

## **EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 23 February 2012 at 5.00 pm in the Executive Meeting Room, third floor, The Guildhall, Portsmouth.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting.)

### **Present**

Councillors Steve Wemyss (In the Chair)  
Margaret Adair  
Peter Eddis  
Lee Mason  
Paula Riches  
Caroline Scott

### **Also Present**

Siôn Reynolds, Teachers' Liaison Panel Representative  
Mike Stoneman, Strategic Commissioning Manager  
Rachael Dalby, Head of Community Safety and  
Co-Chair of the 14-19 Partnership Board  
Charlie Adie, Chief Executive, Motiv8 and  
Alliance Representative  
Teresa Deasy, Local Democracy Officer

#### **11 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 1)**

There were no declarations of members' interests.

#### **12 Apologies for Absence (AI 2)**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **13 Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 January 2012 (AI 3)**

(TAKE IN MINUTES)

With reference to minute number 8 on the first line in the first paragraph on page 9, it was pointed out that the word "proved" should be replaced with the word "provided" and the word "provided" on the second line of page 9 should be deleted.

**RESOLVED that, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 26 January 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.**

## **14 Charlie Adie, Chief Executive, Motiv8 and Alliance Representative**

Charlie Adie showed a DVD which explained the work on Motiv8. Motiv8 is a charity that works with 13-19 year olds. Delivery is aligned around community-based teams.

Motiv8 was originally formed in 1998 under the name Portsmouth Community Safety Partnership to respond to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 with a specific focus on young people's needs. The name was changed to Motiv8 in 2003.

In addition to working with 13-19 year olds, Motiv8 also works with young people up to the age of 25 years. Mostly, the young people come from vulnerable backgrounds and the organisation aims to build a relationship with individuals based on their strengths and to help them to overcome barriers to achieving their goals.

Many young people are referred by schools: for example, a teacher may realise that a pupil is at risk of being excluded or perhaps is not achieving his or her full potential. Motiv8 is currently working with pupils from the Charter Academy and St Edmund's School plus a further eight schools in southeast Hampshire. Motiv8 offers both targeted and open access activities and its core business is community based. Help with access to employment is partly delivered as a sub-contractor to Barnardos where Motiv8 provides services in Havant and Gosport; similar in Portsmouth is delivered by PCMI.

The first tranche of Motiv8 activities began in Portsea in 2000 with 50 young people most of whom were at risk of offending. At its peak, there were five youth inclusion programmes in Portsmouth. Now there are three: one in Paulsgrove, and two in Charles Dickens ward and surrounding area. Last year across the board 345 young people were referred to Motiv8. Fifty six percent of young people had already committed an offence. Twenty three would go on to commit an offence at a later date. Normally the re-offending rate is approximately 70%.

In response to questions from the panel, Charlie explained that referrals generally come from the Youth Offending Team, the police, the community wardens, Social Care, a school or a family member. He added that the number of people committing a first offence in Portsmouth was falling so it could be argued that programmes such as Motiv8 were successful. In addition, young people could also self-refer. Generally support is given on a one to one basis or small group targeted work. Activities were provided on an open access basis to the target audience and to friends.

Motiv8 continues to have accreditation to enable young people to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme but they tend to do the Steps programme of the Open College Network. The organisation also has a licence from the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority to provide canoeing, climbing, sailing, abseiling and kayaking.

The organisation deals with many more boys than girls. Sixty five percent of clients are boys. There is no hard and fast rule but generally young people tend to stay with Motiv8 for about 9 months to 2 years. The assessments carried out are the same as those carried out by the Youth Offending Team and the Preventing Youth Offending programme. Every referral starts with a home visit offering support to parents and providing group support.

Looked after children are disproportionately represented among referrals.

Councillor Caroline Scott mentioned that she had previously worked in another authority with young people with emotional and behavioural problems. She reported that it was easier to deal with boys in the 11-17 year old age group than with girls in this age group. Charlie Adie commented that, as girls have different needs, it is often necessary to operate single sex group activities, for example to provide girls' groups. He commented that community action programmes worked well with girls.

As far as boys are concerned, Charlie mentioned that many young people are from single parent families without a positive stable male role model. To some extent, young people would look to the Motiv8 staff to perform this role.

In response to a question from Councillor Wemyss about activities which Motiv8 had carried out in the past but were no longer able to do due to funding issues etc, Charlie reported that last year had been a very difficult one for Portsmouth in terms of resources. Fortunately, they had obtained funding from the Cabinet Office to help with some of the shortfall.

Motiv8 had developed a volunteer mentoring service and they had been able to increase the number of days per week support to schools. This was a critical relationship. He added that Motiv8 needed a gateway to bridge the gap between the school and the community in order to provide young people with additional support. A number of young people come from very deprived backgrounds and it had been necessary to provide support in terms of food, uniforms etc. There is a real need to develop a more intensive programme for those needing a higher level of support. The ideal would be to have one caseworker for three to four young people rather to rely on a ratio of one to fifteen as is the case with targeted work.

In reply to a question regarding cost benefit analysis undertaken, Charlie explained that the unit cost per young person supported was £2,400. It was not difficult to establish the level of need based on the risk factors identified. Support is based on a staff member supporting a group of 15 young people. Early intervention is cost effective.

In reply to a question from Councillor Caroline Scott, Charlie explained that he would judge success with an individual child in terms of the ability to progress to adulthood to face the future to the best of their ability. Motiv8 supported young people to avoid them being labelled a "young offender".

In reply to a question from Councillor Margaret Adair concerning gangs, Charlie explained that Portsmouth was not at the moment a city with a gang culture. Nevertheless, there were some groups of young people who commit anti-social behaviour. At present, these gangs do not use guns and knives and their activities are not drug related. However, the authorities would need to keep a watchful eye on the gang situation in the city, as things might change in future.

At 5.50 pm Charlie Adie left the meeting.

**15 Rachael Dalby, Head of Community Safety and Co-Chair of the 14-19 Partnership Board**

Rachael Dalby began by explaining that the Preventing Youth Offending programme and the Safer Portsmouth Partnership had identified the need to provide a prevention service to work with young people as long ago as 20 years ago. The Preventing Youth Offending project had come into being as a result of government funding. The last 12 years had been relatively good ones for Community Safety in terms of funding. However, the future would bring changes in terms of the activities that the service would be able to fund.

Priority D of the Children's Trust plan would involve commissioning services for young people to prevent them from engaging in activities likely to cause them harm. In this respect, many young people were having to access multiple contacts in different parts of the service. The aim was to try to streamline the service in order to provide more for less. Money was beginning to reduce and next year merely £100,000 was available for the Preventing Young Offending project. There were many challenges facing the city council and not just financial challenges. It was very clear that the city council would need to do things differently to protect and improve outcomes for young people. In her role as chair of the Priority D project, Rachael explained that this was a very challenging programme and an exciting opportunity to look at the way services had been delivered and to break down the concept of silo delivery. At the moment 50 staff members were delivering targeted services. The aim was to provide multi-agency support with a more efficient and effective referral system.

Mike Stoneman added that the proposal was to integrate the systems. All services would be concentrated into a citywide focus operating with three area based teams with the appropriate staff in each team. They were looking to consolidate good practice in the field and also in the back office function.

Rachael explained that there were three phases of work to be undertaken and two phases were currently fairly advanced. The positive activities programme was expected to be up and running by the summer. The targeted youth service would be commissioned, set up and running at the end of the summer.

The idea was to break the mould, take the best of the best and put it into a new model. The challenges were timeframes, capacity and funding. However, if the organisation failed to get it right for young people now, costs would be likely to be higher in future.

In response to a question from Councillor Wemyss, Mike Stoneman explained that the young people requiring support were generally aged between 9 and 19 years and amounted to some 2,000 young people across the city. This would potentially require 20-25 advisers each holding a caseload of 30 young people. However, that was not sufficient to deal with the need.

Siôn Reynolds commented that cultural change had taken place in the UK since the 1950s. He mentioned that he had recently visited Hong Kong with the Council of Portsmouth students and they had noticed that methods of teaching in schools there were similar to those in Britain in the 1950s. In Hong Kong, parents expect their children to work hard at school, and if they do not do so, their parents would punish them. However, Hong Kong was moving in our direction and they were looking to the UK to find out how we deal with the problems that such cultural change brings about.

Councillor Paula Riches commented that research into the emergence of the underclass explains why society is in the current position. It was important to recognise that Portsmouth is one of those cities with an emerging underclass. She added that it was tragic that Portsmouth City Council had lost funding for Community Safety which resulted in the need to reduce staffing levels. She therefore suggested that this scrutiny panel should look at the effects of the cutbacks on the level of service that can be delivered.

Councillor Caroline Scott produced a copy of an article in "The News" of 27 January alleging that a number of challenging pupils at the Charter Academy were being home educated so that the school did not have to deal with them. Mike Stoneman reported that Di Mitchell was in discussion with the Charter Academy regarding this situation. Teresa Deasy agreed to copy the article and circulate it to members of the panel.

Councillor Wemyss repeated the question that he had asked Charlie Adie regarding activities which the service had undertaken in the past that had been effective but could no longer be provided due to cutbacks. Rachael reported that the weekend and Friday night street patrols named Operation Bourne had been very successful. The operation involved targeting young people and chatting to them to find out whether they would benefit from support. It was a very worthwhile activity in terms of identifying those at risk.

Rachael went on to say that when the new services were commissioned, the Preventing Youth Offending project would no longer exist. However, some of its working practices had been identified as good practice and were likely to be continued. For example, working with larger family units to identify the risk to siblings had proved to be effective.

In reply to a question from Councillor Margaret Adair, Rachael explained that some volunteers from Portsmouth University were involved with the service. In fact, two voluntary community wardens from Portsmouth University had been taken on as full time community wardens. She added that perhaps it would be useful to strengthen the city's relationship with the university.

At this point Councillor Lee Mason declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in that he works for Portsmouth University and the Students' Union.

Councillor Wemyss asked about the cost of Operation Bourne and Rachael Dalby agreed to find out.

Rachael Dalby explained that Operation Bourne was a multi-agency activity and it had been very effective at signposting young people to the help that they needed.

On behalf of the panel, Councillor Riches explained that she had worked with Rachael for six years and expressed her thanks to Rachael. The group expressed their thanks to Rachael for attending the meeting.

At 6.30 pm, Rachael Dalby, Mike Stoneman, Siôn Reynolds and Councillor Caroline Scott left.

### **Date of Next Meeting (AI 5)**

The panel noted that the date for the next meeting was Thursday 15 March at 5.00 pm. At the suggestion of the chair, it was agreed that it would be useful to hold an informal meeting before the 15 March meeting in order to discuss possible site visits and the questions to be asked. It was also agreed to review the progress made by the panel so far.

**RESOLVED (1) that Teresa Deasy be asked to make arrangements for an informal meeting of the panel to be held on Thursday 8 March at 5.00 pm;**

**(2) that Teresa Deasy be authorised to contact Charlie Adie of Motiv8, Bruce Marr and the Brook Club to ask for dates for possible site visits and to agree such dates with the panel.**

The meeting concluded at 6.40 pm.

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28 February 2012  
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