

YOUTH SERVICE – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Report By: Director of Policy and Community

Wards Affected

Countywide

Purpose

1. To update Members on the under performance of the Community Youth Service against the four key performance indicators set by the DfES.

Considerations

2. The DfES has set four key performance targets for all local authority youth services these are: numbers of young people we are in CONTACT with, secondly those who are PARTICIPATING, and who then receive either a RECORDED or ACCREDITED outcome. In the first six months we are significantly under achieving against these targets.
3. Due to the new targets and definitions we have adopted a new Management Information System (MIS) and reporting procedures. These have increased the administrative workload for youth workers and the focus on accredited learning outcomes, which are primarily delivered through small group work. This new system has not been imbedded sufficiently and we have both a high error rating requiring forms to be sent back, and a number of unreported areas of work.
4. The MIS we have adopted is the nationally recognised system, however there have been a number of technical problems with the system. A new software developer has been appointed and a new version is due in January 2005, which is intended to resolve the current difficulties. These difficulties have resulted in a one-month delay in implementing the system, which means that only five months figures are shown on the report.
5. The Youth Service has had a vacancy rate of 12% for all of this year. This has been addressed through new recruitment activity but staff will not be in post until the third quarter. Many newly recruited staff are trainees who will require additional support and are unlikely to meet the required performance standards in their first 6 months of employment.
6. The Youth Service is under funded against national and regional standards (National Youth Agency (NYA) standard £100 per head of 13 – 19, Herefordshire youth population 2004-5 allocation £59.54) and therefore understaffed. The NYA standard for youth workers set per head of the youth population would mean 35.8 FTE workers for Herefordshire. Current allocation is 24.5 FTE youth workers.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Geoff Cole,
Head of Culture, Leisure and Education for Life on (01432) 260721

Financial Implications

7. The Youth Service budget is currently being utilised as part of the strategic options exercise. If the proposals were to be implemented in full the budget would be reduced by £100,000. This would mean the closure of one youth centre and the cessation of financial support to the voluntary sector. This would reduce further the Youth Services ability to meet these targets.
8. To meet the national standard of £100 per head of youth population aged 13 – 19, the Youth Service budget would need to be uplifted by £566,025.

Recommendation

That the Committee note the report.

Background Papers

- None identified.