

Annex A – Covering Template for Responses

Please complete the attached cover sheet when sending evidence, indicating the set of questions to which a response is being provided and contact details of the person for any follow-up queries.

Contact details for respondent	
Name	
Job title	Head of Citizenship and Development
Do you represent an organisation? (if so, name of organisation and type: e.g. voluntary, public body, private company).	The British Youth Council (BYC) BYC is the UK national youth council; it is a national voluntary organisation.
Postal address	The Mezzanine 2 Downstream Building 1 London Bridge London SE1 9BG
Telephone number	

	Which area of the review are you responding to? (please mark X)
Prevention strand	
Review of disabled children	
Strategy for youth services	X
Review of high cost, high harm families	

Introduction

BYC welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Children and Young People's Review that is being conducted by HM Treasury and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) as part of the ten year Comprehensive Spending Review.

As the UK's national youth council for young people, we are a champion for young people aged under 26 at a local, regional, national and international level. We support young people to ensure that their views and voice is heard by decision and policy-makers and feel it is important that this review takes account of those views when considering funding arrangements for the next ten years that will impact on the lives of today's and tomorrow's young people.

BYC is keen to ensure that *all young people*, those *aged up to 25*, are included in the review and that the subsequent funding priorities match this age range. For too long have the invisible generation of those aged 19-25 been left to fend for themselves, whilst central government have ignored their needs and rights to access services and information to assist their transition from childhood to adulthood, whilst rendering their time as a 'youth' as unacknowledged or valued.

Our evidence responds to specific key questions within the review as highlighted in the terms of referenced outlined in Annex B3. It is based on our recent submissions to government consultations ranging from the DfES's consultation on the rationalization of its grant schemes to the Russell Commission on Youth and Voluntary Action.

The British Youth Council (BYC)

The British Youth Council is the National Youth Council of the UK. We are an active network of youth organisations from across the country. Our membership represents a unique coalition of interests with over 400 local youth councils, forums and groups. We also have organisations representing specific groups of young people such as Student Action for Refugees and the Queer Youth Alliance. Youth sections of political organisations and trade unions are also represented as are uniformed groups. The list ranges from Amicus-MSF to Girlguiding UK. The numbers and different interests of our network mean that we can truly represent the real diversity of young people in the UK.

BYC's vision is that all young people are able to voice their views and have equal access to opportunities within society. We achieve this by empowering young people to have a voice on issues of concern and importance to them by providing information, support and training. BYC acts as a voice for young people through campaigning and lobbying decision-makers.

BYC is a peer-led organisation, in both principle and practice. Our Board of Trustees is formed by thirteen young people elected annually from our membership. The trustees are the principal representatives of the organisation, and are responsible for BYC's strategic work. Specific areas of work are divided among committees of young people with a staff support worker. We have a strong volunteering base of young Media Spokespeople and Volunteer Peer Trainers. We also have a number of volunteers who work with staff members on specific projects to gain valuable work experience. Through young people's involvement at every level of the organisation, BYC is able to respond sensitively and rapidly to emerging issues of concern to young people in the UK. In short, BYC is led by young people for young people.

BYC's response to the key questions

1.0 What is the current distribution of youth services and youth engagement activities available across the country? How is that likely to evolve following the Youth Green Paper?

- 1.1 The Youth Green Paper calls for Children's Services to involve children and young people in the development of local children and young people's plans. BYC anticipate that their involvement will increase, with greater emphasis placed on ensuring that every child and young person is able to participate in this process.
- 1.2 BYC is aware that many organisations – statutory and voluntary, already ensure that children and young people are involved in their decision-making. This is evidenced by the mapping of children and young people's participation in England conducted by BYC and the National Youth Agency (NYA) between November 2003 and January 2004. The survey covered statutory and voluntary sectors across the England. A key finding from the respondents (160 voluntary organisations and 849 statutory sector) was that around four out of five involved children and young people in decision-making.¹
- 1.3 This is an important starting point based on the recommendation contained within Youth Matters, as the number of children and young people involved in local decision-making, for local services, should dramatically increase over the next decade. This will require a need for greater training, support and resources for those children and young people as well as the adults working in children's services to ensure that their involvement in meaningful and any impact can be identified and measured.
- 1.4 BYC envisages that a greater involvement by children and young people in the decision-making of the types of local youth services and engagement activities will have a direct impact on the development of local youth representative structures. These will become recognised forums to ensure that all young people's views are captured and feed into the decision-making process. BYC strongly supports this, as we believe that a current system already exists, in the form of local youth councils, but as yet they are not sufficiently resourced to fulfil their potential at a local level.
- 1.5 We have long promoted and supported local youth councils as a model for young people to come together, discuss issues of importance to them and to engage in local action to address these issues. Over the next decade BYC would like to see the implementation of *Youth Matters* result in the creation of a vibrant and resourced network of independent youth councils which would:
- Effectively represent and communicate the views of local young people
 - Empower and encourage greater involvement of young people in local communities
 - Provide a consistent and recognised approach to involving young people across all local authorities
 - Provide a mechanism for young people to influence the work of Children's Trusts and the Every Child Matters local change programmes
 - Ensure that young people can be involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of local services, governance and strategic planning
 - Enable young people's needs to be more fully and accurately assessed and ensure that services meet those needs
 - Share information and build links with other strategic bodies
 - Provide a support network for smaller youth-led community groups e.g. local young carer's groups, young refugee groups and enable these groups to influence local decision-making

¹ Oldfield, C. and Fowler, C., *Mapping Children and Young People's Participation in England*, DfES Research Brief No: RB584, October 2004.

- 1.6 There is a general perception that youth councils and forums are well-resourced groups of articulate young people associated with the local authority. This may be true of a small minority; but the majority of youth councils are established by young people in response to a local need and as such have very limited local support or resources. Amongst BYC's network only 16% of youth councils have some form of staff support.² There are often several councils and forums in a locality but because of limited resources they may not be aware of the other groups or are able to collaborate. A lack of resources including, staff, funding and appropriate expertise, also means that these groups are often not able to actively reach the harder to reach young people and may, in many cases not be aware of what groups of young people are in their areas. Therefore, youth councils may miss the views and involvement of groups of young people who are more marginalised.
- 1.7 This lack of support for youth councils and forums undermines the positive impact they have and weakens the level of youth involvement in local decision-making. Something which runs counter to the ethos behind the Youth Green Paper and the responses it gathered.³
- 1.8 The role and potential of youth councils is already recognised by young people. Their responses to Every Child Matters highlight this. When asked '*how do you think you should have a say in what your local council does to make things better for children and young people?*' the third highest response was youth councils. The first two responses were 'consultations and surveys' and 'open meetings and forums', which are mechanisms for involvement, which youth councils use.⁴
- 1.9 A prominent activity that young people engage with is volunteering. During 2005's Year of the Volunteer, 16-19 year olds were the group most involved in informal volunteering (50% at least once a month) and formal volunteering (32% at least once a month)⁵. This age group's engagement was above the average level of engagement for citizens during the year.
- 1.10 There are already a number of opportunities nationwide to involve young people in voluntary activities that meet their areas of interest. BYC's membership of a unique coalition of youth organisations throughout the UK, from youth sections of political and trade union organisations such as Young Labour, Amicus and NUS, to faith and uniformed organisations such as MAYC, Girlguiding UK and the Scouts. Our membership also includes local youth councils and organisations that represent particular groups of society such as lesbian, gay and bisexual and black and minority ethnic groups. Many of these groups offer varying volunteering opportunities, from traditional to more informal opportunities such as the involvement of young people in youth councils.
- 1.11 Central government must continue to support V and other initiatives through the Volunteering and Charitable Giving Unit in the Office of the Third Sector, to which BYC is a youth volunteering strategic partner, which ensure the long-term sustainability of youth volunteering and its infrastructure. A key component must be ensuring that young people themselves are able to develop and initiate volunteering opportunities. Youth-led volunteering gives young people the chance to create, organise, and develop their ideas with their peers.

² *Building a vibrant youth council network*, BYC, January 2005.

³ 68% of young people that responded to the Youth Green Paper said they would 'like to help decide how local councils spend money on providing activities for young people', *Youth Matters: Next Steps*, DfES, 2006.

⁴ *Every Child Matters... and young person: What you said... and what we're going to do*, DfES, 2004.

⁵ Year of the Volunteer Review, GfK NOP, April 2006.

2.0 Building on the Youth Green Paper, is there more that could be done to improve and sustain the effectiveness in the delivery of existing services and activities?

- 2.1 BYC believes that sustained funding in existing infrastructure, especially youth-led bodies, would transform the landscape for youth services and youth engagement activities. The introduction of significant investment in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) would ensure that such bodies had a sound financial base from which to grow in direct response to children and young people's needs. Such a shift from central government, where funding was prioritised for strategic growth and development as opposed to short-lived project deliver, would ensure that organisations were equipped to engage all young people and resource meaningful participation, especially for those young people experiencing significant disadvantage.
- 2.2 BYC welcomes the recent change in funding arrangements by the DfES for national voluntary and community organisations, we believe it to be a good example where applicants are able to bid for strategic and project funding. Whilst this is welcomed, it should be noted that many central government departments continue to treat children and young people in silos, limiting opportunities to improve children and young people's lives by having a narrow and limited view of the world in which they live.
- 2.3 Central government and its funding arrangements to deliver services and activities for children and young people need to be realigned to ensure that no type of child or young person is allowed to fall through the net. The continuation of central government's over obsession with classifying types of children and young people or what central government department and its services they will come into contact with, will only add to this.
- 2.4 We also believe that the government has a role to play in being a beacon of best practice to others that engage with and fund the voluntary and community sector. Whilst we welcome the change in focus from solely project to strategic funding by the DfES, central government should consolidate this by acknowledging that even where project funding is available there is still a requirement to cover core costs. Endorsement of and use of models such as ACEVO's full cost recovery⁶ across government would ensure that even the smallest VCS would be able to deliver existing and future services in both the short and long-term.
- 2.5 The disbanded Children and Young People's Unit served as a good example and acknowledgement by central government that children and young people are not a homogenous group. Its *Learning to Listen* document, a set of core principles on involving children and young people agreed by eleven central government departments, established three key reasons to involve children and young people:
- Better services;
 - Promoting citizenship and social inclusion;
 - Personal and social education and development.⁷
- 2.6 *Learning to Listen* resulted in the creation of annual involvement plans by the eleven central government departments, which was coordinated by the Children and Young People's Unit. Yet following the unit's disbandment, there has been a lack of focus at the heart of central government on mainstreaming and promoting best practice on the need and practical ways to support young people's involvement in the design and delivery of public services from which they intend to benefit.

⁶ This model was designed by ACEVO (Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations) and is recognised by the HM Treasury and increasingly by major funders including The Big Lottery.

⁷ *Learning to Listen: Core Principles for the Involvement of Children and Young People*, Children and Young People Unit, November 2001.

3.0 What are the particular barriers faced by different groups of young people, including disabled young people, in accessing services, and what are the policy issues that arise?

- 3.1 Young people with disabilities should have equal opportunities to accessing services that are provided for all young people. They are likely to require extra support to use such services. Support should also be available to organisations that wish to involve more young people with disabilities so that more opportunities are available. Services need to be flexible and responsive in order to accommodate the differing needs of all young people aged up to 25, whether they have a disability or not.
- 3.2 Consideration should also be given to young people who face other barriers to accessing services. Many young people do not have associations with formal structures, whether that is an organisation or interest group. Their interests and use of services vary regularly and for many their direct engagement with some services is sporadic.
- 3.3 There is too heavy an emphasis from central government on a one-size fits all approach. Devolving responsibility and accountability down to the local level is limited, and there is little flexibility or ability for innovative at a local level to ensure the delivery of tailored rather than generic services. The lack of this provision is a key barrier to ensuring that every young person is able to access services when and where they need and want to.
- 3.4 A direct policy issue is the need for a more expansive menu of ways by which children and young people can not only access services but also shape and influence decisions on the delivery of such services. Removing or reducing barriers, especially for disadvantaged young people, will result in more responsive services.
- 3.5 One persistent barrier faced by young people is that of age. Unless a young person is deemed to be in care or disabled, once they reach the age of 19 they are cut adrift from state support and services that are dedicated for young people and left to fend for themselves until their mid 20s when they are likely to reengage with the state whether as a home owner, or parent etc. This is in contrast to many of our European colleagues where the age determinate for a young person is until their mid 20s if not later.
- 3.6 Older young people also have specific needs. The ages of 16-18 are, for many, a crucial transition period when young people make their own choices and have greater freedom to do so. Beyond 19 years many young people are better able to cope with their core relationships and their entry to secure employment. For some, however, these transitions remain difficult and for those an entitlement should continue to be available in appropriate locations.
- 3.7 The Social Exclusion Unit's *Transitions* report considered the lives of 16 to 25 year olds with complex needs and the policy actions required to improve their life chances. The report found,

“Many policies assume that youth ends at 18 or 19 but the reality is that for some disadvantaged people – teenage parents for example – this may be when support is most needed. Many of the issues that are thought of as the problems of teenagers are in fact as bad (or worse) for those in their early twenties, on whom much less policy has been focused – the phenomenon of ‘the invisible early twenties’.”⁸

⁸ Social Exclusion Unit, *Transitions* Report, 2005.

- 3.8 The argument that there needs to be a cut off point is not a valid one when you consider that most young people still need access to the information, services and activities provided by youth services but are denied that access simply because of an arbitrary cut-off date. Based on statistics from the ONS in 2004, 49.4% of young people aged 14-25 fall in the category of being too old to receive any services for young people; i.e. they are aged 19 or older.
- 3.9 The age of young people within central government's narrow age range for access to youth services and activities must be broadened to encapsulate those aged 19-25. This is critical as prevention and early intervention is not only about reaching young people in their early childhood years; neither is it about dealing with just the small number that get drawn into anti-social and criminal behaviour at a later age, having shown no previous engagement in anti-social behaviour.⁹ There must be a commitment and level of investment into youth services of universal scope, for all young people aged up to 25, comparable to the investment following the Albemarle report¹⁰, many of the recommendations of which remain valid today.
- 3.10 If young people do not receive help to enable them to deal with their issues, then they are unlikely to access any other type of youth services.

⁹ Dr Stephen Scott, published in Every Child Matters, DfES.

¹⁰ The Albemarle report in 1960 looked at the development of youth work in England and Wales, amongst its recommendations was a call for 'the establishment of a generous and imaginative funding programme'. The report also acknowledged that (the beginnings of) citizenship could be developed 'even in a tough area' through youth activities.

4.0 What is the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of different types of services and activities in terms of better life outcomes?

- 4.1 As acknowledged in *Trusting Young People*¹¹, Britain has much to learn from youth work developments across Europe. The paper also highlighted a number of specific themes where the UK has much to offer: information services for young people; young people's participation in decision-making; voluntary action.
- 4.2 At a European level, there is a wealth of evidence on how member states of the European Union (EU) support young people's participation and the positive outcomes it has on their lives and wider society. This has been greatly increased over the last few years through the creation and implementation of the Open Method of Communication (OMC), as evidenced in the latest follow-up on European policies concerning youth participation and information which member states submitted to the European Commission at the end of 2005.
- 4.3 A consistent theme from the follow-up was the need for member states to ensure that the role of national youth councils, of which BYC is the UK's, is reinforced and that they are a key agent in consulting young people on issues of concern to them.
- 4.4 Throughout Europe, the role of youth councils in developing high levels of participation and active citizenship amongst young people is widely recognised. Evidence for this is provided in recent responses from member states to the OMC report on initiatives undertaken over the last 2 years to develop enhanced participation and information for young people as well as through the White Paper on youth. In most European countries it is a statutory requirement for schools to have a youth council as well as an officially recognised national youth council. This has led to increased participation by children and young people in clubs and organisations - pioneering countries in this area such as Sweden can claim over 75% of young people participate in these non-formal activities. Participation in clubs and organisations, as acknowledged in the Russell Commission and Youth Matters, is a key factor in developing health, well-being and active young citizens. In Lithuania this proactive approach to developing participation has been taken one step further through the development of a co-management and co-decision-making structure at a national level. Since 1996 the Lithuanian State Council for Youth Affairs has maintained a co-management structure consisting of an equal number of people representing the Council of Lithuanian Youth Organisations (LiJOT) and different ministries dealing with youth issues (education, culture, social security etc.). These structures are replicated at regional and local level. In Finland the Youth Act aims at reinforcing the position of young people in local decision-making. Local authorities are obliged to give young people opportunities to take part in matters relating to youth work and youth policy. Furthermore, local authorities are obliged to listen to young people in matters concerning them. In Malta the National Youth Council serves as the consultative body to the State on all matters concerning Maltese youth. It is a member of the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development, which is the highest consultative body to the government for all cross-sectorial drafting policy decisions. Each of the above examples has successfully supported the development of higher levels of youth participation.
- 4.5 In European countries such as Finland, Sweden, Germany and Belgium (amongst others) national governments give additional support to young people to enable them to engage with issues and opportunities at the European level. As part of a wider strategy to develop understanding and opportunity through working with European partners, these governments offer additional support to information centres, and formal and non-formal education spaces

¹¹ *Trusting Young People* (December 2004) was a paper produced by a Youth Green Paper reference group chaired by the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS), of which BYC was a member.

to sign-post young people to initiatives taking place at the European level. This in turn has resulted in an increased participation by young people in European democratic processes and a higher level of uptake of project opportunities. Despite the introduction of the DfES International Strategy for schools, young people in the UK are uninformed. One clear example of this is the high number of young people from diverse backgrounds applying to take part in funded European YOUTH programme projects (European Voluntary Service, Group Initiatives, Youth exchanges) in other European countries compared to the UK, and the low-level of awareness amongst UK young people about the European political processes and opportunities at this level to develop skills and experience.

- 4.6 Further examples include Slovenia, where the youth information and counselling centres pay specific attention to the young Romany population. In Cyprus and Spain mobile units were created for informing young people in rural areas. In France, 32 youth information centres funded by the national authorities have their own staff training structure to ensure that quality standards are met. The European youth information charter¹² is applied together with additional national quality standards. European youth information networks have put together a compendium of quality initiatives. In Slovakia, youth information centres cooperate with volunteers who disseminate youth information in schools, universities and elsewhere.¹³
- 4.7 In a number of European countries the government support financially and otherwise the development of effective youth representation to international platforms through supporting the officially recognised national youth council in consulting young people on their perspectives of international issues and in preparing and supporting young representatives to platforms such as the UN AGM, Presidency youth events and world youth congresses this has enabled young people from diverse backgrounds to contribute to debate at the international level. In the UK there is no structured process for consulting and supporting young people to participate effectively at the international level.

¹² This was adopted in November 2004 by the General Assembly of the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (EYICA). The charter sets out young people's rights to information. A copy of the charter is found in Appendix 1.

¹³ Examples taken from Communication from the Commission to the Council, Commission of the European Communities, July 2006.

5.0 What more can we do to support and enable young people to exert a strong demand side influence on provision? What would we expect in return from young people – their rights and responsibilities?

- 5.1 We advocate young people's involvement at the start to ensure that provision is demand led, by utilising existing youth-led bodies, such as youth councils which were suggested in the Government's guidance to Youth Matters next steps. Involving young people is essential to the success in delivering effective services for young people and ensuring value for money.
- 5.2 We believe that, young people should be involved in the planning and delivery of public services from which they intend to benefit. Our commitment to the involvement of young people is drawn from recognising that their contribution and ownership promotes more effective policy solutions; that young people as citizens have a right to be involved in services that affect them; and this will lead to added benefits for young people's personal and social development.
- 5.3 Within the UK, there is a long tradition of local youth councils/forums that enable young people to express their views on issues and to engage with local decision-makers. BYC supports a network of over 400 youth councils across England, as well as provides advice and support to youth councils in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We believe that the formal acknowledgement by central government of such youth-led local bodies as legitimate entities would assist in obtaining greater and wider demand-led provision of services.
- 5.4 As part of our work supporting youth councils, our Every Young Voice¹⁴ project assists them in broadening the range of young people they involve as well as identify local partners. Greater support and investment in this project, married with central government recognition of youth councils – in line with the European White Paper on Youth that calls for an established system of a national youth council supported by regional/local youth councils or infrastructure, would assist the government in meeting this stated aim.
- 5.5 Providing greater freedom for young people to shape local service provision through initiatives like the Youth Opportunity Fund will facilitate a strong demand side influence on provision. BYC believe that young people should be involved in the design and evaluation of services that affect them not just be involved in that service's decision-making.
- 5.6 Equally, we believe that young people should be trusted with a wider scope of decision-making on funds to deliver services and activities that meet the needs of all young people. YouthBanks serves as excellent example of this, where children and young people are able to commission their own services from dedicated and devolved budgets.
- 5.7 Whilst acknowledging that the fostering of a more demand led provision will result in greater awareness and understanding by children and young people of their rights, government should not seek to introduce carrot and stick approaches to circumvent children and young people's opportunities. The derived responsibilities should be created in partnership as they will differ for children and young people on a number of criteria ranging from life style choices, geographical location, residential status etc.

¹⁴ Every Young Voice was piloted during 2004/5 and funded by the Carnegie UK Trust. BYC has received funding from the Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales to assist in a limited roll out for 2006/7. The programme enables local youth councils to be representative forums of young people's views, influence local decision makers and participate in the wider agenda of social exclusion and community cohesion.

6.0 What principles and priorities should guide the allocation of current and future resources? And who do we need to target?

- 6.1 For youth participation, activities and services to be done well it will need to be resourced. Any funding allocations for the delivery of youth services or activities should allow for inclusion of resources for young people's involvement, alongside administration, management and other key overhead costs. The UK Government should invest in funding an effective, vibrant network of local youth involvement, supported by a resourced independent national youth council, as this will strengthen and create more cohesive communities, tackle social exclusion and ensure a holistic approach to the needs of children and young people. This will result in the creation of sustainable funded platforms at local, regional and national level to engage all young people, with a particular emphasis on engaging young people who have not traditionally been engaged.
- 6.2 The five outcomes of Every Child Matters – enjoy and achieve; achieve economic well-being; be healthy; stay safe and make a positive contribution, should be adopted as the core principles for allocating resources. This provides a framework by which targets can be measured and outputs can be assessed.
- 6.3 In our response to the DfES consultation on the rationalisation of grant funding from the Children, Young People and Families Directorate to voluntary organisations, BYC advocated that funding for national infrastructure and capacity building should be a priority. Whilst the DfES now conduct a simplified grant scheme of project and strategic grant, BYC is still of the opinion that central government does not fully accept or acknowledged the distinct and unique needs of national infrastructure umbrella bodies in this regard. The realisation that umbrella organisations, its ability to meet its strategic objectives and fulfil the required outcomes requires long term, sustainable funding was acknowledged in the DfES consultation.
- 6.4 Aspects like national infrastructure, for umbrella bodies are not activities but part of an organisations foundation. It is not about a passing phase, but ensuring that an organisation is equipped, in terms of facilities and personnel, to carry out its strategic objectives. The rational for allocating resources should be based on ensuring that voluntary organisations are effectively resourced to deliver a change for children and young people. Fairness and transparency must be at the heart of the allocation of resources, ensuring that no applicants or certain sectors/organisations will receive preferential treatment.
- 6.5 Consideration must be given to how the outcomes for children and young people and those for the voluntary and community sector – will work together. Central government should work in partnership with strategic national voluntary organisations, including those that are youth led, to ensure this happens through the development and delivery of an outcomes framework for infrastructure organisations that builds upon existing compacts for the sector.
- 6.6 We strongly advocate that plans announced in the government's response to Youth Matters calling for young people's involvement in the Youth Opportunity Fund are extended to devolving power to children and young people to secure and deliver services. They are members of their communities and a key element in the solution for community cohesion and civil renewal. This should not be ignored; only by training and supporting their active involvement in all stages of local service provision will the government achieve their goal of a more demand led side influence on provision. YouthBank, a UK wide young person-led grant making initiative of which BYC is a consortium partner, serves an example of how children and young people can distribute money in response to community need that is followed up with thorough evaluation. Young people devise their own criteria and application processes for grant making and decide where the money goes in local YouthBanks. All grants are made to fund young people's good ideas to benefit their own communities.

Annex B3: Terms of reference for the Strategy for Youth Services

Objective: To review the current provision of youth services and support for young people with a view to identifying longer term policy directions that will bring about improvements in the life chances of young people.

The scope of the review will cover:

the services / support provided for young people in the following areas:

- positive activities to engage young people and also places for young people to go;
- opportunities for active citizenship such as mentoring or volunteering;
- young people's access to youth activities and places, for example their location and consideration of transport needs;
- the current role and practice of the youth worker and the support and advice they provide as an integral part of youth activities.

The review will examine existing provision, the impact of different services and support on outcomes for young people and how outcomes could be further enhanced. The review will also consider the role and opportunities for children and young people's participation in the design of services and decision-making.

The key questions the review will address includes:

What is the current distribution of youth services and youth engagement activities available across the country? How is that likely to evolve following the Youth Green Paper?

Building on the Youth Green Paper, is there more that could be done to improve and sustain the effectiveness in the delivery of existing services and activities?

What are the particular barriers faced by different groups of young people, including disabled young people, in accessing services, and what are the policy issues that arise?

What is the national and international evidence on the effectiveness of different types of services and activities in terms of better life outcomes?

How can we best combine demand led provision for young people with provision that is planned and structured to have the best impact on outcomes for children and young people?

What more can we do to support and enable young people to exert a strong demand side influence on provision? What would we expect in return from young people – their rights and responsibilities?

What principles and priorities should guide the allocation of current and future resources? And who do we need to target?

What measures and milestones need to be in place to ensure that performance can be assessed and delivery monitored at a local level.

Supplementary questions posed as part of the 'call for evidence':

- What are the barriers and enablers of effective Third Sector provision, including statutory commissioning capability?
- What can be done to improve the ability of universal provision to identify and provide a service to those with greater needs?
- Which projects and programmes in the last five years have had a proven and sustained impact and brought innovation to delivery of services for young people?
- What encourages young people to try new and different kinds of activities from those they already do?
- What evidence is there of the benefits that arise from young people's involvement in design and provision of their activities? What evidence is there of how outcomes have improved as a result?
- What attracts people to the youth work workforce? What is less attractive about membership of this workforce? 0

Appendix 1: The European Youth Information Charter

Preamble

In complex societies and in an integrated Europe that offers many challenges and opportunities, access to information and the ability to analyse and use information is increasingly important for young Europeans. Youth information work can help them to achieve their aspirations and can promote their participation as active members of society. Information should be provided in ways that enlarge the choices available to young people, and that promote their autonomy and empowerment.

Respect for democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms implies the right of all young people to have access to complete, objective, understandable and reliable information on all their questions and needs. This right to information has been recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and in the Recommendation N° (90) 7 of the Council of Europe concerning information and counselling for young people in Europe. This right is also the basis for youth information activities undertaken by the European Union.

Introduction

Generalist youth information work covers all topics that interest young people, and can include a spectrum of activities: informing, counselling, advising, guiding, supporting, befriending, coaching and training, networking, and referral to specialised services. These activities may be delivered by youth information centres, or through youth information services in other structures, or using electronic and other media. The principles of this Charter are intended to apply to all forms of generalist youth information work. They constitute a basis for minimum standards and quality measures which should be established in each country as elements of a comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated approach to youth information work, which is a part of youth policy.

Principles

The following principles constitute guidelines for generalist youth information work, which seeks to guarantee the right of young people to information:

1. Youth information centres and services shall be open to all young people without exception.
2. Youth information centres and services seek to guarantee the equality of access to information for all young people, regardless of their situation, origin, gender, religion, or social category. Special attention should be paid to disadvantaged groups and to young people with specific needs.
3. Youth information centres and services should be easily accessible, without any appointment being required. They should be attractive for young people, with a friendly atmosphere. The operating hours should meet the needs of young people.
4. The information available shall be based on the requests of young people and on their perceived information needs. It should cover all topics that could interest young people, and should evolve in order to cover new topics.
5. Each user shall be respected as an individual and the response to each question shall be personalised. This shall be done in a way that empowers users, promotes the exercise of their autonomy, and develops their capacity to analyse and use information.
6. Youth information services shall be free of charge.
7. Information is given in a way that respects both the privacy of users and their right not to reveal their identity.
8. Information is provided in a professional manner by staff trained for this purpose.
9. The information offered is complete, up-to-date, accurate, practical and user-friendly.
10. Every effort is made to ensure the objectivity of the information provided through the pluralism and verification of the sources used.
11. The information offered shall be independent of any religious, political, ideological or commercial influence.
12. Youth information centres and services shall strive to reach the largest possible number of young people, in ways that are effective and appropriate to different groups and

needs, and by being creative and innovative in their choice of strategies, methods and tools.

13. Young people shall have the opportunity to participate, in appropriate ways, in different stages of youth information work, at local, regional, national and international levels. These can include, among others: identifying information needs, the preparation and delivery of information, managing and evaluating information services and projects and peer group activities.
14. Youth information centres and services shall co-operate with other youth services and structures, especially in their geographical area, and shall network with intermediaries and other bodies that work with young people.
15. Youth information centres and services shall help young people both to access information provided via modern information and communication technologies, and to develop their skills in using them.
16. Each source of funding for youth information work should not act in any way that prevents a youth information centre or service from applying all the principles of this Charter.