



great clubs for young people

# Implementing the integrated youth offer

# Progress and challenges

# for Local Authorities



Supported by Nestlé in  
partnership with 4Children



# Contents

Foreword.....	3
1. Executive summary.....	4
2. Background to the study.....	7
3. The experience of integrated services – early gains and benefits.....	12
4. Delivering integrated services.....	13
5. Next steps.....	21
6. Conclusions.....	22

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# Foreword

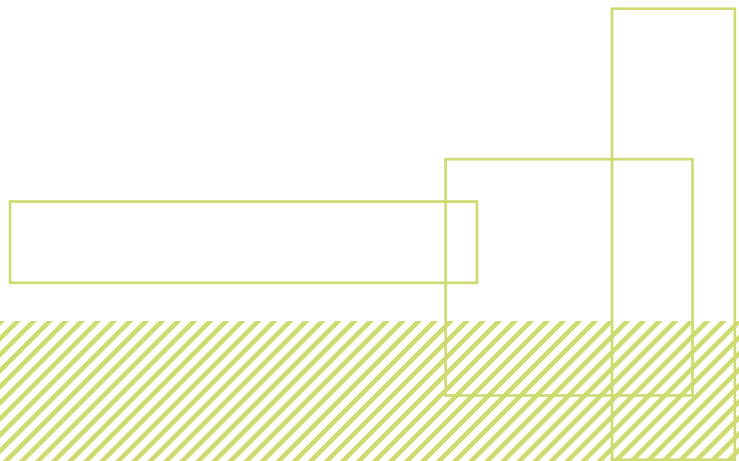
Make Space is a dynamic campaign run by 4Children and supported by Nestlé. The campaign objective is to create and support a strategic model of development, via a network of contemporary clubs for young people aged 11–19 across England. Working with local clubs, schools, Local Authorities and national organisations, we respond to the needs of young people and work towards meeting their needs.

The Make Space integrated model is about creating spaces in communities for young people that they have ownership and control over. Make Space centres can provide young people with modern and accessible facilities outside of school hours – where they can meet their friends, get involved in activities and learn new skills, do their homework and stay safe – but their impact can be much wider than this. The centres also act as physical and virtual centres from which young people are able to access a wide range of information and advice, as well as other supportive services and activities.

The policy impetus for better coordination of local services has become increasingly clear through recent Government strategies. This project works with Local Authorities to explore and identify common opportunities, challenges and solutions in developing integrated services in practice. It is designed both as a policy report on progress to date, as well as a tool for Local Authorities aiming to redevelop their youth offer in line with the important principles contained within Youth Matters.



Anne Longfield OBE  
Chief Executive  
4Children



# 1. Executive summary

During 2006 Make Space undertook a strategic pilot with four Local Authorities to devise, develop and test out strategies for the planning and delivery of the integrated youth offer. Make Space is built upon the principle that integrated support services, combined with positive and structured activities, provide the most effective support for young people. Integrated centres can provide a mix of high quality services and provision for young people from 4pm to 9pm, whether the delivery point is provided through extended services within schools, youth clubs or elsewhere. Integrated provision means that a wide range of specialist services or enriching activities are accessed by young people through an open-access or universal facility.

The Make Space integrated model is an example of a practical means of developing centre provision for statutory, private and voluntary sector bodies – first, at strategic level through a cross-sector approach and second, through the local providers. The strategic pilot identified both benefits and challenges associated with the delivery of integrated services. These challenges are of importance when planning for and delivering the implementation of joined-up services.

## **The programme identifies a number of key strategic priorities to developing an integrated approach:**

### **Joined-up policy**

Outcomes for young people play a key role in a wide range of high level policies. From the reduction of poverty and anti-social behaviour, to employment, education and health, supporting positive outcomes for young people is central.

However at national and local level, the interface and linkages between these different policy strands is not always clear. Despite the introduction of Children and Young People's strategic plans, there remains some way to go to achieve a coordinated system which adds value and enhances support across policy areas for young people. This is the challenge for Local Authorities as they strive to organise their services in a way that enables collaboration and information sharing.

The study found that integrated policy-making is crucial if integrated delivery on the ground is to be achieved. For many Local Authorities the argument for integration is won, with many already restructuring and reorganising to achieve this. In doing so, there has been some progress in revising structures and policy in order to facilitate more coordinated delivery. This has built on links with elected members

not just in the context of youth policy, but in relation to education, renewal and regeneration and other areas, and has involved consulting on the needs of young people and providers and reporting back to cross-sector stakeholders, including schools.

### **Joined-up structures and leadership**

The senior sponsorship of change and integration of support for young people by the Director of Children's Services was found to be of central importance to delivery of an integrated offer.

In addition, establishing a designated lead person with the responsibility of coordinating and leading all aspects of work with young people in an Authority was found to be key. Conflicting messages, directions and lines of responsibility can hinder the drive towards better coordination and cultural change, and this post was seen to be critical in ensuring that this is overcome. Monitoring, review and assessment also all rely on a single point of focus for direction and planning.

The creation of integrated structures was of vital importance to create the conditions for change, but evidence suggested that these too must take place at strategic level – following through to support centre managers locally in bringing together services.

Restructuring to achieve this was an important task for all Local Authorities as a process to achieve a move to multi-agency working and information sharing, whilst keeping young people at the centre of service delivery. During the study all four Local Authorities were continuing the process of reorganisation, whilst attempting to promote cultural change over the medium term as a product of new structures.

### **Planning for delivery**

Mapping and assessing both needs and availability of support is of central importance and was a key priority for our project partners. Analysis of needs through audits of service had taken place in each case, through various structures designed to facilitate review, and this formed the basis for important decisions with respect to development. The key lesson to be derived from the process of completing the most effective needs assessment was to ensure regard for private and voluntary sector services, however specific and concentrated, as well as statutory services.

**Financial and budgetary** planning and decision making to support the move to integration unsurprisingly emerged as key. Again, the importance of senior sponsorship

and clear leadership and joint planning was reinforced. Furthermore a coordinated, whole service approach to commissioning in order to meet priorities was key. Ensuring providers are well informed and built into an accountable process relating to the distribution of resources was found to be of utmost importance. Local Authority partners were found to have made more progress in aligning budgets for statutory services than in reconstructing grant application processes for non-statutory process, which was found to be a more time-consuming experience. Enthusiasm for budget pooling was helped by building representatives of cross-sector partners into the joint commissioning process, mainly through seats on advisory committees and consultation exercises with providers. Clear publication and communication of policy and the 'whole' picture of what a redeveloped youth service is provided a basis on which to create joint ownership and cooperation amongst long-standing providers.

## **A number of operational priorities to developing an integrated approach were also identified:**

### **Consultation**

An **integrated youth support service** will provide the strategic framework for the delivery of services for young people. However, the involvement of young people themselves in designing the services is crucial in providing an attractive and accessible offer locally within centres. Factors such as opening hours, location of services, links with schools and the menu of activities on offer within centres are all issues on which young people should be consulted. Local Authorities involved in the study undertook different means of consultation, some of which involved pre-existing and consistent structures such as Youth Councils, whilst others undertook one-off consultations. Those who purpose-designed consultation exercises generally encountered less problems in reach incurred by hard-to-engage young people, possibly because they were not relying on established structures. The most effective consultations complemented work through Youth Parliaments and other structures with ad hoc liaison work with individual groups, such as faith groups and looked after children.

### **Managing the market and sustainability**

The Local Authority has a key role to play in developing and managing a sustainable youth offer for young people in the area. Developing and coordinating a cross-sector response is a key priority for many Local Authorities and a crucial prerequisite for strategic commissioning. Local Authority partners were found to have put some effort into balancing statutory, private and voluntary provision but in some cases there was a feeling that reassessment would be necessary in the short term. There were some concerns over the capacity and sustainability of smaller voluntary provision, whilst opportunities were also opening up.

A key part of building the cross-sector market is seen as supporting local providers to develop their own sustainability, drawing funds from a range of sources including the Local Authority and Children's Trust, charitable trusts and wider national funding streams as well as self generated income including the potential in some cases from fees.

Make Space has encountered many examples where innovative programmes struggle to sustain beyond initial funding. Consistency of staff, communication of best practice and funding support can assist in achieving sustainability. In most cases, Local Authorities were found to have more work to do in realigning grant application process with revised funding structures. A key element of this was found to be promoting communication with lead officers in voluntary sector organisations and support for those officers with long-term strategic planning and creating sustainability. Information on external funding sources, for example through Big Lottery funds, was an element of this, although support in building the evidence base for applications was also seen to be necessary.

The leadership of the Local Authority in this area is clearly of key importance in both creating and leading a support framework for sustainability. The development of provider business planning and management emerges as a major priority for the future with the enhanced emphasis on diversification of funding sources.

### **Quality and staffing**

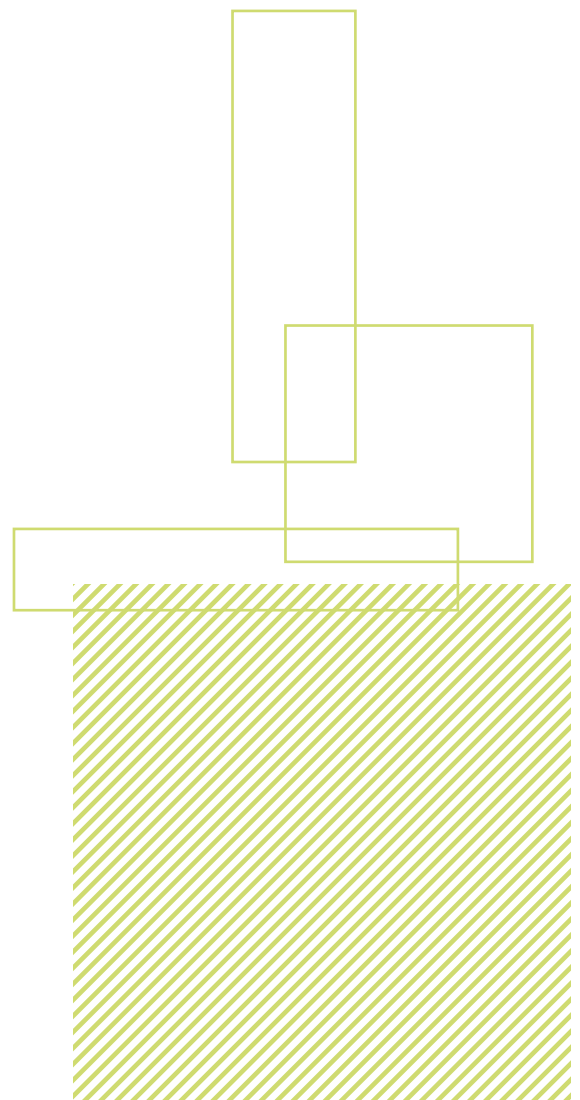
Quality improvement and development are core priorities for local authorities in their delivery of an integrated youth offer, and workforce development is at the centre.

Clear processes for monitoring of standards and continual quality development are crucial, as is the development of multi agency approaches with the needs of the young person at the centre. Continual quality development was found to vary across Local Authorities as processes and programmes for ensuring quality were designed to address specific local conditions. A number of key areas for quality assessment were identified but it was felt that local issues such as accessibility to local groups and transport and infrastructure were important as a background to analysis. This gave rise to a sense that local assessors should lead on the process, although there is some room for standard self-help toolkits to provide a consistent framework to work within.

Limits were encountered by Local Authorities with respect to workforce development, with a feeling that national Government needed to do more to make funds available to improve recognition and reward. Integrated training and development strategies were beginning to show results in terms of meeting needs across providers, identifying synergies and easing financial pressure. Funding for recruitment and training more generally was seen as a key issue.

## Key lessons in delivering an integrated approach

- ✓ Commitment and leadership at high level are required to drive through change and draw together a disparate array of priorities, funding and services.
- ✓ A multi-agency integrated approach needs to be taken at central and local government level as a key requirement to remove professional barriers and increase access and cooperation between services.
- ✓ Placing a high priority on integration as a driver to review and change can form the basis of a dynamic reconfiguration of both services and ways of working.
- ✓ On a local level, an audit of local need, services and gaps in provision and the potential for beneficial synergies is crucial. Assessment of need must be followed through in the design of services in response.
- ✓ The integrated model of provision provides an important blueprint for change and development with providers. However, local needs and conditions influence the degree to which that model can be imported. The building in of flexibility in meeting these needs is an important step towards promoting the value of the model as a toolkit for change. This needs to be communicated from strategic officers to heads of agencies and those individual officers on the ground within delivery points.
- ✓ The restructuring of roles is key, with a new emphasis on strategic review, planning, service development and wider market management development and support.
- ✓ Pooling of budgets alongside the agreement of common needs assessment frameworks in relation to the development and improvement of existing services within wards is an important step.
- ✓ A creative and dynamic approach to commissioning across all sectors is crucial. This will achieve most if it is an open process with good information and potential support for local providers.
- ✓ Throughout the change management process Local Authorities must take the lead in creating and communicating a vision in a way that is inclusive, promote a sense of ownership, involvement and shared ethics amongst all agents of delivery.
- ✓ Oversight and ongoing support arrangements are essential in ensuring that the integrated vision at high level is translated to the experience on the ground. This means that front-end youth centre staff are supported to bring the new linkages and synergies between professionals to life in a way that can be clearly felt by young people using services.



## 2. Background to the study

Make Space is 4Children's flagship strategic programme for 11–19 year olds. Working nationally and locally, the programme aims to combine strategic development with operational support to develop an integrated approach to the delivery of services aimed at young people. The main driver within *Youth Matters* was that of multi-agency working and integration of services on a local level. This provided an impetus through policy for the delivery of more effective, less atomized support services aimed at teenagers. The Make Space Integrating Local Youth Services Strategic Pilot project was set up to explore the opportunities and challenges encountered by Local Authorities in implementing this policy, whilst providing support for delivery by way of application of the Make Space model.

The objectives of the Integrating Local Youth Services: Policy to Practice project were:

- To identify, develop and test out strategies for Local Authorities to deliver the Youth Matters offer for 11–19 year olds whilst using a Make Space strategic approach and delivery model
- To test approaches to implementing this aspect of *Youth Matters* in a systematic way
- To develop, identify and disseminate best practice
- To use best practice frontline to inform the development of policy centrally
- To develop our model to even more effectively offer support mechanisms for local authorities in respect of delivery of the *Every Child Matters* and *Youth Matters* agendas

The key areas for consideration in meeting these objectives were:

- To consider models to facilitate the change required in order to deliver the youth offer in all local authorities
- To consider the strategic and operational steps required to deliver the youth offer
- To consider resource, personnel and structural needs
- To identify challenges to delivery

This report addresses these points through a focus on the following:

- Benefits common to the four Local Authority case studies of integrated services
- An analysis of a good practice approach in facilitating integration
- Common challenges encountered
- The ways in which these challenges can be overcome

The observations made are based on common lessons drawn from the Local Authority findings. In addition to this, occasionally it has been necessary to draw illustrative local

case studies from within one or more of the Local Authority areas.

### The policy background provided by central Government as a context for pilots

The integrated delivery model is described in *Every Child Matters* as a key approach to securing 'a shift from intervention to prevention; and in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable'.<sup>1</sup> It has become commonly recognised that better outcomes can be secured by services working together more effectively to support children and their families. The Children Act 2004 placed the responsibility for leading the changes towards co-operation and integration (with health, education and other partners) on Local Authorities. The co-location of services and pooled resources are considered to provide clear advantages for families who may previously have had to visit several centres and work with a number of different professionals to access services. It is considered also as a driving ethic for agencies themselves, that their accessibility and relevance is increased in the medium to long term by collaboration. Notes from Hansard in relation to the parliamentary debate on the Children's Bill (as it then was) indicate that joint planning and commissioning of services, underpinned by pooled resources and reduced duplication and overlap, may result in financial savings.

Research conducted by 4Children indicates that, for youth services, the integration of services can have a clear positive impact on the realisation of the important five outcomes listed within *Every Child Matters*. Integrated youth services and the Make Space model can offer '...a physical and virtual focus for co-ordinating and co-locating the support and opportunities provided for teenagers'.<sup>2</sup> In addition to this, delivering a multi-agency service to young people that is based in a local and accessible delivery point is a common-sense response to the consistent call from teenagers for 'somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to'.

Further elements of legislative context to the pilot include Clause 6 of the Education and Inspections Act, which provides the legal obligations for the implementation of *Youth Matters*. The legislation came into force in January 2007. This new legislation places a duty on local authorities to provide positive activities and necessitates a fundamental and creative review of approach at local level in respect of the organisation and delivery of services for young people. In essence, a Local Education Authority in England must, so far as is reasonably practicable, secure for young people in the Authority's area access to sufficient educational leisure-

1. *Every Child Matters*, DfES-1110-2004

2. *Investing in Young People, Investing in our Future*, 4Children, June 2004

time activities for the improvement of their well-being, and provide the facilities for these activities to be delivered. Specifically, this duty applies to the 13–19 age range and those aged up to 24 who have learning difficulties. However, our evidence suggests that many Local Authorities are taking a broader age range approach, acknowledging the importance of work with children from 9 and 10.

Local Authorities are required to put in place a coordinated approach to the resourcing, planning, delivery and performance management of the youth offer, which can be measured against the following:

- Preparation and publication of a ‘statement of ambition’, more commonly described as a ‘youth offer’
- Comprehensive, accurate and accessible information sources on the range of available activities, programmes, opportunities and guidance services. This is described as a duty to ‘publicise positive activities’.
- Coordinated youth volunteering initiatives
- Access to sufficient youth worker-run activities and related facilities
- Full participation of young people in shaping, designing, delivering and evaluating services
- Opportunities for young people to be engaged more widely in decision-making processes, including spending decisions
- Access to out of school activities

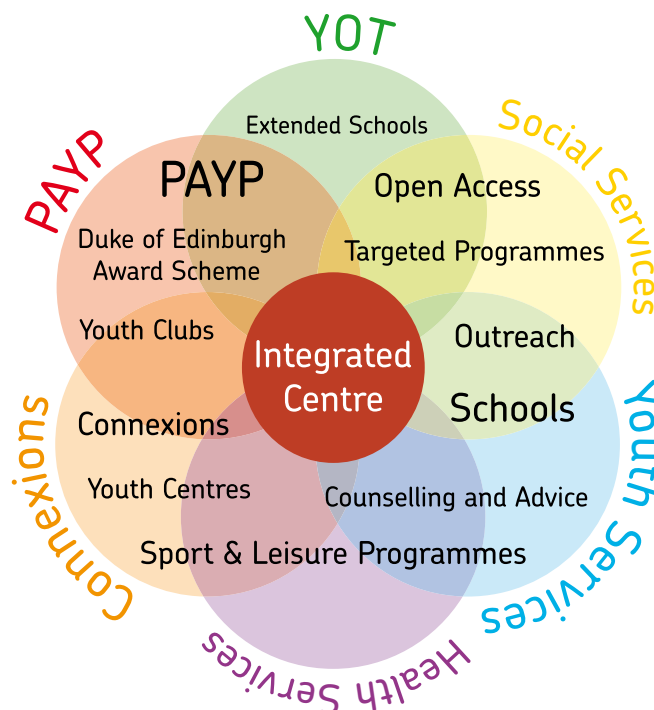
## The Make Space model as an integrated approach

An integrated model of provision for young people coordinates a number of local services in a way that promotes joint working, information sharing, collaboration and a shared strategy. This can lead to maximum reach for services by avoiding duplication and facilitating cooperation in meeting the needs of the ‘whole’ young person. Integration can be constituted systemically by strategic bodies in place to coordinate services on a bureaucratic level, and it can be delivered locally through delivery points that provide access to the full range of integrated services. The latter can be achieved by ‘one stop shops’ that provide an access point to the full spectrum of services through open-access or referral mechanisms. These services may include opportunities to socialise, take part in activities or seek advice and information, to access education support, Connexions service, health issues, Youth Service support, Youth Offending Team, social services, teenage pregnancy support team, counselling, advice on sexual health, alcohol, drugs and many more. Strategically, joint working and coordination can eliminate overlapping services and maximise coverage.

Since 2002 the Make Space campaign has developed experience of integrated services for older children. This builds on the integrated approach to provision that has been rolled-out for early years through the Sure Start programme. Make Space provides a model that Local Authorities and providers can use to develop and deliver integrated services

for 11–19 year olds in line with the *Every Child Matters* white paper and *Youth Matters*.

The model below demonstrates the vision of a universal integrated service model, by having the Make Space centre at the core of the services and being able to either offer directly or refer young people to the appropriate support services.



Through either direct provision or signposting mechanisms, integrated centres will provide:

- A service that is based on the active and continuous involvement of young people in all aspects of their centre
- An out of school hours facility for 11–16 year olds operating before/after school on a regular basis that is safe, welcoming, accessible, dynamic and contemporary
- A dedicated chill-out space where young people can relax, meet their friends and enjoy their leisure time in comfortable surroundings
- A quiet space where young people can access computers and the internet, study or read
- Activity space(s) or access to local facilities, providing young people with a range of sports, arts and other opportunities
- An up-to-date range of information, advice and guidance for young people on personal, social, careers and health issues
- Opportunities for young people to volunteer in the community
- A membership scheme, that enables young people to take ownership
- Access to specialist services as required
- A service that is sustainable but affordable to all young people

This model has been developed to deliver on the full range of outcomes described within *Youth Matters*. The model breaks these outcomes down into achievable deliverables, examples of which include the following:

- If young people are involved in the development of services, including the vision and direction, take-up will increase as the offer becomes more relevant and finely tuned to their needs.
- The development of positive activities offered through high-quality services will not only improve the quality of the activities provided to young people, but also raise the self-esteem of both young people and the professional experience of youth workers. Experience shows that dynamic, goal-orientated and team-led positive activities promote the personal and social skills of teenagers. Professional development of youth workers will be a product of clear guidance and practical examples of applying greater structure to their work, whilst promoting quality assurance and offering guidance on effective activities and support methods.
- If support services are located in a one-stop-shop then young people are more likely to be able to seek out advice, information and guidance that they need. Further, having regular contact with the same support worker has the potential to build a relationship of closer understanding.
- The model ensures that services are open at times that are suitable for young people. This is as opposed to existing services that are sometimes inaccessible through being offered within the school day.
- The model ensures that publicity and information about services is clear and effective. Feedback from young people on effectiveness is crucial for this.

## Background to the four local authority case studies

The project worked with four Local Authorities: the London Borough of Barnet, Leeds City Council, Sunderland City Council and Essex County Council during 2006.

### London Borough of Barnet

The *Profile of Children and Young People in Barnet* describes Barnet as a 'vibrant and culturally rich borough of London, home to a growing and diverse population... with a population of 330,000 Barnet is the second most populous borough in London'.

There are 24,000 children and young people aged 11–16 within the scope of the local authority and with approximately 80,000 0–19 year-olds Barnet has the second largest population of children and young people in London. Within the under-16 population 57.9% are White British, 8.1% are Indian and 6.6% Black African and the remaining 27.4% are divided amongst 13 other specific ethnic groupings, including a significant number of refugees from different countries.

Barnet consists of a number of distinct centres of population, including Hendon, Cricklewood, Edgware, North and East Finchley, Mill Hill, Burnt Oak, Whetstone, Totteridge, Golders Green, Barnet and East Barnet. It is divided by distinct and busy route-ways including the A5, M1, A1 and A4 and includes the Brent Cross Shopping Centre. The size and diversity of the population, its geographical spread, its dissection by a number of different route-ways and the commercial activity generated by the huge Brent Cross Shopping Centre are all factors that influence the needs of children and young people in Barnet.

**Barnet** went through a comprehensive restructuring in 2004 and the service comprised:

- The Head of Youth and Connexions Service
- 3 Youth and Connexions Managers – Development, Planning, Programmes
- Team Leaders Connexions (2), Barnet Impact, Youth Theatre, Principal Cultural Development Officer, Oasis Programme Co-ordinator (excluded pupils), Detached Team Leader full time,
- Centre Based Youth Workers, PAs, Project Workers
- Part time sessional workers

The Youth Service has placed a great deal of emphasis on multi-agency days designed to provide an opportunity for the voluntary and community sector to map out what they have to offer and to provide outcomes to demonstrate achievements in designated areas. There are a number of providers of services from the voluntary sector that demonstrate a willingness to engage in measures designed to lead to better integrated services.

For 2006-7 the overall budget for the Youth Service was £1.5m. However, the Service has been successful in attracting additional external funding.

### Essex County Council

Essex is a large, principally rural county in the East of England and is adjacent to London. It is the UK's second largest county, with a population of over 1.3m, having grown by 5% in the ten years to 2001.

2.9% of Essex residents, 38,000 people, belonged to Mixed, Asian, Black, Chinese or Other (non-White) ethnic groups in 2001. A further 2.6% belonged to white minority groups of White Irish or White Other, making a total of 5.5% of all residents belonging to minority ethnic groups. This proportion is considerably lower than across the whole of England, in which 9% of residents belonged to Mixed, Asian, Black, Chinese or Other (non-White) ethnic groups, and 3.9% to White Irish or White Other groups, making 13% across all ethnic minority groups.<sup>3</sup>

The Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DETR) Indices of Deprivation 2000 show that only 3 districts in Essex fall into the 50% most deprived areas in England, with only one (Tendring) amongst the most 20–30% deprived in the country. Uttlesford is the least deprived area in Essex and the 24th most affluent district in England.

The Essex Local Area Agreement (LAA), published in March 2006, identifies 13 Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), through which it will ensure local consultation, planning and delivery. Each LSP, working with existing and new partners, will deliver services under the auspices of existing structures within the Authority, with each of those structures replicating itself into a smaller, local version of itself. Thus, for the Children and Young People's block of the LAA, the core management body is the local Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), which functions within the second tier of local authority structure. There are currently 11 local CYPSPs. The local CYPSPs perform the role of strategic lead body within a Children's Trust approach, bringing together a network of multi-agency partner services from within the statutory and voluntary agencies that commission and/or provide services to children and young people from 0 to 19 (or in some cases up to 25). The County Council has further devolved responsibility for planning and delivery of services to Local Delivery Groups (LDG – currently 25 across the authority). For the purposes of this project, these LDGs can be seen as centres of delivery based around extended schools clusters or networks.

The council has taken considerable care to ensure that, while devolving responsibility for the planning and financing of services to the lowest possible level, *'there is symmetry between their LAA work and other strategies, such as, for example, the County's Local Transport Plan, and the Children And Young People's Plan on which consultation has been taking place in parallel with the LAA work.'*<sup>4</sup> Evidence of this careful planning can clearly be seen in the CYPSP document, *'Priorities for Improving the Lives of Children and Young People'*, which uses the *Every Child Matters* outcomes framework to address the setting of priorities for children and young people in the county. The Youth Service has also adopted this approach and, through the Business Plan, written as a county-wide document, the new Youth Offer will be developed at LDG level.

**Essex Youth Services structure comprised:**

- A Head of Service
- 4 Divisional Managers (Central, South, East and West)
- 12 Locality Managers
- Centre Managers
- Centre and detached staff

Volunteers run youth clubs in village halls in the districts with support from the Youth Service, whilst there is increasingly more formalised co-operation between the Youth Service and local voluntary organisations under the umbrella of the Essex Council for Voluntary Youth Services (ECVYS). This body is set up with a remit of increasing positive activities available for young people in their localities. ECVYS has a good working relationship with the Youth Service at a strategic level.

The Youth Service Budget for 2006-7 was just under £9.9m.

## Sunderland City Council

The City of Sunderland has a population of just under 300,000. It has recently completed a reorganisation of its services to respond to *Every Child Matters* and has produced an ambitious Children and Young People's Plan. At the time of the project, Sunderland was also preparing for a Joint Area Review (JAR). During the self-evaluation process, it was felt that Sunderland should promote its work on Youth Participation, which is highly regarded by the Council.

Sunderland has the largest population of any local authority district between Leeds and Edinburgh, with a population of 280,000 (2004 mid-year estimate). From 1994 to 2004, the City's population fell 4.3% compared to an average rise in England and Wales of 3.8%. Outward migration is one of the main reasons for the population decline in Sunderland with one of the contributory factors being the decline of traditional industries and relocations of employment to other areas.

The age structure of residents in Sunderland mirrors the national picture of an ageing population. Furthermore, there is predicted to be a significant increase in the number of older people over the next 10 years, particularly those aged 75+. This ageing is the result of declines in both the numbers of children born and in mortality rates and this has led to a declining population aged under 15, which in turn has led to school amalgamations and closures due to falling school rolls.

Sunderland has high poverty and deprivation levels compared to many other local authorities, particularly as measured by Child Poverty and Income Deprivation. The City of Sunderland rates between 7th to 37th out of 354 local authorities in the government's 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. (The IMD ranks authorities using seven categories: income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education; skills and training; barriers to housing and services; crime; and living environment.) As expected, the proportion of children receiving free school meals is above the national average.

The minority ethnic population is small but growing, with the largest (over 1,000) being Bangladeshi with 570 of school age (1.2% of the school population). The number of asylum-seeking families has risen from 132 in 2002 to 179 in 2005. Unemployment at 4.3% is above the national figure of 2.8%. Based on information obtained from schools in January 2005, 23.0% primary pupils in Sunderland (16.9% nationally) and 16.3% secondary pupils in Sunderland (14.0% nationally) are eligible for free school meals.

**Sunderland's** Youth Service was delivered by:

- Head of Youth Development Services
- 2 Youth Strategy Officer
- 3 Senior Youth Officers
- Part-time Youth Support Workers

Sunderland also has a range of provision for young people delivered by the voluntary and community sector. The positive development of the partnership between Sunderland Council, Youth Development Group and the voluntary sector has grown over the years to enable effective service level agreements through Grant Aid Allocations. New commissioning for youth work has enhanced the strengths of partnerships that build on the expertise of both services.

The budget for the Youth Service in 2006-7 was £2.5m.

live in families in which the adults are married, 26.3% live in lone parent households and 12.2% in families where the adults cohabit. Nearly 2,000 children (1.3%) are not in a family.<sup>5</sup>

The Service offers a range of accredited programmes to benefit young people including the full Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, the Campaign for Youth and Access, elements of Awards Scheme & Accreditation Network (ASDAN) in partnership with schools, Youth Train / Open College Network packages, and is working closely with other regional Services to develop a regionally accredited programme.

The Service is now in the process of developing access for Youth Workers to a comprehensive database of resources, utilising information from a wide range of sources. Consultation work with colleagues is being undertaken in order to prioritise the development of further curriculum tool-kits, such as environmental work, anti-racism work and community cohesion-related work. Leeds City Council is embarking on a concerted restructuring of its services to young people through the development of an integrated approach.

## Leeds City Council

Leeds is the second largest metropolitan Authority in the country. Leeds differs from most other large metropolitan areas by having an urban centre with surrounding small towns, villages and countryside. Unlike many other cities, the population of Leeds has grown in recent years to 700,000 people. Over 8% of the population are from black and ethnic-minority groups, particularly concentrated in communities such as Beeston, Harehills and Chapeltown.

The city has seen strong economic growth and investment in recent years. However, although there is raising prosperity, areas of significant and multiple disadvantages remain. There are sharp and significant differences between some areas, including some of the wealthiest and some of the most deprived areas in England.

There are 180,000 children and young people between the ages of 0 and 19 in Leeds. This represents 25.5% of the whole population. Falling birth rates and demographic change mean that the number of young people has fallen in the past. However, more recently this has stabilised and the number of young people is growing in some parts of the city, specifically in the inner city and in black and ethnic minority communities. There are larger numbers of black and ethnic minority children and young people than in the Leeds population as a whole. Some 13.6% of children and young people aged 0–19 are from black and ethnic-minority groups. Approximately 500 children and young people are Travellers. The three largest black and ethnic minority groups are Asian or Asian British Pakistani (7,000), Asian or Asian British Indian (almost 4,000) and mixed Black Caribbean and White (over 3,000).

The largest religious group of 0–16 year old children and young people is Christian (68.9%). The other largest groups include people with no religion (16.8%), Muslim (3.0%) and Jewish (1.2%). In Leeds over 60% of dependent children

**Leeds** Youth Service was delivered by:

- Head of Youth Service
- Four Senior Youth Officers
- 8 Locality Officers
- Full and part time Youth Workers

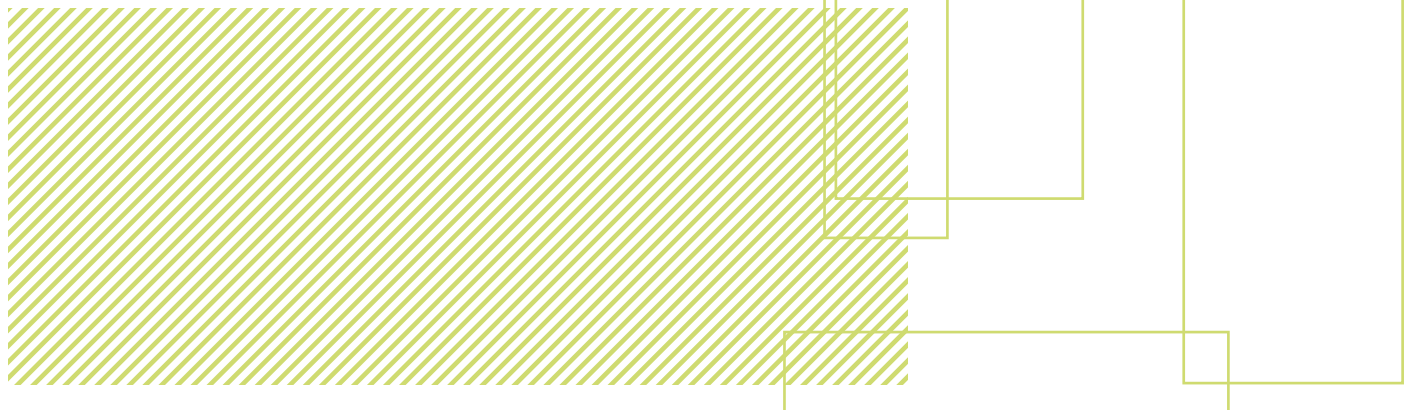
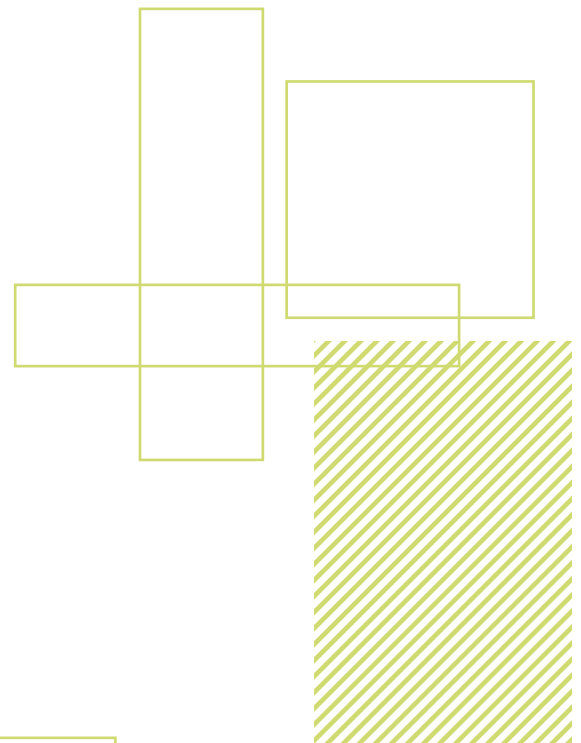
In order to develop work at a local level, the Local Authority is divided into 'wedges', with local partnerships and resources allocated to develop services for the area. There has been widespread discussion of measures to take forward a more integrated approach, led by the Authority but very clearly involving the voluntary and community sector. Results of this form the basis of a networking arrangement across the city and in the wedges. They are in the process of a detailed mapping of all services.

In 2006/07 the Youth Service budget increased in line with inflation to £9m excluding external funding. The proportion of resources commissioned to voluntary youth work organisations is approximately 9% and is rising. An improved area based commissioning process is being introduced for 2007/08.

# 3. The experience of integrated services – early gains and benefits

During the time at which the project was taking place all four Local Authorities had to some degree reorganised their services to increase integration. Early benefits that were common to each included:

- Increased efficiency and effectiveness due to sharing information about young people.
- Quicker access to services because of co-location and enhanced contribution to positive outcomes for young people and their families as a result.
- Increased access to resources for interventions and support for young people due to the effect of pooled budgets and more coordinated resource allocations.
- A shared location for services and joint working helped increase knowledge of interventions and support being provided to young people. It also builds closer working relationships with other service providers in the area and an increased awareness of issues and services across the patch in general.
- Increased access to support and training for staff because of economies of scale in the organisation of development, as well as more effective central recognition of development needs and progress.
- Better shaping and co-ordinating of activities to contribute to the Local Authorities' targets and aims.



## 4. Delivering integrated services

This section provides information on a number of the key processes for achieving effective integration of youth services.

Responsibility for the delivery of services for children and young people directly lies with the Local Authority. Under guidance from the Director of Children's Services, and through the implementation of a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), Local Authorities will have a single clear strategic plan to implement change to ensure that children and young people's needs are met.

Underpinned by the 2004 Children Act, Children's Trusts will bring together all services for children and young people. The focus of the Trusts is on commissioning a range of services that will improve outcomes for all children, young people and their families.

The Trusts will be overseen by a Children's Services Director who will have overall charge of delivering these outcomes and responsibility for services within the Trust, as well as coordination of services outside the organisation. This will include a single planning and commissioning function supported by pooled budgets. This will involve developing an overall picture of children's needs within an area, and developing provision through public, private, voluntary and community providers to respond to those needs. The Trust should involve children and families in putting together the picture of their needs and in designing the services to meet those needs.

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on Local Authorities to make arrangements to promote cooperation to improve the well-being of children locally. Children's Trusts will explore contributions from the voluntary and community sector to widen commissioning and increase the coverage of services locally. Children's Trusts must involve the voluntary and community sector at all levels from governance to integrated service delivery.

This system will give Local Authorities the responsibility for delivering integrated, multi-disciplinary services for children and young people that will require a joint needs assessment, shared decisions on priorities, identification of all available resources and joint plans in deploying them. The joint commissioning process and pooled resources will ensure that the best packages of services are delivered.

In order for this to be implemented it is important that everyone shares the same vision and values. This will include leadership at every level from the Children's Services Director to hands-on deliverers of the services. Strong outcome-driven performance management will be required to drive the services forward. Actively listening to the views

of children and young people will be paramount. In terms of oversight it is essential that committees and individuals build relationships with providers in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors, whilst developing a culture of integrated decision-making that promotes involvement from an early point. There is an important role for leadership in creating and sustaining this culture, whilst essential also is the sense that providers – often with a starting point of differing funding interests and traditional perspectives – have ownership and shared interests in making it work.

### Changing structures

The study found that all the Local Authorities had undergone, or were in the process of, restructuring services in response to the *Youth Matters* agenda. This was particularly evident with an impetus for integration of services that had already begun to show early signs of benefits for delivery. However, a clear understanding about how the statutory sector will engage with voluntary sector providers was yet to be finalised in all four cases.

The involvement of cross-sector providers at an early stage in planning is critical. Evidence from the study demonstrated that many existing local services meeting important needs are run by voluntary agencies. To ensure that the voices of those voluntary agencies are heard – and that their expertise is built into the offer – there is a need to have clear lines of responsibility for building the voluntary sector into decision-making. There remains room in each of the Local Authorities to clarify key posts including Locality Managers, Divisional Managers, decisions on who will remain at the centre of the service, and who will have responsibility for the centrally managed but locally delivered services and for developing partnership with voluntary organisations.

### Pooling budgets and resources for maximum reach

#### Key lessons:

- Pooled budgets are an important approach to enable service integration and joint working
- This can help strike the balance between centre-based, detached and project-based work through enabling greater coordination of resource allocation and decisions on spending relating to coverage
- This can assist with integrating the existing work of a number of programmes including Connexions into the wider youth offer through identifying the extent of coverage already achieved by the agency and also needs for its further development

A crucial element of service integration is the framework of protocols and agreements that can give rise to pooled budgets and resources. Managing multiple lines of funding can be difficult and will require a clear vision. However, coordination of both assessments and funding can have a direct effect in enhancing the services received by young people. Pooling of resources is key if integrated services are to be delivered to a shared agenda. However, many Local Authorities encounter difficulties in reorganising services from existing priorities and funding regimes without a sense of there being 'winner' and 'losers'. This can be overcome by building in representation from all providers at an early stage, transparent reporting back and clearly demonstrating throughout a firm strategic direction based on the benefits of coordinated services.

Pooled funding can also allow local partners flexibility in commissioning services that reflect cross-boundary needs, rather than being held back by the constraints of funding being locked in different budgetary silos. It creates a stage for partner agencies to come together, streamline and enhance provision on the ground.

It also encourages planners to ask key questions such as:

- What are the objectives?
- What are the outcomes?
- What do children, young people and their families expect?
- How are these objectives going to be achieved (i.e. what is the partnership going to do)?
- What needs is it intended to meet?
- What will the service that is going to do these things look like?
- What infrastructure would be best suited to delivering the service?
- What roles are required and what should be the balance between traditional professional roles and newly-defined local roles, both in respect of governance, quality assurance and implementation?
- What kind of staff skills will be needed?

In Barnet, the study found that the Local Authority had already begun to pool budgets and services. The amalgamation of the Youth and Connexions Service had helped the development of integrated service provision and Connexions PAs are part of the same service as centre based, detached and project workers. The careers guidance aspect of the Service is currently run by Prospects, an independent provider. North London Connexions is handling the transition process of further integration of Connexions into the Local Authority.

## Pooling resources

### 331 Young People's Centre, Barnet

In January 2007 the 331 Young People's Centre in Barnet moved under the management of the Youth and Connexions Service. It runs a free and confidential information, advice and support service for young people. It is a joint funded project between Connexions North London, the PCT and the Local Authority. They see up to 50 young people each week, mostly during the drop-in sessions.

## Joint planning and commissioning

### Key lessons:

- Mapping exercises identify gaps in provision, but follow through to planning in response is crucial
- Joint commissioning through formal and inclusive structures can ensure that all providers have an opportunity to be involved in constituting the new youth offer
- Private and voluntary sector providers play an important role in delivery and can be built into the visioning and joint commissioning process at an early stage
- The process of joint commissioning can identify gaps and duplications in service and ensure the widest reach for the reconfigured youth offer

An essential element of integrating services for all Local Authorities has been the need to create structures for commissioning. This means that bodies charged with commissioning have clear links to cross-sector providers and a clear, holistic picture of needs.

When looking at joint commissioning, lessons learned from the four Local Authorities show that, whilst many strategic partners will be willing to engage, other responses to integrated working may not be so favourable. The following are some examples of barriers encountered in relation to integrated commissioning:

- There may be some reluctance from some agencies over the reallocation of resources. Some agencies may feel that they would rather have the money and work to their own agenda rather than work within the context of a multi-agency service.
- Some agencies and providers, for example childcare providers or community play schemes, may fear that schools are duplicating the efforts of local services and reducing demand for their services.
- Some voluntary agencies may feel that they have been working in this way for some time, yet are not being consulted or included in the development of multi-agency working.

- Some professionals may feel that they are getting less favourable access to equipment and resources compared with the new multi-agency service.
- If service delivery issues have not been resolved there may be frustration for families who feel services are being duplicated.

It is important to create joint commissioning processes that are presided over by a body that brings in a variety of skills and membership bases. Evidence from the study suggests that the Joint Commissioning Team is most effective when it is constituted to be wide and inclusive – embracing the range of skills, experience and backgrounds required by the joint planning and commissioning cycle. The services that they will consider when commissioning will be diverse and the broadest possible skills and involvement are essential. These services can include contracting, financial, legal, negotiating, people skills, human resources, participation, evaluation, data analysis, children’s services, project management and leadership.

One of the core advantages of an integrated model is that it allows for the development of economies of scale in purchasing and commissioning. It may also be appropriate to joint commission with other Children’s Trusts across sub-regions or regions.

The balance between universal and targeted provision is a challenge that each of the four Local Authorities addressed as planning the youth offer progressed. Targeted support will always be required to an appropriate degree. There will always be especially vulnerable children who will require swifter high level intervention. But if universal integrated services are well developed, over time as problems are tackled at an earlier stage Local Authorities should begin to see a reduction in the need for targeted services.

In Sunderland multi-agency working is already in place in some areas of Youth Services and the experience of this supports the case for the joint planning and commissioning agenda. The case study below provides an example of where there has been an effective analysis of local needs with a practical response.

### **Youth information services Youth Information Shop, Sunderland**

The Youth Information Shop aims to be fully accessible and welcoming to any young person with an enquiry seeking advice, guidance and support. The target age range for the service is 13–19 years. The project is city-centred and is based in Holmside, Sunderland. Until recently the project has secured partnership work with the YMCA, based in Toward Road. They are also in direct partnership with the NHS, allowing for a wide brief in the type of support that can be offered.

The project’s aim is to be supportive with almost any enquiry a young person may have. This unique approach is about putting the young person first and

anchoring all other professional agencies around that question/enquiry.

The Youth Information Shop offers a direct service for young people but also support and information for youth projects around the city. They work in partnership with 19 projects, providing a satellite point for information on training, employment and educational opportunities to issues of bullying, sexuality and recreational activities.

The project was initially set up to be a service that offered information only. However, over time it has taken on much more in the way of relationship building. Evaluations found the traditional approach of youth work in building relationships with young people helped and supported take-up of information and advice.

In order to effectively joint commission services it is clear that there is a need for a strong strategic lead within the Local Authority that is capable of maximising the potential and bringing together the multitude of providers. This lead official or committee of individuals needs to effectively promote joint working at an early stage and gain the support and involvement of a number of disparate groups.

One of the outcomes of the discussions of the Steering Group set up in Sunderland to explore deepening integration was to build on existing structures and mechanisms. A key focus for this was the need to incorporate Sunderland’s response to Publicising Positive Activities – this involved the provision of information to young people regarding positive activities and associated facilities. An area approach was seen as a better way of efficiently delivering information services and there was agreement to seek to pool the resources allocated to this area to avoid duplication. A tender to provide consultancy on information systems that could build on the Children’s Information Service was agreed as a way forward. This is an example of the joint-commissioning approach that has been successful in the context of delivering information surrounding youth services and location.

There are some essential planning processes that have been shown by the experience of the Local Authorities to help to develop a cohesive approach to the range of agency agendas. Benefits can be achieved through all partners and members of the community being involved in data collection in order to play a part in the development of better outcomes for children, young people and their families. Diverse communities have a particularly important task in ensuring that there is representation of all groups and active participation from local community members.<sup>6</sup>

The key areas to review and consider before developing a multi-agency action plan and coordinating contributions to the CYPP need to be identified as a first step. By building partners in early and ensuring that there is a common

6. Joint planning and commissioning framework for children, young people and maternity services; [http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/\\_files/312A353A9CB391262BAF14CC7C1592F8.pdf](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/312A353A9CB391262BAF14CC7C1592F8.pdf)

understanding of strategic needs for service delivery it becomes easier to develop services in response to local needs. The process of reviewing need as well as supply of existing services in and around the local area will provide the evidence of the gap in provision and help shape the development and commissioning of services.

The key elements of planning a youth offer include:

- Multi-agency working arrangements
- Information gathering
- Mapping – what are services currently doing?
- Consultation and interviews with service users
- Analysis of data in respect of what young people can easily access
- Assessment of services and quality of provision
- Checklist of outcomes leading to an implementation plan linked to the CYPP

### **Integrated delivery of services Barnet**

In Barnet, the integrated model is currently being used in a number of settings but not always to its full potential. This is more evident in the voluntary sector where agencies were willing to develop services but needed some support. One of the best examples of integrated working with young people in Barnet can be found at the Old Barn Centre in East Finchley. It is a Make Space centre.

#### **Old Barn, East Finchley**

The Centre organises three out-of-school clubs all year round, one linking to a special school for 12–19 year olds and two others working with local schools catering for the 5–12 age group, and for which they provide transport. During the summer period the centre organises four holiday play schemes, linking with Whitefields and the Play Team.

The Centre has a new Youth and Connexions Multi-Agency Centre onsite and also an adventure playground (which does need refurbishment). The Centre is situated next to a Children's Centre and there is established joint working with the Finchley Youth Theatre and IPOP inclusion project.

The Centre is well used by children and young people in the local communities but it is in need of some refurbishment and good quality marketing. The potential for the further development of integrated working is enormous. The Local Authority and Connexions North London have developed a new Youth and Connexions drop-in centre at the Old Barn.

## **Multi-agency working arrangements**

### **Key lessons:**

- Ensuring that services operate joint working arrangements that can facilitate referral, data-sharing and collaboration
- The Local Authority is the strategic driver for ensuring that processes exist to create and sustain these arrangements
- A multi-agency team can be set up to audit the current service
- Reshaping of the service and its working arrangements can take place on the basis of input from all providers and a clear picture of the adequacy of provision

Local Authorities have a duty to ensure effective joint working arrangements between partner services and the local community. Local Authorities can play the role of strategic driver for this process. The creation of new systems and powerful advocacy for change can create the leadership necessary to enable new partnerships and working agreements to develop successfully. Partnerships between service providers will also evolve as service users have more say in the services commissioned and provided for them. Effective support and engagement by elected members and Local Authority strategic managers are key factors in a successful process.

In practice this means working strategically with senior managers to look at how resources are distributed, which approaches work best, and how individual agencies and the multi-agency service can mutually benefit from new ways of working.<sup>7</sup>

A multi-agency team can be set up to audit the current service, as has happened in Sunderland and Leeds. The aim for this team is to augment, reshape and upgrade existing services to develop a coordinated youth offer for the area. The youth offer should have a clear plan how to move forward after assessing key needs and gaps identified through the initial review and mapping of services.

Experience shows that the youth offer becomes most effective if it is designed through the involvement of all partners and in consultation with parents and young people. It is important to build in representation from professionals working with children so that they can clearly trace their own role to improving outcomes for young people in the plan. Prior to the development of the youth offer a clear process for the assessment of service use, users and gaps is also important.

It is helpful if local services are able to be clear about their work and contribution as this will promote building a very clear picture of existing provision quickly. In order to achieve this in a way that avoids slippage, Sunderland set a time scale and began by assigning key responsibilities to individual members of the group agreed by each partner on

the multi-agency team. Also agreed was a generic format for information collection and this was communicated with partners from all sectors, including the voluntary, community and faith sectors, as well as community safety agencies, schools offering extended services and Connexions. Information to be gathered through this process inevitably involves getting a sense of what already works – and learning from current good practice – as well identifying gaps and shortcomings.

### Joined up delivery Leeds

Leeds City Council is at the final stages of establishing an integrated Youth Support Service. The key aims of the steering group are in place to:

- Facilitate a coordinated approach to the implementation of Clause 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Improve outcomes for young people
- Join up services in a more tangible and effective manner
- Streamline infrastructures, tackle areas of duplication and make resultant efficiencies which could increase the overall proportion of resource invested in front line delivery of services

It will be important to monitor the development of Leeds as a system which is already well advanced in building structures to facilitate an integrated approach, both strategically, on the high level, and on the ground.

## Managing diverse sets of interests

### Key lessons:

- Local Authorities, as the strategic leader for planning and delivery, have an important role to play in building and maintaining relationships with providers from all sectors
- Inclusive structures, consultation and review exercises are essential in ensuring that providers are included in the processes of reform and have a stake in the creation of the new youth offer

Change is never easy for services and it is the role of the Local Authority to anticipate and manage the process. Building trust between professionals and services is important for the development of integration on the frontline and delivering a consistent and effective integrated service. The experience of the Local Authorities involved in this study has been that there is a clear need to communicate at all stages from the thinking behind the collection of data to planning priorities for the future.

This auditing exercise undertaken by the Local Authorities produced a range of common observations:

- A mapping brief is likely to better enable partners to feed back easily
- Effective auditing must include both services and resources available to those services
- The setting up of a dedicated team or named officer for partners to send their responses back to is likely to make the information collation process easier
- All information ought to be collected in a similar format to create ease when recording and analysing the data collected
- Deadlines for responses were essential
- Having spent time exploring partnership relations that are pre-existing can give a sense of the local climate in respect of joint working and collaboration and may inform decisions on the right structures to deepen cooperation
- The development of a geographical mapping of the area that includes service delivery points provided a good opportunity to gain a sense of current provision
- The return of feedback to partners on their involvement was essential to keep them engaged in the process

### Integrated services Essex

Essex is investing heavily in new Teams Around the School, Child and Community (TASCC) in order to ensure that resources are effectively deployed to meet the local needs of children and young people. TASCC teams will work proactively across the universal services, with and through schools, children's centres and community groups to develop first class preventative services.

The TASCC teams will be in place from September 2007. The teams will be multi-disciplinary, and will include behaviour support workers, social care staff, educational welfare officers, youth workers and early years staff. In the first instance they will include only Essex County Council staff, but the Local Authority is engaged with partners to ensure that as the teams develop, they will include staff from partner organisations, including community health practitioners, district or borough council officers and possibly community policing resources.

Each of the 29 TASCC teams will be aligned within existing Local Delivery Groups (LDGs). LDGs are well-established geographical communities of schools and other partners working together on shared priorities to deliver the Extended Schools agenda and meet other needs within the local community. Some LDGs, for example, have identified a need for additional child and adolescent mental health services to support pupils in school, and have commissioned additional resources to meet this need.

The new TASCC teams will provide a framework within which such additional resources can be deployed more effectively as part of a dedicated multi-agency preventative service. As the teams develop, they will continue to work in partnership with schools, through the LDG, and other partners, to identify local priorities and either recruit practitioners or commission services in accordance with that identified local need.

LDGs work in partnership with the 11 local Children and Young People's Strategic Partnerships, which are aligned to the district and borough councils that make up the County. These are the mechanism for delivering the priorities identified within the Children and Young Person's Plan (CYPP) and the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnerships provide the framework within which the various statutory and voluntary, community and independent partners can come together, plan strategically and pool resources in order to meet the priorities of the CYPP and LAA. Resources will be deployed as effectively as possible so that services delivered, whether commissioned or provided, have the maximum impact on improving outcomes.

- The multi-agency group is in the most effective position to create and formalise interview questions so that information required can be gathered and this information analysed cohesively and in view of the 'whole system'
- Higher response rates were achieved when consultation methods took a number of forms – using questionnaires, open feedback and comments from users, group discussion or video and photographic tools.

Many Local Authorities have existing forums for young people. As they are pre-existing formal networks they can perform an important role in bringing the voice of young people into the commissioning and review process. Often these structures take the form of Youth Councils or Youth Parliaments and this adds a layer of democratic accountability for the youth representatives to their peers, as well as an important citizenship element.

However, it is important also to remember that often the hard-to-engage young people – which many services are specifically in place to provide for – are the least likely to stand or vote in youth elections. It is important that consultation does not reach only the articulate and the confident but also the less vocal and more elusive teenagers who so often form the focus for targeted services. Targeting these groups with clear objectives and a set outline of the information needed, when done properly, is invaluable to the development of the youth offer.

Increasingly, young people are becoming more familiar with responding to consultation requests and are becoming increasingly articulate in expressing their views. The information gathered from young people is likely to highlight gaps as well as areas of good practice in the locality.

## Consultation and interviews with service users

### Key lessons:

- Consultation with parents, young people and schools is critical in remodelling services in a way that is fit-for-purpose and genuinely responsive to need
- Existing structures, including Youth Parliaments and Youth Councils, are valuable vehicles for consultation events
- Where consultative mechanisms are not already in place this process is an excellent stimulant for their creation
- Consultation extends to review of service delivery as well as identification of need

Consultation with young people and families was found to form a key part of the mapping and planning process. It is essential to gain an understanding of the views of those using a service to help shape a developing and enhanced offer. Local Authorities in the study learned of good practice but also priorities for development through consultation. This was a key tool in auditing projects to assess management and in some cases demonstrated that funds might be better spent in different ways.

Common lessons from the Local Authorities on the models for consultation included these:

- A consultation brief and set interview process can better enable partners to feed back easily

### Integrated services Sunderland

Sunderland has begun a process of reviewing and building more highly developed systems for engaging with young people. Sunderland is one of many Local Authorities that are working with the Youth Parliament to scope out the views of young people in a structured way that is capable of shaping that offer.

There is already a range of out of school provision and youth services in Sunderland that includes many of the features of an integrated model of service delivery. Several settings that demonstrate this have received funding from 4Children's Make Space campaign.

Partner consultation in joint planning and commissioning is highly developed but essential also is the involvement of groups of young people and adults working with teenagers at ground level in response to local need. Some examples of partners working within the ambit of the youth offer include local health services, Connexions and a number of small-scale local voluntary and community organisations that

together provide a range of opportunities for young people. Their breadth has enabled targeted work to take place. Connexions works in partnership with the Local Authority to provide Advice Information Guidance (AIG) in appropriate settings and has also set up a project that specifically targets those young people in the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) category. The integration of local and national volunteering services forms a core element of the integrated offer envisaged by *Youth Matters*. Sunderland offers a wide variety of volunteering activities and youth projects, a local example of which is an award and accreditation scheme called the Mayor's Award scheme and a national example of which is the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme. Specialist health and support services are available and are accessible through a variety of settings.

However, concerns about short term funding and having to chase grants continue to worry many in the voluntary and community sector. Sustainability is a key area for development locally and the establishment of a more cogent grant application and funding process is an important element of this. Currently, the availability of grant money from a number of different sources, all involving different application routes, makes planning for sustainable services difficult and unpredictable. This often leads to a default termination of some services as funds dry up.

## Analysing and assessing

### Key lessons:

- Robust analysis is a crucial follow on to mapping exercises and consultation
- This process provides the basis for work in remodelling youth services and extending services to fill identified gaps and shortcomings
- Location, travel arrangements, quality of activities and programme accessibility issues and opening times and importantly, cost provide some examples of factors that are crucial to an effective analysis of the current offer in relation to its ability to meet identified need

Robust analysis and follow-through on information collected is crucial if services are to really meet the needs of young people. Evidence from this study suggested a range of factors were key to the analysis, including clear timescales, joint decision-making with cross-sector representation and effective reporting back on conclusions. A clear factor to consider is the range and type of services, taking into account local variations such as the need to target age groups or members of specific communities, as well as opening times and accessibility.

From the information gathered it is then possible to form clear protocols of working and start the development of local action plans designed to support the ambition of the Children and Young People's Plan. It is essential that the analysis recognises and works on realising the true meaning of data collected rather than any preconceived plans or notions. That data should facilitate change and reform, whilst linking with the CYPP.

Strategically, the analysis and decisions taken on the basis of it, will feed decisions on commissioning and delivery. It will be a crucial tool through which Local Authority priorities – including identifying and assisting vulnerable children, providing positive activities to cut down on anti-social behaviour, cutting down on social exclusion and providing support and interventions – should be pursued.

Operationally, this work can help with outlining training and development issues required in widening and narrowing the remit of agencies, including arranging the details of any joint training that is to be undertaken. Further operational issues that arose in the case of Local Authority partners included:

- When services begin to collaborate or share remit there is a clear need for data collection and information sharing to enable the needs of young people to be identified quickly from pre-existing data and relationships
- A useful step was found to be the development of intranet facilities and guidelines on the sharing of information guidelines
- The use of computer programs, online and real-time recording, as well as joint assessment frameworks for statutory services can help to avoid repetition and streamline responses to issues
- Detailing consent and joint confidentiality procedures is essential<sup>8</sup>

## Maximising the use of community buildings

### Key lessons:

- Carrying out an audit of existing community buildings that have potential to provide a youth offer can help open up a new avenue of delivery
- Capital expenditure is required for some upgrading work but this can be kept to a minimum through using existing buildings. This can support the streamlining of spending to allow for investment in areas of no fit-for-purpose existing provision.
- Existing youth clubs, extended schools and children's centres are some examples of community buildings capable of providing opportunities for young people
- Surveying existing premises for health and safety considerations, location, opening times and accessibility can identify suitability for the youth offer

One of the most effective ways of providing upgraded youth services whilst ensuring minimal capital spends is to base services in existing community buildings. This can mean that effective services are provided whilst avoiding prohibitive cost of investing in new buildings. In Essex the Local Authority has demonstrated the potential for an after-hours youth service to be operated from an existing community asset. Involving minimal capital expenditure and utilising space as efficiently as possible, this approach demonstrates the potential for integration of children's and youth services.

The challenges in achieving this have included consultation with managers of existing services providers, as well as neighbourhood residence groups and associations around centres. Gaining the cooperation and 'buy-in' of these groups is important in modifying services and extending opening hours. In addition to this, limited infrastructure improvements and, more significantly, training of ancillary staff was found to be important in the upgrading process. Choosing buildings, for example children's centres already providing integrated support services, was found to offer potential for important synergies. Where this occurs, overall management of centres should be capable of coordinating and developing the youth wing of the overall service in addition to existing service priorities, as well as in identifying potential for crossovers and cross-fertilisation between facilities.

In Essex, this principle is exemplified by the newly opened children's centre in Braintree. Onsite the centre has a full time youth centre which was developed using the Make Space concept. This has proved to be a successful example of 0–19 services and the capacity of children's centres to provide a continuum of support and activities for families over and above strictly early years provision.

### **Integrated service provider Carousel Children's Centre, Essex**

The Carousel Centre opened in April 2006, and its high-quality refurbished school building offers services to children and parents from before birth to 19 years of age and up to 25 years with some young people. Half of the building houses the Children's Centre, with its nursery and child care provision, including holiday and after school clubs for 5–11 year-olds, run by 4Children.

This building also provides office space and consulting rooms for Mid-Essex Primary Care Trust (PCT) staff – a Community Paediatrician, Speech and Language Therapists and an Ophthalmologist. Additional health workers also deliver services in the Centre, and a Health Visitor is permanently based there. 4Children has secured agreements to provide office space for PCT professionals, ensuring that there is continuity of care for children in their community as they move on from the early years provision within the centre and securing sustainability for the future.

The centre provides accommodation for Home Start activities and for the Adult Community College and for Jobcentre Plus. There is a training kitchen on the premises that is run by a special needs local employment group. Future plans include a discrete Mother and Toddler Group for Traveller families, which will be run in partnership with the Traveller Education Service.

The Youth Centre located on the Carousel Centre site has been created using the Make Space model and comprises a social space, a cyber-café, a separate information point (providing access to information on health issues, Connexions and other advice and guidance leaflets), an arts and craft room, meeting/activity space, a quiet area and office space. There is also a large playing field and multi-sports area and further accommodation behind the main Centre. The Centre hosts an alternative education programme for excluded pupils from a wide catchment area and a complementary education programme for year 9 and 10 pupils who are at risk of exclusion. There is a daily drop in for young people aged 13–25 from 4.30–10.00pm, offering a range of activities, workshops, advice and support to over 200 young people.

## **A coordinated workforce to bring the integrated offer to life**

Three of the four Local Authorities partners are continuing to undergo a restructuring of services. Part of effective restructuring is the creation and maintenance of a high-quality workforce, with appropriate training and support to ensure that effective services are delivered to young people. Recruitment, reward, training and development opportunities, as well as the qualification framework, are essential issues here.

The experience of the Local Authorities was found to be that frontline youth workers need the support of higher-tier centre managers who are well-versed in change management and building new links with services whilst unifying around shared interests albeit in different organisational cultures. These change managers can play the role of driving and empowering colleagues to take action in building in services to their own, in collaborating and in sharing information and responsibility. An integrated workforce means that workers in local services in the community, where generally workers better understand the specific needs of the young people in the community, have strong links with centre managers and Local Authority officials.

# 5. Next steps

## What operational steps and support will be needed to deliver the youth offer?

After a full mapping and analysis has been completed strategic decisions will be made on how to develop an integrated approach to services for young people. New joint working policies and procedures need to be created or adopted to create a central point of contact for all partners involved.

A lead officer and senior managers of services for young people should undertake these next steps. Evidence from this study suggested that it is helpful for the check list of outcomes to be documented and distributed amongst partners for their review and understanding.

The process involves:

### Reviewing findings and reflecting on the analysis

From the mapping and information gathering exercise key actions need to be developed and these will form a schedule of steps for Local Authorities and partner services to develop the youth offer.

Reviewing the gaps in service provision and identifying which services are under-used is a process which is best managed delicately, especially when looking at the commissioning of services. Those organisations that are not achieving their aims or being under-used will need to be supported to ensure their continued involvement and support for restructuring in line with the needs identified and actions agreed in the youth offer.

### Implementing the youth offer

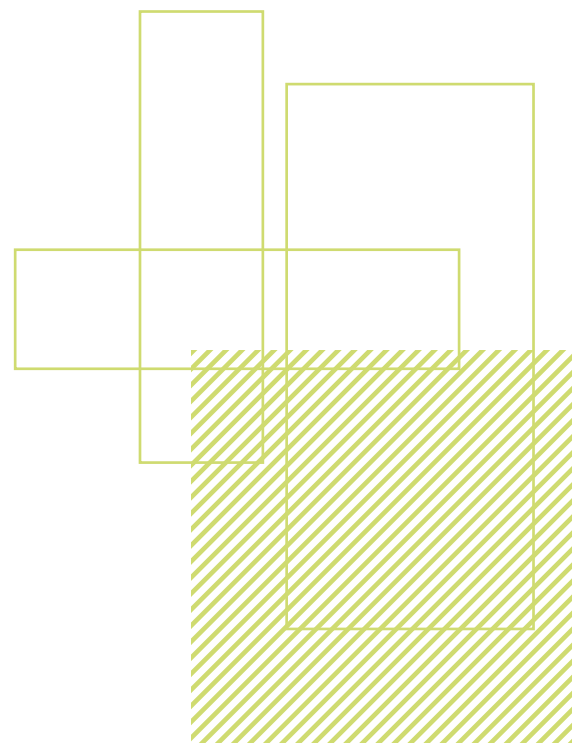
Once the revised youth offer has been completed it can be disseminated to local network groups for children and young people. On a more local level the localised network groups will be in a position to refine the detail of where and how they can reach the targets set out in the youth offer in respect of their local community.

### Delegation for implementation

In the Senior Management Team/Commissioning Team the implementation plan (action plans from the youth offer) can perform a useful role in identifying remits of officers to take overall responsibility for ensuring that each objective is achieved.

Lead officers will be responsible for the following:

- Achieving the agreed outcomes through the development and implementation of agency business plans, strategic or partnership plans
- Ensuring that clear milestones are agreed and evaluated in order to meet targets
- Ensuring that appropriate resources (people and money) are allocated to achieve agreed outcomes, or making the case for additional investment where this is required
- Ensuring appropriate communication across partners
- Monitoring progress on achieving the agreed outcome or outputs
- Providing regular progress reports to the Children's Executive – including exception reports analysing reasons for slower than expected progress
- Evaluating the impact of actions on improved outcomes (i.e. being clear about what made the difference)



# 6. Conclusions

The experience of the Local Authorities that worked with Make Space in developing the integration of their services is made up of a series of commonly encountered challenges and approaches. These form the basis for a series of practical observations contained within this report. These observations provide pragmatic measures that can assist in making the approach concerning service delivery contained within *Youth Matters* a reality. To implement these there needs to be a focus both on structural and cultural change in Local Authorities in respect of arrangements for the repackaging of their youth offer.

Key measures in achieving this include the following:

- Strategic leadership and coordinated policy
- Structural change
- Inclusive approaches to the role of providers at an early stage in commissioning
- Building in private and voluntary providers
- Maintaining a focus on quality and coverage of services
- Highly effective change management and workforce development

The Make Space integrated model provides a key approach to achieving a renewed youth offer that provides for collaboration, joint working and information-sharing between services. The experience of the Local Authorities involved in this study has been one through which the benefits of better integrated services are already beginning to develop. These observations include:

- More effectively mapped services that reach greater numbers of young people
- Effective referrals to targeted services within a universal framework
- A more cohesive youth offer that takes into account local needs and changes alongside them

In the period since the publication of *Youth Matters* much has been achieved through the work of Local Authorities in reframing their services. The scale of the task ahead gives a sense of the work to be done to fulfil this potential, whilst some clear effects in promoting the experience of young people give us a sense of the rewards of its completion.

