In addition, the Group has sought

views on the Green Paper from young people in the borough through the Gedling District Youth Assembly.

3. Proposal

As a result, a response has now been compiled by the Chair of the Youth Action Group. The detail of this response is highlighted in the report to the Gedling Partnership Executive (Appendix A) for the information of Cabinet Members.

4. Recommendation

Members to note the response to the Green Paper.

Appendix A: Response to “Youth Matters” Green Paper by Gedling Partnership Youth Action Group

Gedling Partnership
Working Together

Report to Gedling Partnership Executive

Subject “Youth Matters” – Green Paper

Date: 24th October 2005

Author: Graham Farrow, Youth Action Group

1) Purpose of Report

To feed back to the Board the view on the “Green Paper” of the Gedling Partnership Youth Action Group

2) Background

Members of the Youth Action Group: (Debbie Clarke, Connexions, Lance Juby, GBC Cabinet Office, Andy Bowers, GBC Leisure Services, Cllr Viv. McCrossen, Young Persons Champion, Blanche Steeples, NCC Youth Engagement Team, Graham Farrow and Sharon Hall, NCC, Young People’s Division) met on Tuesday 18th October 05 to consider a response to the Green Paper.

At the time of meeting the responses of the NCC Young People’s Division and Connexions Service had still to be released. Young people from across the County are due to meet Members at County Hall to discuss the Green Paper on Wednesday 26th October.

3) Views on the Green Paper

Positives

- The vision of Youth Matters was positively received as naturally leading on from ‘Every Child Matters’ and continues the current trend of partnerships.
- It supports improved co-ordination of services and resources with child/young person at the centre.

- It puts young people at the core of decision making, seeks to value their views and strengthens the voice and influence of young people.
- It does give a generally positive view of young people and recognises that the majority are positive contributors to society.

Negatives/Concerns

- Considering the scale of re-organisation and potential impact of applying “Youth Matters” a lot of time was spent discussing its concerns and negative aspects.
- Concern was expressed unanimously over the ‘Opportunities Card’. Financing of it is vague, with no additional funding and it appears unrealistic with no evidence that it will work. If young people don’t buy into this then what impact will taking the card away as a sanction have on young people.
- The group felt strongly that having been awarded to a young person the Opportunities Card should not be taken away from them.
- 2/3 of young people were against the Opportunities Card and favoured Travel Concession Card as an alternative. Alternative responses should be available as rewards to meet the differing interests and needs of young people.
- If young people really do matter – why is no additional funding available?
- Have we the Capacity to meet the needs of the new targets?
- There are concerns that the major structural changes will be costly and divert attention away from delivery.
- The paper is limited on social education. Emphasising provision rather than personal development.
- Important issues such as skills, training, employability and housing are missed, i.e. particularly 14-16 year olds who experience difficulties over work placements, insurance etc.
- Schools do not have to sign up to Youth Matters – making the role of schools as information providers, problematic, Quality standards need to be in place to ensure the LEA are using the money effectively and that young people are benefiting.

4) Proposal

Response of the Partnership Youth Action Group be forwarded to dfes by
November 4th 2005