



YOUTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)

14th December 2006

KEY ISSUE

To consider the issues raised at the recent Local Committee engagement event on 6th November and agree a set of recommendations to improve facilities and services for young people in Guildford borough.

SUMMARY

On 6th November 2006 The Local Committee hosted the first of its engagement events with a theme of Youth Facilities and Services in Guildford borough. This report summarises the discussions and views from the meeting and seeks the Committee's comments and support for taking forward specific proposals.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

1. Thank attendees for coming and participating in the meeting, particularly the young people who attended and youth workers from SCC's YDS.
2. Request that SCC Executive provide extra funding to the Youth Development Service for operational Youth work staff to provide outreach youth work as well as increased staffing (and opening hours) at youth centres, and consider other ways in which youth work (at youth centres and in outreach settings) might be increased, including the use of volunteers and services of other agencies.

3. Consider ways in which the Local Committee and the Guildford Youth Council could work together, particularly on funding issues, and School Councils for those schools in each of their divisions.
4. Request that Guildford Borough Council consider hosting a larger event at Spectrum leisure centre similar to those held in Spelthorne (the 'Youth Shout' event)
5. Negotiate with the Surrey Advertiser to give regular column space to promote a more positive image of young people, and ask SCC and GBC officers to develop ways of organising cross generational events at schools and/or day centres in the borough
6. Review progress made on the range of issues in 6 months time, with a report on progress made to young people and agencies that attended the event.

BACKGROUND

1. While in previous years the Committee has only operated in formal 'mode', holding 7 or 8 formal meetings each year, it was recognised that this way of working placed limitations on the extent to which the Committee could include the views and participation of the public and partner agencies in its discussions.
2. The 2006/2007 programme for the Committee therefore included 4 formal meetings (where Transport and General issues would be discussed in the usual way) and 3 informal engagement events, based around three themes: Youth Services and facilities, Waste/Minerals/Environmental issues and Highways Maintenance. (See the Forward Programme item on the agenda for details of these remaining two engagement events.)
3. Invitations for the event were extended to a wide range of agencies (see Appendix A) and the meeting was publicised through Local Committee posters, Youth Workers, Community Safety Wardens, press release to the Surrey Advertiser (not printed), Guildford Youth Council, Guildford Live Music Forum and Eagle Radio.
4. A particular emphasis was placed on encouraging young people themselves to attend, with posters sent to venues that young people might use e.g. cafes, leisure centres, shops, schools. The Guildford Borough Council txt2u service was used to send a text message to people who have signed up for this service.
5. Some attempt was made to include a more diverse range of young people e.g. young people from Guildford Pupil Referral Unit, Libertas children's home, Disability Challengers, young offenders/ex-offenders, and young people from the Traveller community.

6. About 50 people attended including representatives of the organisations listed in Appendix B. Given the effort made by many people to encourage people and young people in particular, the quantity of the turnout was perhaps a little disappointing, and instructive in terms of the effort and publicity required to successfully promote this sort of event. However the lively contribution of the 15 young people who did attend more than compensated for this.
7. The meeting cost approximately £250 including venue hire, refreshments, travel and expenses for young people. Costs were met from the Local Partnerships Team budget.
8. Discussions were structured around a number of different themes:
 - a. Nothing to do
 - b. Education and Work
 - c. Nowhere to go
 - d. Image of young people
 - e. The environment
 - f. Safety
 - g. Involving young people in decision taking

(No-one chose to discuss the environment.)
9. For each theme participants were invited to describe the perceived barriers to further facilities for young people, and to suggest solutions, including specific practical steps that could be taken. The feedback from each group is summarised in Appendix C.
10. A panel of representatives from the Surrey County Council Youth Development Service, Guildford Youth Council, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey Police responded to questions and some of the issues raised by the groups.
11. Participants were invited to make pledges of actions that responded to the issues raised by the groups. Representatives of Surrey Police / the Safer Guildford Partnership pledged to respond to young people's request for safe music events. Since the meeting: an event for young people has been organised for 20th December. 700 Young people between 13-18 are expected to attend. The decision to hold repeat events (similar to the alcohol/drug-free 'SNAP' events (Say No And Phone) will depend on take-up and funding.

12. ISSUES RAISED

13. Some people felt that there should be more opportunities for young people to give their views on services. One suggestion was to hold a larger consultation youth event, and the example of events in Spelthorne was given. It was suggested that the Spectrum leisure centre be made available for such an event.

14. Several groups called for more funding for youth work, and more youth workers, with longer opening hours at youth centres.
15. Many felt that young people often have a negative image and it was suggested that the Surrey Advertiser be asked to provide regular space (a 'youth page') for more positive images and news stories. Some people suggested that cross-generational events would help to break down barriers between older and younger residents of Guildford.
16. Young people could be more involved in decision-taking if there were better links between adult decision-takers and the Guildford Youth Council and individual school councils. Young people wanted to know more about how to contact councillors and what they do.
17. Other suggestions and requests were made:
 - concessions for travel and entry to facilities for young people
 - off road biking facilities
 - places for young bands to practice, regular gigs for young people
 - a leaflet or road show about what there is for young people to do
 - more continuity of services
 - more information about college/university
 - more work experience, more involvement by employers
 - more cafes and facilities to sit down inside, more youth shelters
 - a part of Guilfest for young people
 - learning (about the image of young people) from other countries/communities
 - after-school clubs for non-sport activities
 - better lighting (in parks) for safety

18. POSSIBLE ACTIONS

19. Several references were made to two funds currently available for young people: the SCC Local Committee Capital funds (about 26,000 remaining) and the Guildford Youth Council's Youth Opportunities Fund (£65,000 available).
20. The Local Committee will make final decisions on its Capital allocation at its meeting on 22nd March 2007; it has already indicated that the funds should carry a youth theme, and officers are inviting voluntary and community groups in Guildford to submit any proposals.
21. The Youth Council funding can only be accessed by proposals from young people, with a deadline of 1st February 2007; the decision on any proposals will be made on 31st March 2007.
22. In addition to the specific recommendations in this report, officers will take up the other issues raised above with appropriate agencies including:

Surrey County Council Youth Development Service
Schools and School Councils
Careers service/Connexions
Children Centres/Extended Schools
Surrey University
Guildford College
Council for Voluntary Service
Guildford Youth Council
Guildford Borough Council Spectrum
Guildford Business Forum
Guildford Borough Council Day Centres
Surrey County Council Highways (Street lighting)
Guildford Borough Council Parks.

23. It was suggested that it is important to feedback any results from the engagement event. It is recommended that progress is reported back to this Committee in 6 months time, as well as reported back to the young people and agencies that attended the meeting.

24. CONCLUSIONS & REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

25. The meeting included young people and a broad cross-section of agencies. It will be important that participants in the meeting, especially young people see some evidence that action is being taken in response to the issues raised, and that there is now some communication or feedback to the group.
26. Members are asked to approve the recommendations in this report and maintain an advocacy role to support any ongoing actions that officers may carry out. This will be especially important in order to use and develop partnerships across agencies in order to meet a shared objective of improving services and facilities for young people in Guildford borough.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: **None**

Appendix A - Organisations invited to the event

Academy of Contemporary Music
Ash Manor Sports Centre
Cafes and Restaurants in Guildford
Church youth groups
Community Learning Partnership
Community Safety Wardens
Police Community Support Officers
Safer Guildford Partnership
Connexions
Craggy Island Climbing Centre
Disability Challengers
Friary Centre
Guildford Borough Council Services (Parks, Wardens, Culture, Licensing)
Guildford Borough Councillors
Guildford College
Guildford Pupil Referral Unit
Guildford School of Acting
Guildford Secondary Schools
Guildford YMCA
Guildford Youth Council
Healthy Living Programme Community Development Workers
Jellytree Productions
Libertas
Libraries
Local Residents Associations
Matrix Trust
Parish Councils
Peter Gordon (Eagle Radio / Live Music Forum)
Plantation café
Spectrum
Surrey County Council Travellers liaison worker
Surrey County Council Youth Development Service
Surrey County Councillors
Surrey Police
Surrey Primary Care Trust
Surrey University
Tourist Information Centre
Wey Kayak Club
Youth and Community Centres
Youth Clubs/Centres (Horsley, Ripley, Ash, Park Barn, Guildford, Bellfields)
Youth Offending Team

Appendix B – Attendees

Community Learning Partnership

Free Movement Guildford

Guildford Borough Council Community Safety Wardens

Guildford Borough Council Members

Guildford Borough Council Cultural Services

Guildford YMCA

Guildford.Safehouse

Jellytree Productions

Kings College School

Police Community Support Officers

Safer Guildford Partnership

SCC Local Committee Members

Surrey County Council Youth Development Service

Surrey Police Youth Intervention Officer, Borough Sergeant

Surrey Primary Care Trust

Waterside Centre/Kayak Club Wey Kayak Club

Weyfield Residents Association

Young people from Ash, Stoughton, Westborough, Park Barn

Young people representing Guildford Youth Council

Youth Offending Team