



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 4TH NOVEMBER 2014

SUBJECT: LEARNING CAERPHILLY – AN UPDATE

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update Members on progress on the delivery of the Single Plan in terms of a Learning Caerphilly.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The report informs Members on the anticipated outcomes and impact of the Communities First PDG Match Funded Project and the placement of Youth Workers and Family Support Workers in schools.

2.2 The report also demonstrates how a partnership between schools, Community First and the Youth Service can assist young people to overcome the barriers to learning and reach their potential.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The report links directly the 'Learning' section of the Single Integrated Plan for Caerphilly, linking into the L1 - Improve the level of basic skills and the number of achieved qualifications (formal and non-formal) to improve the life opportunities for families, L2 - Develop a multi-agency approach to address the impact of poverty on pupil attainment, and L3 - Children, young people and families have the skills and resources to access job opportunities.

3.2 The report also has a direct link with the Welsh Government National Youth Service Strategy 2014-2018 and also delivers on the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework.

3.3 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Welsh Government Extending Entitlement Guidance in terms of ensuring opportunities for young people to participate and influence the development of services.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Background

4.1.1 In October 2013 officers from Community First and the Youth Service met to work in partnership and develop a pilot initiative which based a youth and family worker in schools.

4.1.2 A letter was sent to Headteachers asking them if they would be interested in being part of the pilot programme. A total of seven schools replied and four pilot schools were chosen based on the evidence of need. The four pilot schools are: Lewis School Pengam, Pontllanfraith, Rhymney and St Martin's Comprehensive School.

4.1.3 A Communities First Pupil Deprivation bid was written and submitted to the Welsh Government in November 2013 which was then subsequently approved in March 2014.

4.2 Communities First Pupil Deprivation Project

4.2.1 The purpose of the project is to engage young people at an early stage, identify barriers to learning, improve school attendance and achievement, reduce anti social behaviour, crime, alcohol and drug abuse. The project also has the potential to have a significant contribution to the reduction of poverty.

4.2.2 An informal learning environment has been established in each school specifically decorated and furnished to create a nurturing environment and enable the young people to be relaxed and supported effectively.

4.2.3 A Youth Workers in School Project Plan has been developed to identify the objectives and corresponding tasks that need to be undertaken by staff to provide an effective lead worker role which is located in each school on a full time basis to address the challenges young people face during the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

4.2.4 The Youth Workers were appointed during the recent summer months and commenced their support for young people on the onset of the new academic term 2014/15. A total of 113 young people have been engaged to date.

4.2.5 The Youth Workers are currently developing an individual learning plan for each young person to support both their formal and non-formal learning process. This is then linked to the priorities identified for the family and shared with the school.

4.2.6 The Youth and Family Worker are line managed on a day to day basis by the Head of Pastoral Care in the individual school. The staff, are then supported by a key qualified and experienced Youth Service manager to ensure that the activities, outcomes and impact is in line with the bid and Caerphilly Youth Service Strategy.

4.2.7 It is envisaged that Youth Service Managers will monitor and evaluated the project extensively and report on the young people achievements within the Improvement Objective 3 and subsequent Scrutiny Reports.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Youth Service Strategy, operational plan and project management templates will have a holistic commitment to equality of opportunity.

5.2 The Youth Service will be required to demonstrate its contribution to the inclusion agenda in line with the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives, via targets, consultation and monitoring in the Youth Service Strategy, the Directorate's Service Improvement Plans and information provided for inclusion in the annual monitoring and improvement reports for Equalities and Welsh Language to the relevant Commissions.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The submission of this bid ensures best value use of local authority resources by matching school budgets with core Youth Service and Welsh Government funding.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Four youth workers and four family workers have been employed to engage young people and their families in the four pilot schools. They have been employed by the schools directly or by the authority in response to the schools requirement.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All comments received are contained within the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members note the content of the report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure that members are aware of the anticipated outcomes of the project.
- 10.2 To ensure that the funding impacts on the delivery of the Caerphilly Youth Service Strategy.

11. STATUTORY POWERS

- 11.1 Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales.
- 11.2 The Learning and Skills Act 2000.
- 11.3 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2010, Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011.

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