

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP
ACTIVITIES FOR TEENAGERS IN WEST BERKSHIRE

MINUTES

Monday 31st October 2011

Present: Councillors: Sheila Ellison (Chairman), Gwen Mason, Peter Argyle, Alan Macro, Tim Metcalfe and Ieuan Tuck.

Officers: David Lowe (Policy and Scrutiny Manager), Jason Teal, Jessica Collett and David Baker.

Apologies: None

1. Election of Chairman

There was one nomination for Chairman proposed by Councillor Gwen Mason and seconded by Councillor Peter Argyle. At the vote the motion was carried unanimously and Councillor Sheila Ellison was elected Chairman.

2. Agreement of the Scope and Terms of Reference

There was a lively discussion as Members commented and refined the scope and Terms of Reference of the Task Group. The question was raised as to why this scrutiny work had been brought about. David Lowe explained the request had come from OSMC and was a result of continued public perception that the need for improved facilities for teenagers remained the public's highest priority over recent years. That changes were currently taking place within Youth Services as it adjusted from universal provision to a targeted service that concentrated on the most vulnerable made the issue even more relevant.

There was clear agreement that the mapping of existing provision within West Berkshire was an essential starting point. Jessica Collect provided details on a new Youth Activities leaflet and a database of information that would be added to the Council's website very shortly which would provide a sound base of information.

The assessment of need and the demand for services would be required to determine what might be influencing public perception. There was a need to understand within the existing provision why this was not being taken up by some groups of teenagers.

It was agreed that it was important to understand the impact of the changes taking place in the context of the Big Society. Questions that arose included understanding what was actually happening to those services being withdrawn, were replacement services proving to be successful and sustainable and how best could the Council evaluate, influence and support the third sector's activities. A

need was identified to understand what barriers (communications, insurance, training, paperwork, CRB checks & H&S assessments etc.) existed that might inhibit the success of those activities and the volunteers that were involved in their sustained operation.

3. Background Briefing

Jason Teal, (Performance, Research and Consultation Manager) gave a presentation on the community perceptions of activities for teenagers available in West Berkshire.

There were 4 key sources of data to help inform this:

- Annual resident survey 2010
- 2008 survey of what young people do in their free time
- Parish Plans
- Tellus4 national survey 2009

The detail of these was published on the Consultation Finder.

The conclusions drawn from the survey work were:

- Activities for teenagers was a consistently high priority amongst adults with (59%) or without (43%) dependent children
- This was most keenly felt in Thatcham (54%) and Reading suburbs (61%)
- Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of young people gave a positive impression of the local area
- Key to young people were personal safety, street cleanliness and shopping facilities
- Improvements in organised activities were cited in 1/3 of cases – this was consistent across age groups

Jason Teal also advised that there was a mixture of requiring some organised activity and for the provision of space for more informal activities.

Parish Plans were identified as a valuable source of views and requirements such as:

- More physical facilities
- Revenue related facilities – i.e. additional Youth Service support
- More research on the views of local people in the community including young people
- An emphasis on more volunteers to help run clubs etc. Community Action West Berkshire (CAWB) had undertaken work to pull parishes together in this respect. It was commented that a number of checks were required before someone could become a volunteer.
- Facilities for parental support – nurseries etc
- Home to school transport

4. Refinement of the Scope and Terms of Reference

A copy of the latest revised Scope and Terms of Reference is attached via an

active link - see under Section 6.

5. Future meeting dates and actions agreed

Revised Scope and Terms of Reference to be drawn up and circulated – Action DL

Youth Activities Leaflet and details on database to be circulated – Action JC

The following meeting arrangements were discussed and agreed:

Action DL/DB to set up and Members to attend.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	Activity
24/11/11	10.30-12.30	CEO's Office	Interviewing Strategy & Policy
12/12/11	16.00-17.30	CEO's Office	Interviewing Practitioners' Operational View
10/01/12	10.30-12.30	CEO's Office	Interviewing or Site Visit – Views from Young People

6. Active References and useful web-links

The following (Ctrl & Click under Citrix) references and links may be of value:

[Consultation Finder](#)

[Tellus4 survey](#)

[Youth Activities Leaflet](#)

[Parish Planning](#)

[Parish Plans index](#)

[Revised Activities for Teenagers – Scope and Terms Of Reference](#)