

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee **The Cabinet**
Date of Committee **8 September 2005**
Report Title **Ofsted Inspection of Youth Service**

Summary
Following an Ofsted Inspection of Warwickshire’s Youth Service from 23rd to 26th May 2005, the Ofsted Report was published in late July. This agenda item presents the Ofsted Report and recommends that the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider an Action Plan to address the recommendations contained within the Ofsted Report, before submission to the Cabinet.

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]
No

Background papers
▪ Youth Service Self-Assessment Report, March 2005
▪ Ofsted Framework for Inspection of Youth Services

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s)
- Other Elected Members

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Cabinet Member | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Cllr John Burton
Cllr Izzi Seccombe – <i>“am happy to confirm that this report should go to Cabinet for their views”</i>
Cllr Peter Fowler – <i>“I will make any comments on the day and welcome comments from other Members”</i> |
| Chief Executive | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Legal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Jane Pollard / Richard Freeth – <i>“fine”</i> |
| Finance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | David Clarke, County Treasurer – <i>“fine”</i> |
| Other Chief Officers | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| District Councils | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Health Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Police | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Other Bodies/Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

FINAL DECISION **NO**

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Further consideration by this Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| To Council | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| To Cabinet | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Following consideration of the Action Plan by the O&S Committee, report to Cabinet 6.10.05 |
| To an O & S Committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Action Plan to be presented to the Children and Young People O&S Committee 22.9.05 |
| To an Area Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Further Consultation | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

The Cabinet – 8 September 2005

Ofsted Inspection of Youth Service

Report of the County Education Officer

Recommendations:

- (1) That the Ofsted Inspection Report be noted and all staff in the service be thanked for their considerable input into the inspection process
- (2) That an Action Plan addressing the recommendations contained within the Ofsted Inspection Report be presented to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ofsted undertake Inspections of Local Authority Youth Services following guidelines set out in the Inspection Framework. The Youth Service was previously inspected in 1999 and was judged to be unsatisfactory.
- 1.2 For 2005 revised guidance was issued. It modernised the approach and increased the emphasis on self assessment and in-house performance and quality measures. This approach is in line with many other inspection frameworks and is in preparation for new arrangements under the Children Act 2004.
- 1.3 In making arrangements for the inspection process Ofsted described the focus as follows: "Alongside direct observation of youth work, upon which judgements of quality, effectiveness and educational outcomes will be made, emphasis is placed on the extent to which local authorities secure, resource and manage youth services".
- 1.4 The inspection process is in two stages. Stage 1 of the inspection refers to the requirement to submit an up-to-date self-assessment report with supporting evidence and documentation and other factual information. It is mainly a desk-top exercise and documentary search undertaken by the Reporting Inspector (RI) and Assistant Reporting Officer (ARI) away from the authority. The RI and ARI are normally employed by Ofsted as Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). Stage 2 takes place in the authority and consists of a mixture of observation of practice, interviews and focus groups and additional documentary research. The Inspection team consists of those previously identified and "Additional Inspectors" who are experienced people from youth service backgrounds, often

currently employed as county officers or who have been county officers and are in associated practices.

- 1.5 Warwickshire was contacted on 24th January 2005 to be informed that Stage 2 of the Inspection would take place during the week of 23rd May. Information relating to Stage 1 was required to be with Ofsted by 18th March.

2. The Inspection Report

- 2.1 The Report is attached as **Appendix A** and concludes: "Overall this is an adequate service with a balance of strengths and weaknesses. The service deploys resources effectively and provides satisfactory value for money".
- 2.2 In total, 25 observations were made of service delivery, including voluntary sector funded partners. No prior notice was given for observation. It was a credit to the preparation by the Service that many staff were disappointed that the Inspectors did not visit.
- 2.3 The strengths identified in the report and areas that require further development are known and did not, therefore, bring any great surprises. It is considered that the seven recommendations reflect the needs of service development and are areas that the service has been taking action on and/or considering for action. Inevitably for a Service in which the level of resource is a significant issue, progress against some desired issues will be challenging.
- 2.4 It is pleasing that the amount of work by managers and staff in the Service to modernise its approaches and embed good practice for Quality Assurance and Curriculum Development have been recognised. Other strengths included the detached youth work and links with the voluntary sector and other statutory bodies. It was clear that strategic managers were aware of the Service's strengths and weaknesses and that there is a high level of commitment and motivation amongst workers and managers.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The Service is in a strong position to move forward to become a service recognised as "good" through the Ofsted Inspection process. The Strategic Review of Services for Young People gives the Authority the opportunity to build on this satisfactory outcome.
- 3.2 An action plan, based upon the recommendations set out in the Ofsted Report, is being prepared. It is recommended that the action plan is presented to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for consideration before being presented to Cabinet.

ERIC WOOD
County Education Officer
22 Northgate Street
Warwick

24th August 2005



**Office for Standards
in Education**

Inspection report
Warwickshire Youth Service

Dates of inspection: 23-27 May 2005

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Inspection reports are on the Ofsted web site: (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Reference:

Contents

Section	Page
Introduction	4
Part A: Summary of the report	5
Main findings	5
Recommendations	6
Part B: Commentary on the key aspects	7
Key Aspect 1: Standards of young people's achievements and the quality of youth work practice	7
Key Aspect 2: Quality of curriculum and resources	7
Key Aspect 3: Leadership and management	9
Warwickshire Youth Service Indicators	11

Introduction

Name of local authority:	Warwickshire County Council
Name of chief officer:	Eric Wood
Name and address of department in which the service is based:	Education Department 22 Northgate Street Warwick CV34 4SR
Name of service:	Warwickshire Youth and Community Service
Name of head of service:	Peter Hatcher
Reporting inspector:	John Evans HMI
Dates of inspection:	23-27 May 2005

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) conducts inspections of local authority youth services for young people aged up to 16 under section 38 of the Education Act 1997. For young people aged 16 to 19 the inspection remit is provided by section 61(2) of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

The county of Warwickshire is a predominantly rural county which borders the West Midlands conurbation. It had a total population of 509,000 in 2001, which include some 9% in the 13 to 19 age range. Approximately 4% of the population is of minority ethnic heritage. The county is relatively affluent overall, although there are some areas of urban deprivation in and around Nuneaton and Bedworth.

The youth service is part of the Youth and Community Service within the Education Department of the County Council. There are 34 full-time and 151 part-time workers, which corresponds to a total of 81 full-time equivalents (FTEs). Youth work concentrates on the 13 to 19 age range. The council invests 1% of the education budget in the youth service, a figure that is well below the national average. In 2004/05 expenditure on the youth service was £2,620,000, which represents an 8.4% increase on the previous year's budget.

During the inspection, inspectors observed a sample of youth work sessions and held discussions with elected members, senior managers, members of staff and service partners, and reviewed a sample of service documentation. Time was allocated to the evaluation of work identified by the service as being representative of particularly good practice. Young people who had trained as peer assessors in the youth service accompanied inspectors on one visit.

Part A: Summary of the report

Main findings

Effectiveness and value for money

Warwickshire provides an adequate service with a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Progress has been made in planning and developing the work of the service since its recent restructuring, but weaknesses persist in all three key aspects of the work. The service currently offers satisfactory value for money.

Strengths

The service has a clear sense of purpose. Strategic managers understand its strengths and weaknesses. A wide range of development groups are driving improvements. Youth workers are committed to their work and are highly motivated. Staff morale is high. A clear curriculum framework is in place which appropriately reflects local and national priorities. Needs analysis is thorough. Young people achieve good standards in project work. They make good progress in their personal and social development and learn new skills. Detached youth work practice is very good. The service has established effective links with a broad range of statutory and voluntary bodies.

Weaknesses

Expenditure on the youth service is low. The service is over-reliant on part-time unqualified staff. Insufficient strategic direction is given to the promotion of equality and cultural diversity. Youth workers do not always exploit the potential of activities to promote learning. Learning outcomes are not identified or recorded consistently. Young people are insufficiently involved in decision making. Insufficient provision is made for young people with disabilities. Quality assurance arrangements are not yet rigorous enough to support improvements in the service.

Key aspect inspection grades

	Key aspect	Grade
1	Standards of young people's achievement	3
	Quality of youth work practice	3
2	Quality of curriculum and resources	3
3	Strategic and operational leadership and management	3

The table above shows overall grades about provision. Inspectors make judgements based on the following scale: Very Good (1), Good (2), Adequate (3) and Inadequate (4).

Recommendations

The council should:

- ensure that all provision is focused on educational outcomes, and is sufficiently challenging
- involve young people in service development more thoroughly at centre and service-wide levels
- place greater emphasis on promoting positive attitudes towards equality of opportunity and inclusion
- increase provision to meet the needs of young people with disabilities
- take steps to ensure that staff are appropriately qualified
- improve the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures
- fund the youth service adequately and monitor its efficiency and effectiveness.

Part B: Commentary on the key aspects

Key Aspect 1: Standards of young people's achievements and the quality of youth work practice

1. Standards of achievement are satisfactory. Most young people improve their confidence and self-esteem through their participation in youth work activities. Young people make particularly good progress in project work, in some instances exploring their own behavioural issues whilst developing their creativity. Many young people benefit from the wide range of outdoor activities available and use them to help develop their social skills and to accept greater personal responsibility for their actions. However, in a significant minority of sessions young people do not achieve as much as they should. An increasing range of young people are taking up the opportunities created by the service to participate in representative structures, although at this stage their influence is very limited.
2. An increasing number of young people in both the statutory and voluntary youth service are achieving qualifications. Participation rates in Duke of Edinburgh and Warwickshire Challenge awards are high. The range of opportunities for young people to have their accomplishments accredited has improved in recent years. Gaining one of these awards represents significant progress for those young people who have little experience of achievement at school. However, too many young people embark on awards which do not match the quality of the work they produce. The service pays too little attention to matching individual young people to the most appropriate level of accreditation.
3. The quality of youth work practice is satisfactory. Youth workers establish a good rapport and constructive relationships with young people. They know the young people well and understand their diverse backgrounds. However, although youth workers are familiar with young people's needs, they do not always plan programmes with sufficiently challenging goals linked to these needs. Too many plans focus on activities and methods rather than on outcomes for young people.
4. Targeted project work is effective. Youth workers lead these sessions well and have developed relationships with young people in which tolerance and respect are actively promoted. Youth workers encourage young people to reflect on inappropriate behaviour when it arises and improvements result. In most cases, boundaries for acceptable behaviour are identified and complied with. In the best sessions young people are playing an increasing role in negotiating the programme content but generally young people are not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for the planning or leading of youth work sessions. The service has increased its number of detached youth workers. These members of staff are particularly skilful at establishing mutual trust quickly and effectively and have been successful in supporting young people in difficult, often challenging, circumstances.

Key Aspect 2: Quality of curriculum and resources

5. The service's new curriculum model provides a clear framework for planning and evaluating youth work. It identifies relevant objectives that reflect local and national

6. priorities. More experienced youth workers have embraced its educational principles and work hard to translate them into practice. Many less experienced workers do not yet possess sufficient skills in planning and evaluation to capitalise on the intended benefits of the curriculum.

7. The range of youth work provision is satisfactory. It includes centre-based work, youth work targeted at young people who are at risk of social exclusion and outreach work. A small amount of youth work takes place in schools. There are some high quality and innovative projects, often involving collaborative work with partner organisations. For example, in the 'Uptown Rock' project, the youth service works in collaboration with social services and MENCAP to provide recreational activities for young people with severe learning difficulties. Across the service as a whole there is a good balance between targeted and open-access provision. In most cases provision is well matched to local needs.

8. Overall, programmes provide young people with a good range of opportunities in, for example, music, healthy living and personal development and are particularly effective in outdoor education. However, the potential of these activities to promote achievement and enable young people to progress, particularly in centre-based work, is not always fully realised. The service does not make sufficient use of the views of young people in planning its provision. Although evaluation is included in most project and sessional work, it is not yet sufficient to provide the service with information on how the curriculum could be improved. A survey of young peoples' views is conducted but not analysed effectively. Much information, advice and guidance is delivered through a successful partnership with the Connexions Service. In some youth centres, youth workers rely too much on this arrangement and do not provide sufficient additional information and advice.

9. Equality of access to youth service provision is addressed well through provision for specific groups such as those of minority ethnic background, young people at risk of exclusion from school and young parents. However, the service recognises that the application of its equal opportunities practices is uneven. In particular, there is a need for more targeted work with young people with disabilities and for work with minority ethnic groups to be better integrated across the service as a whole. Good practice in equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination has yet to become an integral part of the service.

10. Staff are enthusiastic and committed but the proportion of unqualified youth workers is high; some 66% of part-time youth workers are unqualified. This has an adverse impact on the quality of youth work. At the time of inspection six of the 34 full-time youth worker posts were vacant. The provision of in-service training for staff is effectively linked to the needs identified in supervision and to priorities for service development. A satisfactory range of training programmes on child protection, healthy living and drug awareness is provided. Training events have been arranged for the whole service on the curriculum and accreditation, but these have yet to extend beyond a preliminary investigation of these topics.

11. Centres are appropriately located but most close during school holidays. Generally accommodation is adequate for its purpose. The service has made satisfactory progress towards meeting the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA) 2001. Four of the 26 LEA youth centres are not fully accessible to people with disabilities. A satisfactory range of equipment is available, although some centres do not

possess sufficient computers for young people to use.

Key Aspect 3: Leadership and management

12. The recent separation of the Youth and Community Service from the rest of the Adult and Community Learning Service has helped the youth service to establish a clearer identity and focus for its work within the council's developing Children's Trust. The service has appropriate strategic objectives which are reflected in all five area plans and some of its annual unit plans. Priority target groups, which include disabled young people, non-attenders, drug users and the sexually vulnerable, are clearly identified and recognised across the service. However, the service's response to inclusion and diversity is unsatisfactory: these aspects are not included in the strategic objectives and service plans do not include targets for participation by minority groups, even where they identify non-participation by such groups.

13. The county provides a low level of funding for youth work which compares poorly both nationally and with similar counties. Current funding is inadequate to enable the service to make a more significant contribution to services for young people. The impact of the low level of funding has been masked internally by the service's over-optimistic assessment of the number of young people which it reaches. Increases to the budget in each of the last three years have funded growth in the number of youth work posts. However, the service has not succeeded in resolving its recruitment and retention difficulties and is over dependent on unqualified part-time workers. Senior managers have unrealistic expectations of such unqualified and inexperienced staff who often shoulder more responsibility than they are ready for. Conversely the policy of returning qualified, full-time workers to the field has resulted in clear improvements in standards. Plans for increasing the number of qualified staff in the current year are not ambitious enough.

14. The service has developed a good range of partnerships, primarily with the voluntary sector, which help it to increase the breadth of its work and the number of young people it reaches. There are well-established arrangements for funding voluntary groups but these are not supported by service level agreements and arrangements for quality assurance are unsystematic and lack rigour. Good links with the Connexions service have been established at strategic and operational levels. The participation workers from each service work collaboratively and there are good examples of joint training for youth workers and personal advisers. Nevertheless, at local level the extent and quality of collaborative work with the Connexions partnership are inconsistent. In many areas work in schools, particularly with young people at risk of exclusion, is underdeveloped.

15. Operational leadership and management are satisfactory. There are appropriate arrangements for supervision and appraisal. Staff development procedures have improved. The assessment of needs is thorough and provides managers with accurate information to assist them in planning provision. New quality assurance procedures are well conceived but are not yet applied on a sufficient scale. Managers are unable to measure the sufficiency of the outcomes for young people or the cost-effectiveness of youth work programmes. Target setting and action planning are under-developed. Insufficient attention has been given to adapting the service to more effectively meet the needs of young people in rural communities. Self-assessment gives a generally accurate picture of the service's strengths

and weaknesses but makes over-optimistic judgements about the quality of provision.

16. There is good attention to health and safety. The range of policies is generally appropriate, although it does not include a policy on young people using drugs. Risk assessment is comprehensive and record keeping is good. Paid and volunteer staff are all checked with the criminal records bureau (CRB). Staff are conversant with procedures for child protection and understand how to implement them. Insufficient priority is placed on promoting good race relations.

17. The youth service in Warwickshire has undergone considerable organisational change during the last year. A wide range of development groups, which lead on aspects such as curriculum, quality assurance and detached work, provide opportunities for full-time youth workers to be more involved in making the improvements it was recognised were needed. Communication has improved, staff morale is high and there is an air of confidence and enthusiasm as managers begin to address the service's long standing problems. However, it is too early to judge whether recent changes will become sufficiently established in the culture of the organisation to provide lasting improvement.

18. Overall, this is an adequate service with a balance of strengths and weaknesses. The service deploys its resources effectively and provides satisfactory value for money.

Youth Service Indicators

Table 1: Youth population 13-19 (in 1000s)

	2003	2002
LEA	44.8	43.5

Source: Office of National Statistics (ONS) - Mid Year population Estimate (MYE)

1. The ONS's Mid Year population Estimate takes the most recent Census figure and estimates the births, deaths and migrations (etc.) that have taken place since that time. The above data estimates the population in this Local Authority in June 2003 and June 2002. The original 2002 estimate was revised and re-published in September 2004, and it is the revised figure that is shown here.

Table 2: Youth population 13-19 by ethnicity (in 1000s and %s)

	LEA 2001	LEA 2001 %	England 2001 %
White - British, Irish & Other White Background	39.5	93.3	86.7
Asian or Asian British	1.7	4.0	6.8
Black or Black British	0.2	0.4	2.8
Mixed	0.7	1.6	2.4
Other ¹	0.3	0.7	1.2
All	42.4	100.0	100.0

Source: Office of National Statistics. 2001 Census Commissioned Table. Crown copyright 2004. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.

1. In order to protect against the inadvertent disclosure of information relating specifically to an identified person, some ethnic categories cannot be presented separately within Census material. These categories are therefore included in the Other category in this table. This category includes Chinese persons.

2. These data are copyrighted and must not be re-produced by end-users without a distribution licence.

Table 3: Net expenditure on youth service

	2004-05	2003-04	Change £	Change %
Net Expenditure on Youth Service	£2,620,000	£2,415,628	204,000	8.5%
Other Funding Expenditure	£388,000	£313,000	75,000	24%
Gross Expenditure	£3,008,000	£2,728,628	279,372	10.2%
Other Funding as % of gross	12.9%	11.5%	n/a	n/a

Source: NYA audit

Table 4: Youth service finance

	2004-05	2003-04	Change £	Change %
Total Education Budget	258,897,323	245,574,599	13,322,724	5.4
Youth & Community Sub block Budget	3,843,000	3,613,000	230,000	6.4
Youth Service Net Budget	2,619,711	2,415,628	204,083	8.4

Source: DfES – Section 52

Table 5: Youth service budget as % of the total education budget

	2004-05	2003-04
LEA	0.9%	1.0%
England - median value ¹	1.3%	1.3%
England - range of values ²	0.6% to 6.9%	0.3% to 6.1%

Source: DfES – Section 52

1. The median value is the middle value of the %s of all 150 Local Authorities in England.

2. The range of values shows the highest and lowest %s for individual Local Authorities in England.

Table 6: Youth service budget as % of the youth & community sub block budget

	2004-05	2003-04
LEA	68.2%	61.0%
England - median value ¹	74.5%	71.8%
England - range of values ²	12.2% to 126.1%	18.2% to 98.6%

Source: DfES – Section 52

1. The median value is the middle value of the %s of all 150 Local Authorities in England.
2. The range of values shows the highest and lowest %s for individual Local Authorities in England.

Table 7: % of young people aged 13-19 reached by youth service

	2003-04	2002-03	DfES Benchmark %
LEA ¹	29.5%	25%	25.0%

Source: Warwickshire County Council

1. % reached = no. of 13-19 year olds reached by Youth Services/total youth population 13-19 year olds.

Table 8: % of young people aged 13-19 participating in youth work

	2003-04	2002-03	DfES Benchmark %
LEA ¹	13.1%	11.1%	15.0%

Source: Warwickshire County Council

1. % participating = no. of 13 -19 year olds participating in youth work/total youth population 13-19 year olds.

Table 9: Net budget per young person aged 13-19

	2004-05	2003-04	Change £	Change %
LEA	£57.51	£55.37	£2.13	3.9%

Source: DfES-S52/ONS

1. Population data are taken from the ONS's Mid Year population Estimate of June 2003.

Table 10: Net Cost of each young person reached in 13-19 group

	2003-04	2002-03	Change £	Change %
LEA	£182.67	£185.27	-£2.60	-1.4%

Source: NYA audit

1. Net cost per young person reached = net expenditure on Youth Service (excluding Other Funding) / number of 13-19 year olds reached.

2. The number of young people reached only includes the key age group of 13-19 year olds, although it is acknowledged that other young people in the 11 – 25 year old age group may have used the service during the year. The net spend is the total figure, and no attempt has been made to isolate the amount spent on 13-19 year olds within it.

Table 11: Number of full-time equivalent youth workers

	2004-05	2003-04	Change	Change %
Youth Workers (FTE)	81*	68	13	19

Source: NYA audit

* includes 6 FTE vacancies

Notes