

Area East Committee - 13 April 2011

10. Update on work with Young People in Area East (For information)

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Purpose of the Report

This report provides details of work being done to support young people in Area East and brings the Committee up to date on youth activities and facilities in Area East.

Public Interest

Supporting and helping to improve the work of voluntary community organisations in the towns and villages across Area East.

Recommendation

That Members note and comment on the report

Background

SSDC works with partner organisations to provide support to local groups and individuals working towards maintaining and improving activities and facilities for young people across the District.

Report

The provision of youth work has changed significantly over the last few months as the impact of Somerset County Council budget cuts take effect and communities start to respond. The new structure for the SCC Youth and Community Service includes one senior youth and community worker covering Mendip and South Somerset with 3 full-time workers for South Somerset. The reduction in capacity means that the emphasis will now be on supporting volunteers to deliver direct provision. In Area East, support (in terms of staffing) has been withdrawn for clubs in Ansford and Bruton with effect from the end of March.

Communities are currently investigating options for ensuring that youth clubs continue. The situation is evolving fairly rapidly and a representative of the County Council will be at the meeting to answer any questions.

This report sets out the direct provision of youth work in this area and the support that is available to groups and individuals carrying out this work in communities in Area East.

SSDC Young People Officer – Jay Lewin

The support that is given by the Young People Officer includes small grants of up to £500 through the Youth Development Fund, advice on start up and examples of standard documents including Model Constitutions, Health & Safety Statement, Accident Reporting records, Model Child Protection Policy, Parental consent forms.

Specific work in Area East includes the following:-

Ilchester Youth Council – Working with this group of young people to identify a project, complete a funding bid to secure £500 to refurbish their local Bus Shelter for their local community. This has been successful and the young people will be assisting with the refurbishment of the new panels and painting their youth council logo on the centre panel so the whole community can see what the young people have achieved, a warm dry environment whilst waiting for the local bus service.

Assisting with the Opening of the Milborne Port Skate Park - have booked and paid for Circus Skills to entertain the young people and have booked and paid for a skate display team to show the skate park off in all of it's glory! Paid for Flyers.

Assisting a volunteer in Bruton to set up a Youth Club to take over from the County Council run club. This involves providing start up advice and pack of model documents mentioned above and potentially some funding.

Ansford School/Caryford Fitness Centre and the B Active Scheme has seen a further 40 young people successfully attending Gym and Fitness Sessions with a high percentage of them continuing to use the centre after they complete the schemes 3 months trial. Feedback from Ansford School has also been positive "We can see progressive improvements in the behaviour of the young people referred onto B Active"

Currently planning a network/information event for all/proposed youth councils across the district to interact with each other, obtain funding skills, training, ideas for fund raising activities etc. in the near future.

The Young People's Officer also provides line-management support for the Parish Youth Worker.

Parish Youth Worker

Members will recall that in February 2009, support was given to piloting a new way of funding youth work in the smaller parishes. Five parishes in Area East wanted to take part in the scheme and agreed contributions of £500 towards employing a youth worker for 12 months. The scheme also received match-funding from Yarlington Housing and SSDC Arts Officer with a 50% contribution from the Area East Service Enhancement budget. Lewis Diffey was recruited to the post in August 2010 and has been working to an agreed programme with each parish. Key projects include helping to establish a holiday playscheme and a youth club in Henstridge, supporting the work being done to improve facilities and working towards starting a group in Milborne Port and producing a Walks guide with pupils from North Cadbury Primary School. The Parish Youth Worker will give a brief presentation about the first six months of the scheme.

The Linx Project

The Linx Project is a voluntary organisation established by local churches in response to need identified in each of the Market Towns. The project has operated very successfully for the past 8 years delivering a mix of schools, detached and centre based youth provision. The organisation has recently had to make significant changes and will no longer employ youth workers to directly deliver youth work. After August the project will become a grant giving trust.

Somerset Rural Youth Project (SRYP)

SSDC has a Service Level Agreement with SRYP to deliver targeted support to youth initiatives across the district. Area East has benefitted from this SLA with support for work in Templecombe and with profiling work to support the Parish Youth Worker.

The Youth Opportunities Group

The Youth Opportunities Group is a multi-agency group meeting quarterly to make sure that youth work is provided in a coordinated way across the area. Key partners include Somerset County Council, Somerset Rural Youth Project, Avon and Somerset Police, Local Community Learning Partnerships, Linx project. The Area East group has recently merged with the Area South YOG in order to use the time of officers more efficiently. This has worked so well that discussions are taking place with other Area teams to explore the potential to create a district wide coordination group.

A reporting link to the Area East Community Safety Action Panel ensures that specialist support can be targeted to address reported anti-social behaviour issues relating to young people.

Play Areas and Youth Facilities – Steve Barnes, Youth Facilities Officer

Penn View Play area, Wincanton. The play area upgrade should be completed during the next 3 months.

Happy Tracks Play Area, Keinton Mandeville, A toddler play area was built using funding from SSDC and various grant aiding bodies as well as local fundraising. A local community group led the project with support from SSDC

Springfield Road Play Area, Milborne Port, Has been built using funding from SSDC, Milborne Port PC and other grant aiding bodies. The play area is being enjoyed by lots of local children.

Bab Cary Playing Field Committee, have raised funding to install new play equipment, the group are currently deciding what they will install and hope to have the new equipment in and ready for use by the summer holidays.

Abbas and Templecombe PC, Installed a BMX track a Youth Shelter and a Kick Wall for use by their local young people following grant applications and local fundraising.

Milborne Port Skate Area Improvements, A local community group did an excellent job raising funds and liaising with the Parish Council and local young people. Their aim of improving their Skate Area came to fruition during this winter and is now open.

Wincanton Town Council are starting to work on plans to build a MUGA close to the Skate Area in Wincanton.

Castle Cary Town Council and Ansford Parish Council, have been looking at possible sites for a proposed MUGA.

Keinton Mandeville are in the process of applying for planning permission for a floodlit MUGA close to the Skate Park in Keinton.

Henstridge Community Group supported by Henstridge PC are currently building a Skate Park and Sports Wall which should be completed by early April 2011. Funding for this project was raised mainly through successful grant applications.

Motivate – Health and Activity tour of Village halls

Members will recall that in February 2010, a report by the Healthy Lifestyles Team was considered and support was given for a proposal to take the community bus to rural areas to identify and introduce new activities in halls across Area East. The evaluation of pilot sessions in the summer, along with need identified by the parish youth worker have led to the development of the Motivate tour. Five events (Charlton Mackrell, Milborne Port, Mudford, Queen Camel and Keinton Mandeville) were planned throughout February and March and were designed to support existing groups, identify new activities to support halls and to encourage new people to get involved in their local community. Health MOTs, advice and Health Walks were available although there was no interest in participating in a health walk at any event. Somerset Rural Youth Project, Somerset Youth Volunteering Network and Cat scheme were represented at each event at least 20 local groups participated.

The Charltons

Very low turnout with 15 members of the public attending. Some young people engaged with SRYP workers and some interest in Pilates/yoga was demonstrated.

Milborne Port

Better attendance with 45 people throughout the morning. Local groups reported successful recruitment including the potential of a youth short mat bowls club. Most attendees were already engaged in local activities.

Mudford

Very good attendance as this session was run as part of the regular café. Over 50 people and a clear expression of interest in establishing a walking group. Local table tennis group starting up again subject to recruiting enough people.

Queen Camel

Good number of local groups represented but general attendance was poor with only 12 people attending the event.

Keinton Mandeville

Event postponed due to availability of key representatives from various organisations. The Keinton event will take place but alongside another community event in line with evaluation responses.

Lessons learned

Feedback from attendees suggested that the concept was good but the fact that it was a Council run event was a potential barrier and that running alongside an existing village event would increase participation and ensure better attendance. This was clearly demonstrated at the Mudford event. Other comments received related to the publicity being a bit vague (this also generated some interest) and also about the event and it's relationship to the Big Society.

Next Steps

The Community Development Officer will work with the Healthy Lifestyles Team to work up a draft programme of activities based on the consultation results from the events. This will be the basis of further consultation with hall committees and parish councils before workshops and taster sessions are arranged.

Financial Implications

There are no new financial implications as a result of the report.

Corporate Priority Implications

Supporting work to maintain and improve youth activities and facilities makes a significant contribution towards the corporate plan by:

- *Improving the health and well-being of our citizens*
- *Ensuring safe, sustainable and cohesive communities*

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications

- Providing access to good quality, local activities reduces the need to travel which therefore reduces carbon emissions.