

 <b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009</b>		<b>Agenda Item No.</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Update on the Implementation of the Engaging Younger People Task &amp; Finish Group Recommendations</b>	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Bernadette Allen, Policy and Projects Officer, 01926 456020 or Bernadette.Allen@warwickdc.gov.uk	
<b>Service Area</b>	Community Partnership Team	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	N/A	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	N/A	
<b>Background Papers</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee – July 2008 and March 2009	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	No

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
With regard to officer approval all reports <i>must</i> be approved by the report author's relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Relevant Director	17/09/09	Andy Jones
Chief Executive		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		
Legal	17/09/09	John Gregory
Finance	17/09/09	Gary Walker
Portfolio Holders	17/09/09	Les Caborn
<b>Consultation Undertaken</b>		
Members of the Task & Finish Group		
<b>Final Decision?</b>		Yes
<b>Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)</b>		

## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the progress made on the implementation of the Engaging Younger People Task and Finish Group, at the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June 2009.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider how the Task and Finish Group's recommendations, can be met by the work on the 'hear by right' Standard outlined in section 5 and appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.2 That Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the result of the mapping and planning exercise undertaken against the 'hear by right' Standard (see appendix 2).

## **3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Following the Executive's receipt of a petition in April 2008 calling on the Council to "conduct a review on how it engages with young people on its day to day proceedings", a Task and Finish Group of non-Executive Members was appointed in July 2008 to scrutinise "engaging younger people in our decision making processes".
- 3.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee do not have any delegated powers to implement the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group. The recommendations must be approved by the Executive, before they can be implemented (except where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee make a recommendation for submission to another Committee). The recommendations were presented to the Council's Executive on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2009 and it was agreed a further report is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report back on progress made on the recommendations.
- 3.3 In addition the Children's and Young People's Plan contains a specific target, agreed by the County Council's Childrens Trust Partnership and the Public Service Board, to achieve the 'hear by right' Standard – Established Level by April 2011. The Children and Young People Block of the Local Area Agreement contains the same target.

## **4 POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 The work to be carried out by the Community Partnership Team on the Engaging with Young People Task and Finish Group recommendations and the 'hear by right' Standard contributes to the following key objectives of the Council:
- i.) delivering responsive public services in an open and transparent way
  - ii.) promote safe, vibrant and sustainable local communities.
- 4.2 All work on the Task and Finish Group Recommendations and the 'hear by right' Standard are to be carried out within existing resources.

## **5 BACKGROUND**

- 5.1 The 'Warwickshire Award for Involvement' (WAI) was developed by the Children Fund, the County Council's Youth Service and the Warwickshire Consortium of Voluntary Youth Services as an alternative to the 'hear by right' Standard. The 'hear by right' Standard was considered too complex for some organisations, particularly for small voluntary and community groups. Therefore the WAI was developed to provide a simple and less complicated Standard for organisations to achieve. The WAI was promoted through the Children's Trust Partnerships as a standard for auditing and evidencing active involvement of children and young people in decision making.
- 5.2 In 2007/8 the Council adopted the WAI and set a target in the Corporate Strategy 'to increase the number of services achieving the Warwickshire Award for Involvement from 0 in 2007 to 3 Service Areas achieving the silver award in 2011.'
- 5.3 In January 2009 a report was presented to the Public Service Board to agree a consistent approach across the county for engaging with children and young people. The aim of the paper was to obtain a commitment from the full partnership to adopt the 'hear by right' Standard and to support the establishment of locality based Youth Forums. This proposal was agreed by all partners.
- 5.4 The change from the WAI to the 'hear by right standard resulted in a delay in the ability of the Council to progress work around engaging with young people. The Council had to review the resource implication for adopting the 'hear by right' Standard. After a series of meetings involving the Council Lead Officer for Young People, County Lead for the 'hear by right ' Standard, the Heads of Service for Housing and Property Services and Culture Services it was agreed that the best way to proceed was to complete a mapping and planning exercise at the 'Emerging' and 'Establishing' Levels of the Standard, to present a report to Corporate Management Team on the an analysis of outcomes of the planning and mapping exercise (see appendix 1), identify areas for improvement and state how we go about getting the views of young people on how we are meeting the targets.
- 5.5 In addition the Council's Executive received a petition calling on the Council to "conduct a review on how it engages with young people on its day to day proceedings". This resulted in a Task and Finish Group of non-Executive Members (appointed in July 2008) to scrutinize how the Council was "engaging with young people in our decision processes". The outcome of the Task and Finish Groups resulted in a number of recommendations that now need to be reviewed in the context of the 'hear by right' Standard indicators (see appendix 2).

## **6. ALIGNING THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE 'hear by right' STANDARD**

- 6.1 The Engaging with Younger People Task and Finish Group established there was a need for Warwick District Council to improve engagement with younger people on its decision making processes and made a number of recommendations.

- 6.2 The 'hear by rights' Standards framework secures the sustained and effective participation of children and young people. The standards enable continual improvement in engaging with children and young people and can be applied to services that directly and indirectly affect them. The framework comprises of 3 Levels: Emerging, Established and Advance. There are also seven standards: shared values, strategies, structures, systems, staff, skills and knowledge and style of leadership. They form a practical, evidenced based model of how to achieve change in an organisation, showing how each relies on the other to move forward.
- 6.3 It is important that the recommendations for the Task and Finish Groups are aligned with the 'hear by right' Standard work to ensure a more effective and efficient use of resources.
- 6.4 Appendix1 outlines the Task and Finish Groups recommendations and how they can be linked to the 'hear by right' Standard work.

## **7. WAY FORWARD**

### **7.1 Proposal for seeking views of young people**

The mapping and planning exercise has been completed (see appendix 1) and a number of areas for improvement identified. The next stage, is to seek the views of young people on outcomes of the planning and mapping exercise. The proposal is through the Youth Participation Worker to engage with the existing Locality Youth Forums. In addition through the Warwickshire Association of Youth Clubs to engage with young people involved in the voluntary and community run youth provision.

### **7.2 Feedback to Service Areas**

To ensure the responses by young people are recorded on the 'hear by right' mapping and planning tool and fed- back to Service Areas to help inform and develop an action plan to focus on the ' areas identified by for improvement'.

### **7.3 Approval of action plan**

A further report presented to CMT to agree the action for addressing the identified areas for improvement. To continue to provide CMT with a regular quarterly update on progress made for the target of 'achieving the established level by April 2011'.

### **7.4 Ensure we are on the right tracks to identify another local authority to carry out a 'Peer Review' of the Council's progress on the 'hear by right' Standard to ensure we are on track with the target of achieving the 'hear by right' Established Level.**

### **7.5 Timescale:**

- Engaging with young people to seek their views on the outcomes of the Council's mapping and planning exercise – July – September 2009
- Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on proposals for aligning the Task and Finish Group recommendations with work on the 'hear by right' Standard - September

- Feedback to Service Areas on the views of young people on the council's assessment – October 2009
- Service Areas to develop an action – December 2009
- CMT approve action plan for achieving 'hear by right' Standard target of Established Level by April 2011
- Peer Review on progress of achieving 'hear by right' Standard – March 2010