

REPORT TO: POLICY COMMITTEE ON 5 MARCH 2008

SUBJECT: MORAY YOUTH STRATEGY

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To advise the Policy Committee on the progress of The Moray Youth Strategy

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section A (41) of the Council's Administrative Scheme dealing with all matters relating to the exercise of the statutory functions of the Council under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to initiate, maintain and facilitate Community Planning, the process by which public services in Moray are provided and planned for.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Policy Committee note the progress made in the development of the Moray Youth Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As an action of the draft Community Learning and Development Strategy, homologated by the Community Planning Partnership Steering Group on the 26 August 2004, it was agreed that the Community Planning Partnership would produce a Youth Strategy for Moray.

3.2 The Children and Young People's Partnership held on 28 June 2006 endorsed the Youth Strategy "A place to be young" and agreed that the Youth Strategy would be monitored and reviewed by the Partnership. It was also agreed that the partnership would produce an action plan based on the Youth Strategy.

3.3 The Youth Strategy describes the partnership vision for young people in Moray across a number of themes and was based on consultation with young people across Moray.

3.4 The Policy and Resources Committee of the Moray Council held on 30 August 2006 (Para 7 of the minute refers), agreed to endorse the final draft of The Moray Youth Strategy. It agreed that the Children and Young Peoples Partnership would be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the Youth Strategy and that the partnership will produce an action plan based on the Youth Strategy.

3.5 The Children and Young Peoples Partnership have indicated that rather than producing an action plan that the Integrated Children's Services Plan is the more appropriate means for monitoring progress on the strategy rather than the action plan. This would minimise unnecessary reporting.

- 3.6 The key development of the Youth Strategy has been in the development of a “voice” for young people through the development of the Youth Participation framework. The Youth Council has met on six occasions to date and has also been involved in consultation on the annual education development plan and a group from the Council has met with HMIE. An agreement has been reached with secondary schools to release representatives three times in an academic year with a further three meetings scheduled outwith school times. There is a school Council representative on the Children and Young Peoples Partnership and the Local Licensing Forum. They have been asked to participate in a number of consultations such as The Moray 20:20 Strategy.
- 3.7 The next meeting of the Youth Council is due to take place on April when Chief officers from across the Partnership will present progress against the themes outlined in the Youth Strategy to the Moray Youth Council.
- 3.8 Secondary Schools agreed to take part in the first Secondary School Council conference on 27 November 2007 again at Elgin Town Hall. This was attended by 46 young people representing the eight associated school group areas and addressed by the joint chairman of Education and Social Services Committee, the Director of Educational Services and The Chief Legal Officer.
- 3.9 The Moray Council at its Special Full Council meeting held on 14 February 2008 has included additional funding in its budget to allow an apprenticeship scheme to be implemented. In terms of the “Opportunities” theme this will have a significant impact providing the kind of opportunities identified by the strategy.
- 3.10 There have been developments across the areas addressed by the strategy, Employment, Education, Training, Transport, Housing, Health and Community Safety, however these have yet to be evaluated in the context of the Youth Strategy. These will be reported to a future meeting of the Policy Committee.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan.

This report meets the corporate priorities of easy access to services and listening, consulting and engaging with communities. The Youth Strategy was produced by the Community Planning Partnership after consultation with Young People.

(b) Policy and Legal

From an international perspective, The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (Article 12) enshrines the right of children to be involved in decisions that affect them. From a European perspective, the European Commissions White Paper on Youth Policy states that “The full and active participation of young people in society is fundamental to both the renewal and functioning of democracy”. At a national level, the Scottish Executive’s Social Justice Agenda clearly

aims to have: "A Scotland in which every young person has the opportunities, skills and support to make a successful transition to working life and active citizenship". The Local Government Act 2003, The Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the Beattie Committee and elements of Best Value all encourage greater participation of young people. The importance of participation is enshrined in HMle document 'How Good is Our Community Learning and Development (May 2006)' The Scottish Executive established a number of developments including the Scottish Youth Parliament, Youthlink and support to Dialogue Youth and Young Scot. The Scottish Government launched their Youth Work Strategy "Moving Forward: A Strategy for Improving Young People's Chances Through Youth Work" in March 2007. It aims to ensure that all young people in Scotland will be able to benefit from youth work opportunities which make a real difference to their lives.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

There are no immediate resource issues arising from the content of this report.

(d) Consultations.

The Chief Legal Officer and Head of Educational Support Services have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this paper.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The committee is asked to note the progress made on the development of the Moray Youth Strategy.

Author of Report: John Ferguson Community Planning and Development
Manager

Background Papers:

Ref: