

MORAY YOUTHSTART

Evaluation Report
for
Moray Youthstart

By
Malcolm Aldridge of
Solution Management Ltd

April 2008



**Solution —
— Management**

Moray Youthstart

Solution Management Ltd
Ferryview
Grantown Road
FORRES
IV36 2PG

01309 672547
Info@SolutionManagement.com

Moray Youthstart Evaluation

Contents:	Page
Glossary	1
Executive Summary	3
Section 1 : Introduction and Background	7
Section 2 : Moray Regeneration Outcome Agreements Results	15
Section 3 : Strategic Context	17
Section 4 : Consultation	21
Section 5 : Future Development	35
Section 6 : Conclusions and Recommendations	37
Appendices:	
Appendix A : Moray Community Planning Partnership	47
Appendix B : MROA Targets & Achievements of Outcomes	51
Appendix C : National Outcomes and Indicators	55
Appendix D : Quotes and Comments from the Consultations	59

GLOSSARY

Inevitably a number of acronyms circulate in the world of communities, youth and local councils; this glossary captures and explains those acronyms and where they fit in to the overall picture.

Acronym	Full Title	Description
ChYPP	Children & Young People's Partnership	A multi-agency group that provides long-term strategic view, drive and vision for the "Investing in children and YP" theme of the CP.
ChYPP IG	ChYPP Implementation Group	Decision making, commissioning, intelligence, coordination, analysis, risk management, 'policing', reporting, accountability
CPP	See MCPP	A contraction of MCPP
DY	Dialogue Youth	Project encouraging active participation and involvement of young people and provision of accurate and useful information for them.
GIRFEC	Getting It Right For Every Child	A Children's Services (Scotland) Bill aimed at ensuring children and young people got the help they needed from whatever organisation or organisations best met the YP's needs. However their was insufficient time after the draft consultation to pass the Bill in the lifetime of the last Scottish Executive and now appears to have been overtaken by new SNP policies.
INSO	Information and Network Support Officer	Employed by Youthstart to deliver Object 4 of the MROA.
MCHSCP	Moray Community Health and Social Care Partnership	Brings together Dr Gray's Hospital, community care services at Moray Council, public health services, primary care, mental health, learning disability, health improvement and community health services.
MCP	Moray Community Plan 2006-10	Sets out the key priorities to be addressed by the MCPP over the next five years in taking forward its vision: <i>'To increase the quality of life and well-being of everyone in Moray'</i>
MCPP	Moray Community Planning Partnership	Sponsors of the MROA.
MROA	Moray ROA	See ROA
MYS	Moray YouthStart	Sponsors of this report.
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training	Except in historical or statistical terms, NEET is now referred to as More Choices, More Chances
ROA	Regeneration Outcome Agreement 2005-08	The ROA underpins all the work done by Youthstart. It sets out specific objectives, assigns resources to those objectives, and sets targets to be achieved during the 3 year life of the project.
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation	The SIMD identifies small area concentrations

		of multiple deprivation to allow effective targeting of policies and funding. The SIMD contains 37 indicators in seven domains: Current Income, Employment, Health, Education Skills and Training, Geographic Access to Services (including public transport travel times), Housing and a Crime Domain. None of Moray's deprived areas feature in the 15% most deprived.
SIP	Social Inclusion Partnership	The forerunner to the MROA programme.
SYP	Scottish Youth Parliament	A national body of 150 young people between the ages of 14 and 25 elected to be the collective voice of YP. SYP meets 4 times per year. Moray is allocated 2 posts on the SYP.
Third Sector	Third Sector	Non-governmental organisations that are value driven. It includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, co-operatives and mutuals. Housing associations are also often included.
TRAP	Not an acronym	Youth inclusion advisory service. Provides input in to the community planning process. Supported by MYS
YP	Young People	Generally accepted under European definitions to include 16-25 year olds but in some circumstances this is reduced to age 14.
YPSAG	Young People's Service Action Group	A short-term working group looking at the process barriers faced by key workers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

- E1 Youthstart is a partnership of statutory bodies and non-profit making organisations that have come together to deliver the Moray Regeneration Outcome Agreement (MROA) to support disadvantaged young people in the county. Funding of approximately £1M was provided by Communities Scotland and Community Voices over a 3 year period April 2005 to March 2008. The funding supported a number of projects and a small management team.
- E2 With the project nearing the end of its funded life, the Youthstart Partnership commissioned an evaluation of its performance over the last 3 years and sought ideas for the future. This was a timely study as the new Scottish Government had announced significant changes in its priorities and the way in which Local Authorities would need to deliver new objectives. Much of the detail was unknown at the time of our research, however, and some of the ideas for the future could therefore not be refined due to uncertainties in the new funding arrangements and the inevitable structural changes arising from the new initiatives.

Aim and Objectives

- E3 The aim specified in the MROA for Youthstart was:
- To engage with disadvantaged young adults in Moray, between the ages of 16 and 24, and support them in achieving sustainable independence and participation in their communities.*
- E4 The four objectives in support of this aim were:
- Strengthening routes to secure employment, founded on increasing skills and confidence.
 - Improving access to secure housing and the skills and confidence to sustain independent living.
 - Improving access to information, advice, advocacy and services in support of health and wellbeing.
 - Developing the capacity of the partners and partnership to engage with and meet the needs of disadvantaged young adults, on terms that work for them.

Evaluation Parameters

- E5 Annual reports to Communities Scotland and routine reports from members to the Youthstart Implementation Group provide statistical information on achievements. For this reason and because our report was due before the Youthstart Support Team had completed end of project figures, this evaluation has been principally a qualitative assessment.
- E6 In particular, the evaluation examined:
- Youthstart's relationships, between partners and with external agencies.
 - Youthstart's own structure and membership.
 - How effectively Youthstart communicated across the network.
 - Youthstart's contribution to shaping improvements in community engagement and the community planning process.

- The perceived value Moray Community Planning Partnership (MCP), other partners and Youthstart's customers place on Youthstart's work.
- Opportunities for Youthstart in the future.

Evaluation Findings

- E7 **Relationships.** Relationships between partners were generally good; they improved after the Partnership Manager had come into post and were better than they would have been without the Partnership. There was some suspicion that the funding controlled by the Partnership had attracted some members to the table, but this was considered inevitable and the end result – like-minded groups coming together in a common cause – was positive. There was evidence that some partners were over-protective of 'their' young people (probably to justify their own funding), and we identified overcoming this as an opportunity for the Youthstart Partnership to deliver a more effective service. External relationships were less satisfactory, particularly with Moray Community Planning Partnership (MCP) – with lack of involvement and direction from MCP, and inadequate information and communication from Youthstart.
- E8 **Structure.** The structure of Youthstart served Moray Council, the Partnership and the young people well. Given the range of policy documents and the myriad of agencies with varying agendas, there was unsurprisingly some lack of clarity in objectives and cohesiveness. Whilst some of this was outwith the control of Youthstart, there were other areas where Youthstart could have ensured greater clarity and understanding, for example through the targets that were set and the methods of monitoring. The small core team was consistent with the size of the budget and remit, and proved to be responsive to changing circumstances. We identified ways that the Partnership could be improved further, but it was clear that members need to share some of the responsibilities. The system of providing services has been resource-driven, but would benefit from being more needs-driven. The current structure allows for this and, in addressing young people's issues, could ensure that agencies would not operate parochially and that clear statements are effectively communicated to the MCP (through the appropriate channels such as the ChYPP) before strategies and funding are agreed.
- E9 **Communication.** Communication between Youthstart and its members was generally very good, and the Information and Network Support Officer made a good job of sourcing relevant information and pushing this out to interested parties. This saved individuals time, brought information to their notice that they otherwise would not have been aware of, and highlighted areas of best practice. Better use could have been made of the website. Communication with external stakeholders could have been improved as mentioned above. However, communication with the ChYPP was much better than with the MCP. The Partnership's communication with young people was primarily through TRAP and those working alongside the disadvantaged young people. However, within the resource driven system, this knowledge was of limited practical value, and young people were not able to influence planning and decision making at the appropriate level. Worryingly, youth workers felt that they had little influence.
- E10 **Contribution.** The client group can be a difficult one to work with and instant successes are not often achieved. We had to probe quite deeply to identify examples of the positive contribution Youthstart had made; however, many achievements were identified, ranging from support that had led to individuals receiving awards to a life

saved as a direct result of a Youthstart supported intervention. One of the 4 key objectives, '*Improving access to secure housing and the skills and confidence to sustain independent living*', appears to have received a lower level of support than the others. It was not surprising therefore that housing was cited as one of the key problem areas that still remain. The weak evaluation methods available to some partners and the wooliness of some targets led to the achievements being undersold, and explain why we had to probe to identify a true picture of the contribution made by Youthstart.

E11 ***Perceived Value.*** As this was a qualitative evaluation of a service providing support to vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, a financial cost benefit analysis was not appropriate. Furthermore, had funds not been channelled through Communities Scotland, money would still have had to be found to support the client group. Since assumptions on the amounts and any alternative system for administering and managing those funds would be purely speculative, a value for money comparison between what was and what might have been was also inappropriate. However, we can say that numerous disadvantaged young people have been helped, and Moray Council could claim, in the greater part, that society's moral obligation to this section of the community has been met fairly and proportionately. With regard to the structure of Youthstart and the overhead of the Support Team, we can confidently conclude that the relatively modest cost of the team (£86k/year) has provided worthwhile benefits. The Youthstart Partnership and the Partnership Manager have provided a degree of independence and impartiality in administering a large fund, and the Support Team has undertaken many important but time consuming jobs on behalf of the Partnership – research, drafting, organisation, actions, coordination, administration, etc. In particular, the results of a limited survey clearly show that the time the INSO saves others is significant, probably covering the cost of her post, and frees them up to focus on the delivery of services where they are needed.

E12 ***Future Opportunities.*** With the funding and 3 year term of the MROA reaching the end of its life, there was a high expectation amongst consultees that changes to Youthstart were inevitable. However, we were surprised not to find a greater recognition of the achievements and benefits driving the partners to find alternative ways to continue the progress that has been made. Some partners do not see a problem that needs a solution, but our evaluation shows that the benefits of Youthstart have gone beyond simply being a funding pot and that the Partnership is more than just meetings. We accept though that change is needed to ensure that Moray can meet its obligations to the Scottish Government and to its disadvantaged young people. Some of these opportunities are as yet unidentified, but wider partnership working and outcome orientated programmes are implicit. Moray, and Youthstart in particular, has had a head start in partnership working but one travelled commentator had seen better integration of services in parts of England. Hence it is important to recognise that there is room for improvement to ensure that the knowledge and experience gained through Youthstart is not lost during the transition but built upon. Outcome orientated programmes are no threat and should be welcomed as a more effective way of delivering services economically.

Recommendations

E13 We conclude that overall the Partnership has been successful and that the support for disadvantaged young people was better than if the Partnership, and the Support Team in particular, had not been established. However, areas were identified where

improvements would be beneficial and where Government changes present new challenges. Hence we make the following recommendations:

- Youthstart should continue as a partnership and be supported by a team of one part-time manager and one full-time INSO/admin position.
- The need for this Support Team should be reviewed after 12 months to determine if its role can be undertaken more effectively by another body.
- The basic structure of Youthstart and the YIG should remain and be open to new partners joining or partners leaving.
- The full board should have a greater focus on ensuring that services and funds are distributed efficiently to the areas of most need.
- Documentation standards should be improved to ensure traceability and an auditable trail of decisions.
- Youthstart should nurture its relationships with the MCPP and ChYPP and do all it can to support them.
- A robust system should be developed to ensure that the needs of disadvantaged young people are considered by the MCPP. This may mean a formal system involving support workers reporting to the Partnership and the Partnership reporting to the ChYPP.
- The PeB information bulletin should continue.
- Networking and training events should continue but be fewer in number. Regular 6 monthly meetings of the full board should be held, which should provide sufficient networking opportunities.
- Young People should continue to be heard directly by the full board, whether through TRAP or some other representation. Should TRAP not be sustained in the new structure, this should not be an excuse for not listening directly to the issues facing young people.
- If funds and time permit, the website should be improved – although this is a low priority – and unless the commitment is made then it would be better not to divert energy into this resource. Do it well or not at all.
- Hold a Practitioner’s Forum. This would be an alternative way for the people closest to young people to air, discuss, and consolidate their views.
- Keep an open mind and keep lines of communication open.

Thanks

We would like to thank all the groups and individuals who contributed to this evaluation and for their frank and honest comments. This spirit of openness bodes well for the future of Youthstart.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Background

- 1.1 The Moray Youthstart Partnership is a multi agency group which operates under the umbrella of the Moray Community Plan Partnership (MCP). Moray Youthstart has delegated responsibility from MCP for the development, implementation and evaluation of the Moray Regeneration Outcome Agreement (MROA), 2005-08, which targets disadvantaged young people in Moray between the ages of 16 and 24 years, and for the spending of the Community Regeneration and Community Voices Funds. It is accountable to the MCP through the Investing in Children and Young People theme group administered by the Children and Young People Partnership (ChYPP); as well as directly to Communities Scotland in respect of its management of the Community Regeneration Fund for Moray. Further information on where Youthstart fits within the Moray Community Plan is given in Appendix A.
- 1.2 Moray Youthstart was originally designated in 1999 as a thematic youth Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP), and its effectiveness in delivering the SIP programme prior to the MROA was evaluated by Blake Stevenson Ltd in January 2004.
- 1.3 Current strategies for supporting children and young people in Moray include the Youth Strategy 2006-10, the Children and Young People's Integrated Service Plan 2005-08 and the MROA itself. The MROA relates particularly to disadvantaged young people.

Youthstart Structure

- 1.4 Youthstart is a partnership and not a constituted group or organisation in its own right. A core Support Team supports the work of Youthstart: a Partnership Manager, an Information, Network and Support Officer (INSO) and, until recently, a full-time post providing admin support. All salaries come out of the Community Regeneration Fund, which is the fund linked to the MROA. Youthstart itself cannot directly employ staff or, for example, bid for funding.
- 1.5 The Partnership Manager and INSO are both hosted by SCVO, while the admin post was hosted by Moray Council. The duties of the Partnership Manager have included: raising and coordinating funds, managing the funds, coordinating reports, managing the staff and other activities as directed by the Partnership Board. The Partnership Manager spends two and a half days per week on Youthstart work and the remainder on other duties (in part from the same location). The INSO's job has been to increase the knowledge and skills capacity of the partnership.
- 1.6 Two other posts are referred to in the MROA: the Health Development Worker (now termed the Young Person's Health Development Officer) and the Youth Inclusion Worker. The Health Development Officer was jointly funded by NHS Grampian and one of the Youthstart projects to extend young people's access to information, advice and services in support of their well-being. The Youth Inclusion Worker was employed by Children 1st through MROA funding to engage and empower disadvantaged young people in relation to the MROA programme.

The Youthstart Partnership

- 1.7 The Partnership has the overall aim of:

"Ensuring all young people in Moray have genuine opportunities to become full and active citizens, to contribute to and benefit from living in a healthy community."

1.8 The headline objectives for the Partnership are to:

- Assist vulnerable, excluded young people to sustain ordinary living and break the cycle of exclusion.
- Support disaffected young people through difficult transitions, to prevent exclusion and avoid the need for reactive, intensive services.
- Encourage and enable young people to become positive, active citizens within their local communities.
- To strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between Partners and with relevant other networks and initiatives.

1.9 The Youthstart Partnership comprises 29 Board Members, of whom 11 form the Youthstart Implementation Group (YIG). The YIG has delegated authority to make decisions on how the budget is spent. The Partnership brings together a range of organisations and agencies, including:

- The Moray Council*
- NHS Grampian*
- Grampian Police
- Careers Scotland*
- Moray Voluntary Services Organisation*
- HIE Moray*
- Children 1st
- NCH Scotland
- Aberlour Childcare Trust*
- Moray College
- Langstane Housing Association
- The Prince's Trust
- The Royal Air Force
- SCVO*
- Moray Young Carers *
- Moray Against Poverty
- Dialogue Youth
- Forres GAP
- The Loft Youth Project
- Moray Recycling Action Group
- Moray Volunteer Centre* (*resigned from YIG in march 2008*)
- Moray Council on Addiction*
- Moray Housing Partnership

* YIG Members

1.10 Although not members of the Partnership, three other groups are also stakeholders in Youthstart:

- The Children and Young People’s Partnership (ChYPP), to which Youthstart is directly responsible.
- People who have historically supported Youthstart’s work.
- The disadvantaged young people served by Youthstart. They do not have a direct voice but are involved through the Youth Inclusion Service (a funded project), which is managed and hosted by Children 1st.

Regeneration Outcome Agreement Aims and Associated Outcomes

1.11 Youthstart is responsible for delivering the aims and associated outcomes specified in the MROA. The specific aim and the four objectives with their associated outcomes are:

To engage with disadvantaged young adults in Moray, between the ages of 16 and 24, and support them in achieving sustainable independence and participation in their communities through:

- Strengthening routes to secure employment, founded on increasing skills and confidence – *associated outcomes:*
 - Reduction in the number of unemployed young people.
 - Increase in the proportion of school leavers pursuing training and further education.
- Improving access to secure housing and the skills and confidence to sustain independent living – *associated outcomes:*
 - Improved access to secure housing.
 - Improved skills and confidence of young people experiencing homelessness.
- Improving access to information, advice, advocacy and services in support of health and wellbeing - *associated outcomes:*
 - Improved health and wellbeing of young people in Moray.
 - Improved identification and engagement of young drug users in Moray.
 - Improved access to information, advice, advocacy and services.
- Developing the capacity of the partners and partnership to engage with and meet the needs of disadvantaged young adults, on terms that work for them - *associated outcome:*
 - Increased services and support to young people.

1.12 The indicators and targets for these objectives and their associated outcomes are shown in Appendix B. Although Youthstart is focussed on delivering the above, many other services benefit from the specialist input and knowledge provided by Youthstart.

1.13 The targeted outcomes were to be achieved through a suite of projects delivered by the partners involved in Moray Youthstart. Only some of these projects received funding through the MROA, with the others funded by the partners and external

sources. One of the Partnership Manager's functions has been to help the partners access external funding.

- 1.14 A breakdown of spend 2005/06 to 2007/08 funded by Communities Scotland and Community Voices provided to us by Youthstart shows expenditure by MROA strategic objective as follows:

	£
<i>Building Strong, Safe & Attractive Communities - Homelessness Prevention</i>	87,500
<i>Getting People Back into Work</i>	319,273
<i>Improving Health</i>	141,774
<i>Developing the Capacity of the Partners and the Partnership To Engage with and Meet the Needs of Disadvantaged Young Adults on Terms that Work for Them</i>	147,049
<i>Core Support, Monitoring & Evaluation</i>	166,269
<i>Engaging Young People</i>	139,262
	£1,001,127

- 1.15 The core support, monitoring and evaluation expenditure includes £123,992 general office costs. Also, additional funding awarded to core projects and pilot projects are included under this budget heading (see details below). Engaging young people comprises the Partnership's manager's costs (£53,537) and the costs of the INSO (£85,725).

- 1.16 Additional funding awarded to core projects comprised £10,781 to Moray Youth Action, and £6,106 to YP Health Development Officer. Additional funding awarded to pilot projects in 2007 comprised Moray Young Carers School Support Worker (£8,000), Moray Women's Aid (£3,000), Anger Management (£3,000) and Moray Council Equality Training (£3,000).

Youthstart Tasks and Projects

- 1.17 The Youthstart Implementation Group agreed and funded the following core projects:

- Youth Inclusion
- YP Health Development Officer*
- Moray Young Carers*
- Detached Youth Work*
- Information and Networking Support Officer*
- Moray New Futures*
- Moray Youth Action*

- 1.18 All the main point of contacts for the above projects are Board Members, and those marked with a * have been delivered by organisations that also have representation on the Youthstart Implementation Group.

1.19 In addition to the main core projects listed above, smaller pilot projects funded in 2006/07 included Moray Young Carers schools initiative, Anger Management Training co-ordinated through NHS, and Moray Women’s Aid support for young people affected by domestic abuse (see 1.16 above).

1.20 The projects which deliver the MROA outcomes under each objective are:

Strengthening routes to secure employment, founded on increasing skills and confidence

Lead Agency	Project
SCVO	Moray New Futures
Moray Recycling Action Group	The Green Home project
Aberlour Childcare Trust	Moray Youth Action Keyworkers
Moray Adult Literacies Partnership (MALP)	WEA “pre-literacies” pilot programme
MALP	X-press young people’s multi-media literacies programme
MALP	Football literacies programme
Moray Council	Financial literacies programme
SCVO	Progress to Work

Improving access to secure housing and the skills and confidence to sustain independent living

Lead Agency	Project
Aberlour Childcare Trust	MYA Homelessness prevention and preparation project
Moray Recycling Action Group	The Green Home Project
Aberlour Childcare Trust	Covesea furniture store project
Moray Council	Development of rent guarantee and deposit scheme

Improving access to information, advice, advocacy and services in support of health and wellbeing

Lead Agency	Project
Moray Community Health and Social Care Partnership	Young Person’s Health Development Officer
Moray Anchor Projects	Choose Life young people’s support worker
Moray Healthy Living Centre	Tailor made leisure packages
Moray DAAT	Drug and alcohol direct access service
Moray DAAT	Needle exchange worker
Moray DAAT	Peer support SMART recovery network
Aberlour Childcare Trust	Action research on addiction services and young people
Moray Council	Detached Youth Work
Moray Carers Project	Young Carers’ Project
Moray Council	Neighbourhood research
Moray Council	Big Issue vending support

Lead Agency	Project
Moray Council	Confident Parent, Confident Child ICT Project
Moray Council	Youth Support Base
Moray Council	Essential Skills Base

Developing the capacity of the partners and partnership to engage with and meet the needs of disadvantaged young adults, on terms that work for them

Lead Agency	Project
Children 1st	Youth Forums and Youth Inclusion Worker
SCVO	Information and Network Support Officer
Moray Council/SCVO (from Oct 2006)	Programme Manager
Moray Community Health and Social Care Partnership	Young Person's Health Development Officer
Lhanbryde Community Council	Lhanbryde Community Challenge
Moray Council	Admin and Clerical support
Moray Council	Youthwork training
REAP	Moray Against Poverty Network
Forres Community Forum	Forres Groups Action
The Loft Youth Project	The Loft Youth Project
Moray Council	Social Work Transitions Development

Evaluation

- 1.21 Moray Youthstart commissioned this evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the Moray Youthstart Partnership in operating the Moray Regeneration Outcome Agreement.
- 1.22 The evaluation has examined:
- Youthstart's relationships, between partners and with external agencies.
 - Youthstart's own structure and membership.
 - How effectively Youthstart communicated across the network.
 - Youthstart's contribution to shaping improvements in community engagement and the community planning process.
 - The perceived value Moray Community Planning Partnership (MCP), other partners and Youthstart's customers place on Youthstart's work.
 - Opportunities for Youthstart in the future.
- 1.23 Consultees for the evaluation comprised:
- The Youthstart Implementation Group
 - Other Board Members
 - Members of the Community Planning Partnership and ChYPP
 - Other people and agencies with an interest in Youthstart

Methodology

- 1.24 The Brief contained 25 questions that were rationalised and allocated to one of the six themes detailed in paragraph 1.21 above. These themes were used as the basis of qualitative discussions with the consultees noted above. Each face-to-face discussion lasted about 2 hours and they were supplemented with telephone interviews with other stakeholders where appropriate. These themes are also used as the basis of reporting our consultations in Section 4, although for our conclusions we return to the original 25 questions.
- 1.25 An alternative project-focussed evaluation approach was considered, but after discussions with the Partnership Manager a qualitative approach was preferred¹. Whilst a project-focussed approach can be extremely useful it was felt that:
- The regular 6 monthly reporting and annual reports to Communities Scotland already adequately covered the numerical achievements and the progression towards the MROA outcomes.
 - The time available would be more profitably spent on a qualitative evaluation and be more useful to the Partnership.
 - Until the updated Lifestyle Survey had been published many of the questions relating to target achievement could not be answered.
 - With the project under the MROA drawing to a close, the information would have limited relevance to new support arrangements.
 - The business case for all 36 projects, including specific outcomes and timescales and much clearer financial figures for the projects, would need to be considered to assess the value of the seven funded projects within the context of the MROA and support to disadvantaged young people.
 - It would be difficult, in some cases, to separate the funding and support to disadvantaged young people from closely related services provided for other young people.
 - The original targets specified in the MROA were, by admission of the drafting author, 'finger in the wind' targets that had not been revised.
- 1.26 Nonetheless, as delivery of the MROA is the prime purpose of Moray Youthstart, we reproduce and comment on the targets and achievements set out in Appendix 2 of this report.

¹ Confirmed by email 17 Feb 08.

2.0 MORAY REGENERATION OUTCOME AGREEMENT RESULTS

- 2.1 To monitor achievement of the MROA, outcomes, indicators and targets were set by the Partnership. These are shown in Appendix B, together with quantified achievements.
- 2.2 The figures from the 2006-2007 Annual Report are the latest available. The most recent Lifestyle Survey results have not yet been published, and the actual achievements at the end of the MROA will not be possible to assess until these results are available later in 2008.
- 2.3 Overall, there were 15 agreed targets over the four strategic objectives. Although in some cases there had been progress towards the targets, the achievements by March 2007 were mixed. This is understandable as the full effect of some projects may not be reflected in changed behaviour for some time. The targets against which most progress had been made were: an input target measuring the number of initiatives developed; and a service user target, measuring the number of young people accessing information and support services.
- 2.4 Indicators which attempt to measure changes in behaviour are more difficult to appraise. For five, a third of the indicators used, no information will be available until the next Lifestyle Survey is published. Against other targets, with the exception of the reduction in stays in temporary accommodation, the achievements are at best mixed.
- 2.5 There have been problems with the original indicators chosen and with the baselines against which achievements have been measured. The number of young people in Moray is falling, so where absolute numbers were chosen as a target this would not measure like with like. For example, a reduction in the number of unemployed young people is to be expected if the number of young people is falling. In other cases, the indicator chosen does not seem to be a precise record of the desired outcome; for example a reduction in the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training (reference 2a in Appendix B) does not guarantee that there will have been an increase in the proportion pursuing training and further education as the fall in those who are NEET could reflect an increase in employment.

3.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 Moray Youthstart operates within a dynamic context. Its prime function, delivering and supporting a network of projects for the benefit of disadvantaged and disaffected young people, fits within a local and national context which has evolved through the life of the MROA. In this Section, some of the main policies and directions which impinge upon Youthstart, and may affect opportunities for its future direction, are outlined.

3.2 There has been a change of government in Scotland in the last year and the implications for the strategic context which are not yet clear. The new administration has indicated that the overarching purpose of the Scottish Government² is:

“to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.”

3.3 Sustainable economic growth is seen as the central purpose to which all else in government is directed and contributes. The Government has also set out Strategic Objectives – to make Scotland wealthier and fairer, smarter, healthier, safer and stronger, and greener. These are considered essential elements that will bring more economic success to the country. The Government’s Economic Strategy sets the direction for Scotland’s public sector – the Scottish Government, local government, the enterprise networks and other key agencies – to work collaboratively with the private, academic and third sectors, in pursuit of increasing sustainable economic growth.

3.4 Central to economic growth is addressing the problem of poverty, inequality and deprivation. A recent discussion paper³ identified three broad ways in which these can be tackled:

- Prevention of poverty and tackling the root causes – these include addressing educational disadvantage and underachievement; tackling poor health; providing more choices and more chances for vulnerable young people at risk of disengagement; tackling worklessness – particularly deep-rooted pockets of inter-generational worklessness; providing the best start in the early years so that all children can achieve their potential; and regenerating our most disadvantaged communities suffering from concentrated deprivation.
- Helping to lift people out of poverty – for example, by improving employability (through more and better employment and through ‘one door’ employability services that provide clients with a joined-up package from Jobcentre Plus, economic development, health, social and childcare services) so that people can take advantage of the opportunities that economic growth will provide; improving individuals’ mental wellbeing and resilience; enhancing the availability and quality of advice and information services; promoting benefit take-up to ensure that people entitled to benefits and tax credits maximise their incomes; helping people through key transition points in their lives (such as when they leave school, return to work, or leave the care system); tackling substance misuse and homelessness; and reducing re-offending.

² The Government Economic Strategy. The Scottish Government 2007.

³ Taking Forward the Government Economic Strategy (GES): Launched by Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing on 31 Jan 08 - a Discussion Paper on Tackling Poverty, Inequality and Deprivation in Scotland.

- Alleviating the impact of poverty on people's lives – for example, by increasing entitlement and encouraging the take-up of free school meals; through the abolition of prescription charges; by funding free personal care for older people; providing free bus travel for older people and discounted travel for young people; by tackling fuel poverty; by developing the concept of a 'living wage'; and through the introduction of a fairer Local Income Tax to replace Council Tax.

3.5 Thus, current government policy reflects the core aspects of Moray Youthstart's work: partnership working, addressing poverty and disadvantage and, in particular, providing more chances for vulnerable young people,

More Choices, More Chances

3.6 *More Choices, More Chances* is the Scottish Government's strategy to reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Scotland. Its objective is to eradicate the problem of NEET throughout Scotland.

3.7 Moray is not identified as a target area where NEET is a particular problem, but the strategy sees a need for action from all partners in every local authority area in the country to tackle the issue. The sub-groups of young people who are most likely to be, or become, NEET are very much among the young people who are addressed through Youthstart: care leavers; carers; young offenders; young parents; low attainers; persistent truants; young people with physical/mental disabilities; and young people misusing drugs or alcohol.

Single Outcome Agreement

3.8 The Moray Regeneration Outcome Agreement will not be renewed once the current one expires in 2008. Rather, Single Outcome Agreements with Local Authorities are being developed. Local Authorities and other delivery partners are expected to report on progress towards meeting each of the national outcomes, albeit through a more consolidated and rationalised reporting process being developed as part of a new performance framework to support Single Outcome Agreements. Local Authorities will also be required to provide assurances that they have robust systems in place for managing and improving performance at a local level. Many of the national outcomes and indicators shown in Appendix C relate to Moray Youthstart's client groups.

Fairer Scotland Fund

3.9 Under the new system of Single Outcome Agreements, the Community Regeneration Fund (previously the main funding source for the MROA delivered through Communities Scotland) will be superseded by the Fairer Scotland Fund. The following information comes from a briefing to a meeting of Community Planning practitioners on 16 Jan 08.

3.10 While the Scottish Government will set out the national direction of policy and overarching outcomes, Local Authorities will now have the freedom to deliver them in a way most suited to their local area.

3.11 The main elements of the new relationship are set out in the Concordat agreed between Scottish Government and COSLA and signed in November 2007, which include:

- Single Outcome Agreements
 - The delivery of specific commitments
 - A reduction in ring fenced funding
 - Simpler and clearer reporting arrangements
- 3.12 Each Local Authority will develop a Single Outcome Agreement by April 2008. It will cover all Local Government and a significant range of Community Planning Partnership responsibilities where the Local Authority has an important part to play. A key feature of the Single Outcome Agreement is that local outcomes and indicators will be agreed locally.
- 3.13 The Concordat also contained a list of specific commitments, including freezing Council Tax and improving the quality of care homes, which recognises the national importance of these specific policies.
- 3.14 The process of developing Single Outcome Agreements is currently being discussed by CoSLA, SOLACE, Audit Scotland and the Scottish Government with input from the Improvement Service. More information will be available as the process develops.
- 3.15 The Fairer Scotland Fund, worth £435 million over 2008-11, streamlines seven previous funding streams, remains ring-fenced for 2 years and will be deployed by Community Planning Partnerships. This reflects the continuing importance of Community Planning and will build on Community Planning Partnerships' work in delivering Regeneration Outcome Agreements. The fund aims to improve the lives of disadvantaged people and people in disadvantaged areas, and it will be firmly linked to Single Outcome Agreements.

Local Strategies

- 3.16 Local strategies in Moray which have implications for the future of Moray Youthstart include:
- Investing in Children and Young People: Integrated Service Plan 2005-2008
 - Moray Youth Strategy 2006-2010
 - Draft Social Inclusion Strategy 2008-2011
 - Strategy for More Choices More Chances in Moray
- 3.17 These policies, and others, emphasise the importance of partnership working in meeting the needs of young people, including issues affecting disadvantaged and disaffected young people. Each strategy, from a different direction, identifies key issues and priorities which the agencies and organisations involved in the MCPP will need to work together to put into effect.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 The central feature of this evaluation has been consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and others who have had an involvement in Moray Youthstart, including members of the Board, Children's and Young People's Partnership and Implementation Group, project managers, operational workers and others with a historical involvement or with an interest in Youthstart.

4.2 The findings from this consultation are summarised below, arranged under the six themes which reflect the main concerns identified in the brief for this assignment. These were identified as:

- Youthstart's relationship with its partners
- The structure and membership of Youthstart
- Effectiveness of Youthstart's communication
- Youthstart's contribution
- Perceived value of Youthstart
- Future opportunities for Youthstart

4.3 Quotes and further comments are provided in Appendix D.

Youthstart's Relationship with its Partners

4.4 Comments about relationships fell into two main groups: relationships between partner members and relationships with external agencies. We have grouped our report under these two sub-headings.

Relationships Between Partner Members

4.5 The relationship between partners was generally thought to be positive. It was certainly seen as better than it had been in the past and almost certainly the relationships between the various bodies were thought to be better than they would have been without Youthstart. We were told that Youthstart had not been passive but had worked hard to encourage and involve members. For example, in addition to the formal meetings of the Partnership, the INSO had arranged training, networking events and informal lunches. A lot of the work had fallen to the Partnership Chairperson and the Support Team, but none of these were complaining and one member reminded us that it was always important to have someone at the helm, taking the lead and guiding members.

4.6 On the downside, there were some suspicions about people's motives, with some suggesting that some organisations might not have been so keen to participate if Youthstart had not got any funds. Statutory bodies were considered a little inflexible and often to be following their own agenda. Guarded comments were made about Community Learning and Development, noting that they hadn't fitted in very well with the overall aims of the Partnership and had tended to operate too independently, and hence sometimes in conflict. However, these were put into the context of some significant internal changes, statutory remits, inspections and recent signs of a more positive attitude.

4.7 In support of this last comment, we found a positive attitude in the two people we spoke with, heard some innovative ideas and detected a real desire to make things

better for young people. We were also told that recent discussions between the Youth Inclusion Service and Community Learning and Development had been more productive recently than at any time in the past.

- 4.8 We sensed that some organisations are very protective of their clients. This was confirmed to us by some people, and we found examples of organisations who considered that their needs were so special that the only solution was to set up yet another support group. Sometimes this was at the initiation of the client, but the end result was the same – another new group (if the resources could be found) rather than advising, informing and perhaps placing the client with another organisation’s group. In some cases, we believe that this attitude was driven by targets and the need to demonstrate a pool of needy people to justify funding.
- 4.9 Ideally, we recommend consolidation of some of these groups within geographical areas, with the freed up resources being used to ensure that all parts of Moray have suitable facilities. In our view, mixing clients with different needs would also benefit them and promote mutual support. The Partnership might not agree with our conclusion or the practicality of our idealistic solution, but our comments are worthy of discussion because, under the Scottish Government, client centred needs and efficiency should trump parochial interests and, therefore, this will become an even bigger issue; particularly as the Fairer Scotland Fund is not age specific.
- 4.10 Unsurprisingly, some relationships between partners were more developed than others. For example, the Information and Networking Support Officer, Health Development Officer and Youth Inclusion Worker met regularly and benefited from their liaison. Of course being co-located is a significant contributing factor that naturally leads to discussion. Although it is not always practical, projects tend to benefit from co-location of the team members.

Relationships with External Agencies

- 4.11 Relationships between the third sector and statutory bodies was not always ideal but most people agreed that the relationship was all the better for Youthstart. However, in some areas there was still a gulf to be bridged that needed the intervention of the Partnership. For example, we were told that Social Work was well behind with its assessment of young carers.
- 4.12 The biggest and most significant gulf in relationships was with the MCPP. Unlike the ChYPP, who had a good understanding of Youthstart, the MCPP appeared to know very little. We wouldn’t say the relationship had broken down because there was no evidence that it had ever existed in any depth. This is very surprising given the responsibility Youthstart has for delivering a significant element of the Community Plan on behalf of the MCPP and the resources it controls. It is reasonable that routine reporting and communication is undertaken with and through the ChYPP but this is an area where both the MCPP and the Youthstart Partnership should be doing better.

The Structure and Membership of Youthstart

- 4.13 The term ‘Partnership’ meant different things to different people at different times and in different contexts. It was being used when referring to: all the Board Members, or the Implementation Group, or the team of five, or the core Support Team. Thus, it was apparent from the start of this evaluation that the framework was a little shaky in parts. We have used the terms, ‘Support Team’ to indicate the

Partnership Manager, INSO and admin posts; 'YIG' to indicate the core Implementation Group members; 'Board' to indicate the Board Members minus the Support Team; and 'Partnership' or 'Youthstart' to reflect all Board Members along with the Support Team.

- 4.14 Even some of the members noted confusion between Youthstart as a partnership and as an organisation. They also asked rhetorically; 'Is it needs or resource driven?' – answering that it was probably and understandably the latter. The term 'partnership' was generally understood, although people were not always able to convey how the term differed from a steering group or even a meeting. We have taken partnership to mean a group with a common aim that has a central resource (funding and the Support Team) and operates above the day-to-day working level.
- 4.15 Externally there were competing influences with the mix of the Youth Strategy, Integrated Service Plan and MROA. The MCPP and ChYPP were not being evaluated but we were told that they could have been more effective and that the lack of guidance, particularly from the MCPP, was detrimental to the Partnership. Internally, we noted an inconsistent use of the definition of the key stakeholder group, ie disadvantaged young people. Even though the MROA provides a definition, we were given different interpretations by the people we asked. The MROA itself was generated with the experience of the SIP behind it but it still suffered from 'finger-in-the-wind' targets that do not appear to have been systematically revised in the light of experience or results (although we acknowledge that the 2006-07 Annual Report did question and re-present two of the targets).
- 4.16 Praise was given for the way the Partnership connected the voluntary and statutory sectors and how members learnt about each other, but questions were raised about whether they had been able to extend their network sufficiently and whether they had sufficient reach into the MCPP. 'Youthstart had been responsive to new funding streams coming on line that could potentially have led to duplication and has worked hard to modify its work as new activities come on stream. The difficulty was with the MCPP who make decisions in isolation'. We also got the impression that Youthstart had adapted well to environmental changes, but this was hard to confirm as these changes were not reflected in the documentation we reviewed.
- 4.17 Along similar lines, we heard praise for the way the Partnership had adapted from the SIP to the MROA, and could adapt again to accommodate the new Single Outcome Agreements. However, the same commentator wasn't convinced that the Partnership always focussed on the right things and suggested that there should be a second councillor on the Board. There is one place on the Board for an elected member from Moray Council, and three Councillors currently attend ChYPP meetings.
- 4.18 Two people talked about the infrequent meetings of the full board. One specifically commented on the lack of information available to a member who could not attend and the tardiness of the minutes. The other thought the full Board was too big and met too infrequently to do anything useful; admitting however, that it was a good opportunity for networking and listening to presentations from the likes of TRAP.
- 4.19 A well balanced, effective structure of partners from different backgrounds needs to have appropriate systems in place to manage effectively and convince others of their value. Therefore it was disappointing to find that evaluation systems were weak in

some cases, although pleasing that there was a robust understanding of the performance of others in statistical terms.

- 4.20 In part, the weak evaluation systems were probably responsible for the minor observation that the 6 monthly reports varied in format and style. We believe that this made it more difficult for the Partnership Manager and the Partnership to assess the overall picture than was necessary. The variability of the standard of reporting was also noted by others. This not only denies the partners useful information on what has been achieved but also keeps them in the dark as to what those organisations need to improve their service.
- 4.21 At a more routine project level, the MROA stipulates that all proposals will be subject to a written plan using the LEAP template, although there was no evidence of their use. We were surprised that Social Audits had not been used to evaluate performance. However, regular reporting was undertaken, including annual reports to Communities Scotland that included financial summaries and progress towards stated goals from a known starting point. These reports followed the format specified in the Communities Scotland National Performance Framework Detailed Guidance 2006-08⁴.

Effectiveness of Youthstart's Communication

- 4.22 Communication is required between the members and their young clients, between the members themselves, and between the Partnership and its funders and sponsoring bodies. The fourth aim of the MROA is to *develop the capacity of the partners* so we have focussed our evaluation on the latter two flows of communication (particularly in relation to the INSO, who has this responsibility), although we also consider how effectively young people can communicate their issues because Youthstart is an important bridge for this communication.

Communication Between the Partner Members

- 4.23 The network is accessed by approximately 140 people who are interested in or deliver services to 16-24 year olds. We were told that information received was forwarded to other interested parties where appropriate, so the circle of information is commendably wide. *"The YIG gets things done and keeps members informed."*
- 4.24 There are three main ways in which the INSO communicates with the partners and the wider community of agencies and bodies that have an interest in young people. The first and most successful is the PeB information bulletin sent out weekly. This compendium of news, courses, articles, best practice examples and information was generally well received, highlighted information people would either not have found out about or would have had to search for, and consequently saved them time.
- 4.25 The INSO is also responsible for networking and training events, which received more wide ranging comments from the excellent to the not so good. However, most comments in this latter category related to poor attendance.
- 4.26 The third means of communication is via the Youthstart website and the PeB contact list, calendar and information library (called 'The Base'). We were told that the website, despite being aimed at the providers of services, was used very occasionally

⁴ Reference CSGN 2007/1.

or not at all by the vast majority of respondents. The INSO indicated that the concept of the site was for others to participate in through updating the site. The absence of any external inputs into the simple calendar function indicated that this had not been happening although about half had added their details to the PeB contact list.

- 4.27 A Health and Wellbeing mapping exercise was carried out in 2007 by the Young Person's Health Development Officer. It contains examples of best practice and the main issues perceived by young people. As such, it should provide information and focus for the Partnership. Once published, this report would be a good example of using the Base as a source of useful information. Other important documents have not always been available on the Base, however. For example, until recently, the Youth Strategy was not on the site, minutes from the Partnership Board meetings are not available (important to those who couldn't attend the annual meeting), nor the minutes of the Youth Council. Accurate and timely meeting minutes are an important way of keeping people informed, maintaining accountability and providing a record of discussion, decisions and actions.
- 4.28 Whilst documents such as the Youth Council minutes encompass the overall needs of young people rather than specifically those of disadvantaged young people, the minutes provide a barometer and trends in young people's thinking that would put the work of Youthstart in context and perhaps allow preventative measures to be put in place. Information we did find about the Youth Council was disappointing; concerning the composition of the Council, roles, and what they had for lunch rather than important issues facing young people, priorities and suggested solutions.
- 4.29 During the consultation, the Health Improvement Officer communicated the activities that had been delivered relatively successfully. This doesn't necessarily mean that they were any more successful in lifting young people out of the disadvantaged category but we were pleased to find that these services were available to schools and that schools were taking advantage by inviting the Young Person's Health Development Officer (HDO) to engage directly with pupils. The work also ties in with the national Health Promoting Schools⁵ initiative. We noted no negative effects of the HDO engaging with mixed groups of youngsters rather than singling out specific groups of disadvantaged teenagers. However, just to show that there is always more that can be done, one person said, "*I'm not really sure even now what the HDO's role is or how it fits into Youthstart*".

Communication with Funders and Sponsoring Bodies

- 4.30 Although Youthstart is not responsible for communications from other organisations, its effectiveness will be reduced without a successful two-way flow of communication between parties. Some comments received about external agencies, including important stakeholders, suggest that there is plenty of room for improvement in this area.

Communication with Young People

- 4.31 Communication also needs to work the other way, from the establishment to the young people. "*The Partnership cannot always work to the ideal situation*"; for example, due to the laws on confidentiality. Without effective communication, one organisation found that half its young people said that they did not want their school

⁵ Helping schools take positive steps towards strengthening the health and wellbeing of children and young people. www.healthpromotingschools.co.uk

to know of their situation for fear of being stigmatised. However, once the reasons and benefits were communicated more fully, this percentage fell and more people were helped.

- 4.32 The ultimate accolade for Youthstart would have been glowing testimonials from disadvantaged young people and a clear process showing how disadvantaged young people had influenced and could influence community planning in Moray. Some people will never get involved in such activities and others will only get involved for some of the time, when a particular issue interests them, but this is no different than with adults.
- 4.33 As was pointed out to us, one issue with Youthstart's target group is their lack of capacity to make forward or long term commitments. We appreciate that it takes a lot of effort to build capacity within an ever changing group of young people to a level where they have the skills and confidence to have an effective voice in community planning. It also requires the partners to be willing to put effort into providing a return for the young people's involvement - whether training or a real feeling of achievement. As more groups associated with MCPP have sought to engage with young people - such as Dialogue Youth and Moray Youth Council - the scope for improved partnership working in this area has grown. However, we believe that this is a challenge worth accepting and one that will require innovative solutions, accepted by decision makers, for it to be successful.
- 4.34 It was beyond the remit of this evaluation to speak directly with the numerous groups of young people involved, especially as it is not always easy or appropriate to engage with this client group on policy or strategic issues. However, we were hoping to find examples of positive influence even if that came through from the support workers on behalf of their clients. Sadly, most of the workers at operational and management level felt they had little or no influence on strategic planning. We believe that this stems from the resource driven system that has been in place rather than a needs driven system. Nonetheless, this is a challenging area for the Board as they go forward.

Youthstart's Contribution

- 4.35 Initially, few positive examples were forthcoming that demonstrated successes by Youthstart. This difficulty seemed to stem from:
- Modesty.
 - Not knowing if things would have been significantly worse had there not been an intervention.
 - Not being able to tie a success for disadvantaged young people to a general success.
 - Not being able to tie a success to Youthstart.
- 4.36 However, as we show below, Youthstart's contribution to the well-being of young people has been considerable. Further evidence of achievement against the MROA targets is provided in Appendix B.
- 4.37 Of the four main objectives outlined in the MROA, three were adequately supported by funded projects, but the fourth, '*Improving access to secure housing and the skills and confidence to sustain independent living*' appears to have received a lower level

of support and this was further reduced when the Prevention of Homelessness post was disestablished. It was not surprising therefore that housing was cited as one of the key problem areas by many of the people we talked to.

- 4.38 We understand that the Partnership was not able to influence this area to the extent that it would have liked or was needed to ensure even-handed treatment of the four MROA objectives. One person suggested that the MROA had to take account of statutory obligations and this explained why the second objective, to improve access to secure housing, was not funded to the same extent as other projects. We acknowledge this, but a partnership cannot truly be a partnership if the statutory bodies are not on board and fully integrated into the system. In this sense, we feel that housing should have been a priority issue raised with the MCPP so that it could be addressed at the highest level. Wider national housing issues should not have prevented the Partnership from applying constant pressure at a local level, but we did not sense that this had been the case. We later confirmed that no paper had gone to the ChYPP on the housing issue.
- 4.39 The Health and Wellbeing Mapping Exercise carried out in 2007 was an important contribution to the Partnership. Although it was not focussed on disadvantaged young people, it highlighted gaps in services and identified barriers that impeded the delivery of services. Therefore, it was (and is) a useful resource to enable the Partnership to deliver services more effectively. Three of the issues raised – communication, training and transport – are all issues that Youthstart should be concerned with. However, when we spoke with the Transport Manager (one of those we were asked to contact) he said he had had minimal dealings with Youthstart over the last 5 years.
- 4.40 The Youth Council was launched on 3rd October 2006, and over the next 13 months held 6 meetings. Youthstart’s contribution to the Youth Council through TRAP is filtered by the Youth Council and ChYPP (to whom the Youth Council reports) hence the input into community planning as required by European directive is minimal. The need for some filtering and prioritisation from the numerous groups able to contribute to the Youth Council was accepted; as was the role of the ChYPP, who do have resources available to them to resolve some of the issues raised. However, we found no evidence of policy changes or decisions on the Partnership’s resource allocation or activities that the Youth Council had influenced. The Community Planning & Development Manager broadly agreed with these observations but did not think the picture was that black.

Targets

- 4.41 The wooliness of some targets does not help to objectively evaluate performance. For example, a target to reduce the number of 18-24 JSA claimants from 357 to 300 appears worthwhile at face value but does not take account of changing demographics. The Moray Socio-Economic Audit⁶ gives actual figures only to 2005, but the trend since 1993 has been a reduction in people aged 16-39, and the report states that ‘Moray has a net outflow of people in the 16-20 age range’. The economic forecasts predict continuing falls, so although the Audit does not specifically cover the same period as the MROA, 2005-2008, it can be assumed that in 2008 Moray has fewer people aged 16-24 and hence would have fewer JSA claimants even before any interventions by Youthstart.

⁶ Moray Social and Economic Audit and Atlas 2007 published by HIE Moray.

- 4.42 In a second example, the target to reduce the percentage of 15-17 year old pupils in Moray reporting smoking daily or occasionally from 25% to 22% should have been set in comparison with other areas of the country. Without such reference points, the results that have been attributed to Youthstart will not have taken into account national TV campaigns and general lifestyle changes. Moreover, the target refers to pupils; not all disadvantaged young people in the 16-24 age range are pupils, and most pupils are not classed as disadvantaged.
- 4.43 The inadequate, incomplete and unrevised targets were not successful and do not provide a reliable indicator of Youthstart's success or value for money. However, one example that was given to us, of a young life potentially saved as a direct result of a Youthstart project, highlights that success and value for money are not all about numbers, particularly when dealing with vulnerable groups like disadvantaged young people. Furthermore, we were told that the targets and reporting did help members focus their efforts, so even without targets being SMART⁷, their existence had a positive benefit on outcomes.
- 4.44 There was also a degree of trust that outcomes were being delivered and it was acknowledged that activity was not tied tightly to the MROA. However, even when it was difficult to evaluate outcomes, the benefits of making the effort to do so were recognised. In particular, more attention to target achievement would have allowed the partnership to rebalance resources, assess value for money and justify future funding.

Achievements

- 4.45 Positive achievements arising from Youthstart include:
- More people can make their own choices and live on their own.
 - Self harmers have received enough support to progress with their lives.
 - Youthstart listen and have given young people a voice; although it is not clear how this has affected community planning.
 - The young people's agenda has been raised to a higher level.
 - Youthstart has brought agencies together beneficially.
 - As a result of Youthstart, the hotspots are known – housing, mental health and binge drinking.
- 4.46 Specific examples that illustrate Youthstart's achievements include:
- A letter to the local MP asking why Individual Learning Accounts could not be used for driving lessons.
 - The creation of working groups to tackle specific problems, such as the Young People's Service Action Group.
 - The Y.O.B.S Variety Show⁸.
 - Themed conferences, such as 'In it to Win it' and 'Grand Designs'.

⁷ SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely (or Time bound).

⁸ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/radioscotland/letsdotheshow/>

- A mechanical engineering SQA programme as an alternative to an academic curriculum. Four of the first six young people who entered the programme passed with merit. Keith Grammar School has now adopted the programme.
- A young person who never came out of his house and couldn't make a cup of tea until a Youthstart sponsored intervention.
- Finding accommodation for a very dependent young person and getting them started on 'Get Ready for Work'. This person would almost certainly have been lost in the system without assistance.
- Keeping a person who didn't fit into any of the usual categories from prison or death; one or the other was inevitable without help.
- A teenager who was able to get through some difficult times with support and went on to become the Moray Young Citizen of the Year. Another became the Moray Young Sportswoman of the Year.
- An evening group that was set up to provide those who have changed their behaviour with a different peer group so that they are not tempted to return to their old ways.
- Working with Moray College to help some young people settle in – showing them around before the start of term and having a familiar face in the College twice a week in case they need help.
- Providing young carers with respite breaks and giving them time to participate in activities appropriate to their age.
- Providing training; such as first aid and moving and handling courses.
- 46 young people (advantaged and disadvantaged) on Duke of Edinburgh programmes who wouldn't otherwise have participated.

4.47 The Health Development Officer has made a big contribution to the third aim in the MROA; namely, to improve access to information advice, advocacy and services in support of wellbeing. The services are provided to all young people, but it is mainly the disadvantaged (loosely defined in this context as young people who don't have the same opportunities as others) who take advantage and benefit from them. Services include:

- Developing Access Points;
- Training (assertiveness, anger management, baby think it over);
- Young Mothers (career, financial, general support);
- Sex made Safer (SMS);
- Tobacco project.

Perceived Value of Youthstart

4.48 For the reasons discussed earlier in this report, both in Section 1 and above, the value for money of the projects is hard to assess reliably. Assessment is all the more difficult because the resource column in the main body of the MROA contains a mix of both annual budgets and 3-yearly budgets, and whilst a breakdown of the latter is available, the MROA refers to the original budgets rather than the actual sums received. Furthermore, an unquantified level of activity in support of disadvantaged young people would have taken place even without the Partnership so a comparative value for money assessment is not feasible.

4.49 Much easier to assess is the delta cost over and above the projects, ie the cost of the Support Team. The cost of the team includes the wages for a part-time Partnership Manager, the INSO and clerical support plus a proportional cost of accommodation and overheads. The cost of this support is estimated at approximately £86,000 per year⁹ and we have used this to assess whether the Support Team provided good value for money.

Partnership Manager

4.50 Over the duration of the project, Youthstart has been responsible for over £1,000,000 from Community Voice and Community Regeneration Fund. It received regular requests for funding from partner organisations and submitted bids to allow projects to continue. Many projects were able to be piloted with the help of Youthstart monies – varying in cost from £4,000 to £51,000. For example: Hopeman Skate Park were given £1,500 in 2004/05, young parent groups received just over £2,000, NCH received just over £26,000, and Aberlour Childcare Trust received over £100,000.

4.51 Some of the projects that received Regeneration funds and are now mainstreamed include: the Detached Youth Work Service, Hut 9 in Forres and the Young Persons Health Development Officer, which is now fully funded by the NHS. Two projects, Moray Youth Action and NCH, were originally funded by Youthstart and then through Supporting People (which may be regarded as mainstream). However, the Supporting People funding has now been withdrawn with the removal of ringfenced funds.

4.52 Whilst the YIG had responsibility for allocating these funds, the Partnership Manager had the day-to-day responsibility for administering them. This was a very responsible task that fully justified a support team. The responsibility carries with it a number of reporting requirements which were carried out with due diligence. Separating the administration from the beneficiaries in this way was sound financial management and was therefore a wise investment. This part of the task, as it stands, will disappear once the MROA ends, as will the need to complete reports for Communities Scotland.

4.53 However, the Partnership Manager fulfilled many other roles, and these could not be dropped without a detrimental impact on the work of the Partnership. The position of Partnership Manager was not filled for several months, and the negative impact this had on the Partnership was noted by the members who all said that many activities only started once the post had been filled. Beneficial activities undertaken by the Partnership Manager have included:

- Researching and applying for new funding.
- Freeing up Board members to undertake their primary roles.
- Creating shared objectives and keeping members focussed in a timely manner.
- Helping members to deliver their commitments.
- Organising and minuting meetings and pursuing actions between meetings.
- Maintaining a degree of independence for the Partnership.
- Facilitating inter-agency working.

⁹ Report to ChYPP Implementation Group on 28 February 2007.

- Relieving the pressure on statutory agencies.
 - Managing Support Team staff and providing support to co-workers, such as the Youth Inclusion Worker and the Young Person's Health Development Officer.
- 4.54 Even those who thought the Partnership was strong agreed that this was not a role they would like to take on, and acknowledged the value in terms of available time and effectiveness that the Support Team provided.
- 4.55 An expected consequence of losing the contribution that Youthstart makes to services would be that:
- There would be an increased burden on statutory services;
 - Community Planning would potentially have difficulty in delivering the Local Authority's strategies¹⁰.
- 4.56 This is not possible to quantify financially, but we believe that loss of Youthstart's support would have a significant impact.

Information and Network Support Officer (INSO)

- 4.57 The post of INSO has a wide ranging remit linked to some loose aims and one target. The post was developed as a response to various Community Planning consultations that identified a lack of information and poor communication. The role was strengthened following the Greisbach Report¹¹, which identified further weaknesses in communication and information relating to services for young people. Below, we highlight the views on the key activities of the officer that were raised during the study.
- 4.58 The INSO has arranged a number of networking events for the Partnership. These received mixed responses, with some members highlighting the benefits: "*Events attract a good audience so they are useful*", "*INSO events are successful because they are a constant reminder of the young people issues*"; whilst others highlighted relatively poor attendance and value.
- 4.59 The 'Deal or No Deal' event held in March 2007 was most often mentioned as a successful event and appears to have captured the imagination. Event organisation is very difficult to get right, and all the people will never be pleased all the time; however, to do nothing is usually worse for the organisation so the efforts by the INSO are to be applauded and should be regarded as a positive outcome.
- 4.60 The internet is a major communication tool in today's world and it was pleasing to find that the Youthstart website was the first entry in Google when searching for 'Moray Youth'. This tremendous asset is not, however, being used to its full potential. The site is aimed at the providers of services rather than the young people; this is reasonable given that YoungScot is the main portal for information for young people and it avoids any criticism of duplication. However, we do not understand why a link is not provided from the main Youthstart page to YoungScot for those young people finding Youthstart through a search engine. Nobody we consulted, except the INSO, regularly visited the website, and over half said they never used it.

¹⁰ Summary Paper presented to the ChYPP on 24 Jan 07.

¹¹ The Griesbach Report to Community Safety re Service Provision for Young Offenders 2006.

This was not an evaluation of the website, but Youthstart could have made much better use of the website as a communication tool.

- 4.61 Another strand to the INSO's work that features on the Youthstart website is the information database, called, 'The Base'. The vision and budget for this system were laid down in March 2006, including preferred suppliers. The budget identified 20 days for design and construction, but the facility was not launched until January 2008. Whilst there were some justifiable reasons for the delay, we are not convinced that the end result effectively achieves its aim or materially satisfies objective 4 of the MROA - *'Developing the capacity of the partners and partnership to engage with and meet the needs of disadvantaged young adults.'* Moreover the timing of the launch at the end of the MROA lifecycle has reduced its impact and there is a question over its future maintenance.
- 4.62 It is right that new solutions to problems are tried, but equally, when a solution is not achieving its aim, it should either be terminated or revised. In this case, the Partnership failed to specify an adequate timescale for this project or to monitor and manage the project effectively.
- 4.63 Although one negative comment was received about the style of the weekly Pathway e-bulletins (PeB), the information content was welcomed by all as a time saving source of news, facts, ideas, best practice and information that, on the whole, was relevant and useful. Several people commented that they would not have been aware of the information had it not been for the PeB and, therefore, the information bulletin contributed to their effectiveness and knowledge. The information bulletin has been a success but does not in itself warrant a full-time position. Linked to the PeB is the network directory that provides the names, job title, description and contact details of anyone associated with young people. People found this a useful resource; particularly for identifying those who were not immediate colleagues.
- 4.64 *"If the information flow stops, you have got trouble."* *"Communication helps prevent duplication and gaps"*.

Future Opportunities for Youthstart

Perceptions of the Future

- 4.65 We were surprised that Partnership members were resigned to losing the Youthstart support team through its MROA funding running out. We understand that the MROA was a 3 year project that was always due to end in March 2008, but the response seemed to come from the pressures from floods of new initiatives and fund chasing rather than from trying to ensure a continued, coherent and efficient service to customers. We do not blame the Partnership for the resource driven system in which they have found themselves, but were surprised at the acceptance levels we observed.
- 4.66 Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) are one of the new initiatives, but they have the potential to deliver better services to the people who need them. Moray is well placed to embrace SOAs because of its experience with partnership working. Unfortunately, their timing will reduce the effectiveness of SOAs because organisations have already had to find alternative funding and set up alternative systems for programmes that have come to an end.

- 4.67 Where alternative funds have been secured from sources such as the Big Lottery, those in receipt are obliged to deliver against their bid, and this may not accord or be flexible enough to fit in with SOAs. Many charitable funds have by their constitution a narrow focus, and therefore do not lend themselves to joint, inter-agency projects. Even though Youthstart has received some additional funding for a further three months, the service has already begun to fragment and there is insufficient time in our opinion for the key partners to put in place well designed, robust new arrangements before this extended funding runs out.
- 4.68 For example, Children 1st have succeeded in their Big Lottery bid to assist vulnerable 16 year olds in transition to adulthood¹². Whilst this initiative is commended, it does not appear to have been developed under the auspices of the Partnership – yet the Partnership will have to integrate the intended support to those at risk of substance misuse, offending, self harming or other self destructive behaviour with existing programmes run by other organisations.
- 4.69 The Health Improvement Officer saw their role, ‘to merge the aims of the NHS, Moray Council and MROA when bidding for lottery funds as they are all intrinsic and tied together. There were not really any conflicting agendas’. This was an interesting comment, as most people indicated that it was generally the Partnership Manager who drew together the threads from the partners and applied for funding. This might indicate either an overlap in responsibilities within Youthstart, or best practice in using the most appropriate member of the Partnership to act in the best interests of the members as a whole.
- 4.70 Based on the fragmentation and uncertainty encountered, we disagree with those members who thought the Partnership was strong enough to survive without the Support Team. Although the Board will still be able to meet and discuss the issues, without the driver of a funded MROA programme (or some equivalent) and a support team that focuses and supports activity, we believe that the efforts of members will be less effective. In our opinion, strong leadership and support from the MCPP and ChYPP will be necessary to keep the Board together and focussed.
- 4.71 This leads to the wider issue of the value of Youthstart, and we believe that one of the main benefits to the Partnership has been the dedicated Support Team. Adopting this model for other partnerships would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services, and therefore give good value for money for the people of Moray. It would be important to distinguish between true partnership groups and meetings of other bodies such as steering groups. One such distinction might be to consider only those operating at a strategic level.
- 4.72 Three people specifically mentioned the success of the Police’s approach, “*The Police are streets ahead in community planning*”. Since they have a great deal of intelligence on many, but not all, of the disadvantaged young people groups, their model could be considered best practice. The Police sit on the ChYPP Implementation Group and the MCPP, and attend Youthstart Board meetings. One person described them as “*a very strong partner using their intelligence led model*”.
- 4.73 Both Community Learning and Development (CLD) and the More Choices More Chances initiative were seen as potential new partners in the future. The latter, in

¹² <http://www.children1st.org.uk/news/index.html?action=view&id=322>

particular, was seen as an opportunity for more joined-up working and for the Partnership to work closer together. One person said, “*CLD will need to ensure disadvantaged young people are included as a priority.*” And another thought that there was no need for both Youthstart and More Choices More Chances to exist as separate organisations, but that one could be a subset of the other. However, suggestions of a merger between Youthstart and More Choices More Chances concerned the Community Planning & Development Manager.

- 4.74 It was suggested by a partner that, “*the solution should be driven by Community Planning*”, but we would be concerned if either Youthstart changed its structure and relationships or Community Planning imposed a structure without a proper debate and consensus on the way forward. There was a warning that in the SIP era some joint initiatives involving both advantaged and disadvantaged young people were not very successful, and this made it difficult to demonstrate that help was being provided to those who needed it the most.
- 4.75 The clear message from Government is outcomes; significantly different to the input driven systems most people are used to. Therefore, one of the most important recommendations for the future is to keep an open mind and keep open lines of communication.

Summary

- 4.76 Throughout this consultation, we have found examples of the very good and examples of things that could have been done better. This applies to particular projects and posts as well as to the Partnership’s agenda as a whole. We could conclude from this that there is a lack of skills within the organisation, but this would be unfair because every organisation would benefit from a better trained and more highly skilled workforce, and even the very best people are not able to deliver an exemplary solution if they are not given the time or resources to do so. Moreover, the application of people’s energy has to match the context of the situation in which they are operating – in this case, a highly complex web of legislation, political initiatives, short-term expediencies, inter-agency working (including the voluntary sector) and ever-changing external funding.
- 4.77 The main conclusion we draw from our observations is that there is far more to be done than the Partnership has had the resources to tackle. We are not advocating building an empire, but we are sure that, without the Partnership and the Support Team, Youthstart would not have achieved as much as it undoubtedly has achieved. To do more and to work more effectively, the Partnership needs a Support Team. We hold back from recommending that the Partnership Manager should be a full-time post, however, for two reasons: firstly, the task to manage CV and CRF funds will disappear; secondly, any new structure must be matched to Single Outcome Agreements and the requirements of the Fairer Scotland Fund within the policies of the MCPP and the resources they allocate.

5.0 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Future Structure

- 5.1 Although the original Brief asked the question, ‘Is there a need to revise the current structure?’, the general feeling amongst the Partnership members is that there are so many unknowns with funding and SOAs that this is a very difficult if not impossible question to answer. *“Until we know what the new Community Planning will look like, we cannot answer what the future structure will look like.”*
- 5.2 There were a couple of early responses during our interviews along the lines of *“the Partnership is strong enough to survive”* and *“I’m not sure we even need a partnership”*, but we were not convinced by the arguments or the alternatives put forward. For example, the suggestion that the partners could take it in turns to organise meetings fails to recognise the benefits of consistency and the liaison, research and actions that go on between meetings. Perceived limitations of the Partnership as a result of Community Planning not doing what it should do, or not providing the resources for others to do what needed to be done, are not, in our view, valid reasons to give up the Partnership.
- 5.3 Changes to the structure of Youthstart were expected as a result of the Single Outcome Agreement and Fairer Scotland Fund but there was a genuine hope and expectation that Youthstart would continue in some form. This extended to an expectation that the Partnership Manager would bid for a share of the Fairer Scotland Fund. There was, however, concern that the edge the Partnership has enjoyed through focussing on disadvantaged young people will be lost amongst the Scottish Government’s broader themes and objectives. *“The group needs a focus”*
- 5.4 One person mentioned that Moray was a small Local Authority and, therefore, many people fulfilled more than one role (for example, Community Planning does not have any associated full-time posts), but they were not sure if, overall, this was an advantage or disadvantage. An experienced respondent noted that Councils in England had been more successful at integrating their services for young people than those in Scotland. However, Scottish policies, past and current, mean that the English model could not readily be used in Scotland.
- 5.5 Some of the partners have always been in competition and their visions are not always the same, but this is inevitable. What is important is how they work together when they know what resources they have been allocated. How they work together will be influenced by the direction they get from Community Planning, the support they receive from the ChYPP, the integration demanded by new initiatives such as Single Outcome Agreements and the future management of those serving disadvantaged young people.
- 5.6 It would be wrong to place all the responsibilities with Community Planning without mentioning the supporting role of the Partnership. We were told, for example, that the partners provided very little feedback on the Youth Strategy (although the MROA Annual Report 2006-2007 claims that the Youth Strategy was ‘based on feedback from young people gathered by Youthstart’). We do not know the truth of the matter or if this was an individual partner responsibility or one for the YIG to coordinate, but the principle remains the same: there is an opportunity for Youthstart

to influence Community Planning, but if it is to do successfully then both sides have a part to play in communicating their needs and wishes effectively.

- 5.7 One suggested way forward was to produce a needs-led Youth Work Strategy that would require all organisations to work together. Such a document would be welcome if it replaced, incorporated or clearly sat within a range of strategic documents issued by Community Planning. However, we could not recommend adding yet another document to the existing and already confusing medley of publications. Nonetheless, we believe the time is right for an over-arching review of policy documentation, and a Youth Work Strategy might be an appropriate title within a revised framework of strategic publications.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 We encountered very mixed opinions during our consultations – for nearly every positive statement we were given an opposing one. There was no one quarter or subject that drew universal praise or unanimous complaint, suggesting that weaknesses were highlighted in the spirit of constructive criticism. In general we conclude that the Partnership has been successful.

6.2 The main criterion we used in reaching this conclusion was the extent to which the support for disadvantaged young people was better than if the Partnership had not existed. Thus, whilst the Partnership did not receive unanimous unqualified praise, we are absolutely certain that activities would have been less well focussed and the results poorer without the Partnership, and the Support Team in particular.

6.3 In the remainder of this Section we briefly answer the key questions asked in the Brief and provide our recommendations.

Partnership Structure

6.4 *How effective is the current partnership structure and membership – is it correct and appropriate for its purpose?*

The current structure comprises 29 members, of whom eleven form the core Youthstart Implementation Group (YIG). The YIG determines how the budget will be spent. The Partnership is supported by a Support Team which, when fully staffed, has comprised a part-time Partnership Manager, an Information and Networking Support Officer (INSO) and clerical support. The INSO is also one of the funded projects in the Moray Regeneration Outcome Agreement (MROA).

6.5 We found the partnership structure and membership to be sound and appropriate to the task. Minor weaknesses identified during discussions included:

- The full board met formally only twice a year; and the meetings are therefore more of an update and opportunity for information exchange than an active contribution to the development of the Partnership and its aims.
- The Board's Chairperson and Support Team undertook a disproportionate amount of activity; including some tasks that should have been carried out by the partners.
- Documentation relating to reviews and the revision of aims and objectives as a result of the monitoring and reporting that was carried out.
- Confusion about the make-up of the Support Team. The MROA clearly adds the Youth Inclusion Worker and the Health Development Officer to the three people listed above.

6.6 The structure, because it had a Support Team, was particularly successful in keeping the partners focussed on the MROA and in developing lines of communication.

Partnership Working

6.7 *To what extent has the Youthstart partnership contributed to the development of improved partnership working across Moray.*

The Youthstart partnership has successfully engaged with the agencies, statutory bodies and the voluntary sector working with young people, brought them together and helped to keep them focussed on their role in supporting young people.

However, some partners do not appear to have been fully committed, and were involved only because of the funds Youthstart had at its disposal.

- 6.8 *The lack of partnership working at Strategic level was cited as an issue in the previous evaluation in 2004. Has there been any improvements and if so how much has the partnership contributed to this?*

Relationships with the ChYPP generally seemed positive, and partners believed that the members of the ChYPP had a good understanding of Youthstart – which was confirmed by members of the ChYPP. However, the same could not be said of the MCPP where the understanding in both directions was found wanting. However, both the ChYPP and the MCPP are the higher level organisations and should, therefore be providing leadership and direction. There was little evidence of this, and consequently Youthstart would understandably have found partnership working at a strategic level challenging. Unfortunately, issues of concern to Youthstart, such as housing, which we believe were strategic issues, were not formally raised with either the ChYPP or MCPP. Hence, we conclude that there is still room for significant improvement from all sides.

Community Planning

- 6.9 *To what extent does Youthstart contribute to the overall Community Planning Process?*

Youthstart does contribute significantly to the Community Plan in that many of the services provided for the partners increase the quality of life and well-being of disadvantaged young people in Moray – a significant element of the vision to improve the quality of life and well-being of *everyone* in Moray. However, we found little evidence of Youthstart contributing to the Community Planning process. As indicated above, the relationship with the MCPP was poor. Opportunities to comment on key documents, such as the Youth Strategy, were apparently met with little response.

- 6.10 We were particularly disappointed at the limited influence young people had on community planning, either directly or through their support workers, who also said that they didn't feel their views were being heard. We were told that young people were fed up being consulted and that nothing ever seemed to happen as a result. For example, the Moray 2020 consultation was held in November 2007 but has still to report.

- 6.11 *Is it clear where the partnership sits within this process?*

We were told that, '*It is clear where it sits and that it reports to the ChYPP*' but we are not convinced that the wider process is clear.

- 6.12 *Is the partnership seen as a valuable asset to MCPP?*

For the reasons outlined above, we have to answer 'no' to this at the present time. However, this is not to say that Youthstart is not a valuable asset to the people of Moray or Moray Council.

- 6.13 *How important is it that Youthstart is an integral part of and answerable to Community Planning partners?*

The Support Team did not have any specific responsibilities listed in the MROA that required them to develop relationships with the Community Planning partners.

However, the Partnership Manager was responsible for fund raising and fund managing, and we would have expected that this would have involved developing relationships with Community Planning partners as they are a key potential resource.

- 6.14 We believe that for funding, tasking and reporting Youthstart should have a very close relationship with Community Planning partners. However, there is value in semi-autonomy and a degree of independence from the Community Planning partners because of the flexibility it provides, and this is needed when dealing with multiple agencies at an operational level.

Community Engagement

- 6.15 *How and to what extent has the partnership contributed to/help shape improvements in community engagement? Did the work of the partnership influence at all the content of the 'Rules for Community Engagement' and if so in what way and to what extent?*

The Partnership reviewed its structures for Community Engagement and after consultation produced a new and detailed set of protocols and guidelines. One outcome was the establishment of a Moray Forum that is represented on the MCPP. The MROA Annual Report 2006-2007 identifies the establishment of youth forums as a challenge and, based on our findings, we consider that this is still a challenge to be overcome.

Strength of Youthstart

- 6.16 *In the past Youthstart was always regarded as the partnership which adds value to existing services and strategies. It was identified in the last evaluation that statutory agencies were not effectively serving the needs of YP in Moray and this is where the Youthstart partnership could offer this unique approach. With the developments of Community Planning over the last 3 years is there still a need for this type of approach?*

This was not an evaluation of Community Planning but at this point in time we have not found evidence that either the MCPP or the ChYPP is sufficiently mature, robust or active to negate the need for the Youthstart partnership. With the reduction from 7 to 5 core themes in the Community Plan and refocused effort as a result of Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs), it might be that a properly supported Community Planning department could mean that the Youthstart partnership would cease to provide value for money. However, we are not at this point yet, so the current approach would still appear to be the best option; accepting that some changes as a result of SOAs and Fairer Scotland funding are inevitable.

- 6.17 *What did Youthstart actually provide which added value to young people?*

This is covered in the reports to Communities Scotland, briefs to the ChYPP, the MROA outcomes (reproduced in Appendix B) and the section on Youthstart's Contribution in Section 4.

Communication / Networking

- 6.18 *Has there been any improvements in communication across the network and if so has the/how has the partnership contributed to improved communication across the network and how effective has the INSO been in this? (The last evaluation indicated problems with communication particularly within services themselves.)*

Overall, the partners found that there had been a big improvement in communication, and were particularly glad of the PeB weekly information bulletin sent out by the INSO as it saved them time and highlighted activities and information that they probably would not otherwise have learnt about.

- 6.19 The response to the networking and training events organised by the INSO for the partners drew a mixed response, but the negative comments were about the poor attendance at some events. This is not the fault of the Support Team, and the partners who did not attend must share responsibility for the limited impact of some events. The PeB network directory was a useful aspect of the website. Unfortunately, in all other respects the website did not meet needs and was, therefore, a missed opportunity to communicate information more effectively. The site was rarely, if ever, visited by the vast majority of the people we spoke to.
- 6.20 A survey, carried out by the INSO, confirmed the positive comments we received. Despite the undoubted value of the information that was circulated by the INSO and the information provided on request at a one-to-one level, there were, expectedly, people who said communication could still be improved. Given the comments above about the MCPP and ChYPP, we also conclude that communication with the MCPP was poor and could be improved with the ChYPP.
- 6.21 We only received one comment about internal communication within an organisation and do not consider communication within individual services to be the responsibility of the Partnership or the Support Team. However, we were pleased to note that the PeB information bulletin was often circulated by recipients to several other people.

Young People Representation

- 6.22 *How effective has the Young Peoples Advisory Group been in providing an opportunity for Young People to have a voice and a say in their communities?*

Over and above their individual rights to have a say in their communities, disadvantaged young people have two ways to express themselves: through TRAP and through their support workers. TRAP should feed into the Youth Council and the Youth Council should, according to the Youth Strategy, have a direct input into the MCPP. In practice, the link is with the ChYPP; which is acceptable as they have resources to address issues, providing that the MCPP is aware of these and takes up the mantle when the ChYPP cannot find a solution.

- 6.23 In reality, the system does not appear to work very well, although a full examination was beyond the scope of this evaluation. At the time of our consultation, there were no TRAP representatives on the Youth Council but there had been in the past and new representatives had been invited to join. It is not at all the fault of Youthstart, but we were unimpressed with the information we found on the Youth Council, the issues that are concerning young people and how Moray Council is addressing those issues. Furthermore, we were disappointed to hear from members of the partnership who told us that they had never been asked to represent their client's views or they felt that nothing they said influenced Community Planning.

- 6.24 *With the developments within the Youth Forums, Dialogue Youth, Youth Councils etc is there still a place for the Young People's Advisory Group?*

Probably not, but it is hard to say for certain when the current process is so weak. It is important that the Youthstart target group has a voice and, as a difficult group to reach, it would be easy for the other consultation fora to ignore them and continue without a real understanding of the issues that affect these young people. Disadvantaged young people should be given a direct voice if they want it but we can fully understand that they have more pressing issues. The issues facing them though are a matter for Community Planning to consider. We think that this would be achieved more effectively if Youthstart represented them, through the ChYPP, and that it should be a regular agenda item at meetings of the ChYPP and Youthstart.

- 6.25 *To what extent did the model of the Young Persons Advisory Group influence the developments of the Youth Forums etc (if at all)?*

The answers we got to this question were vague, so we conclude that any influence was minimal.

- 6.26 *Can the role of Youth Inclusion be tied into the existing youth groups? Is there duplication and if so how can this be mainstreamed?*

The last Youth Inclusion Worker was in post for just 6 months and with a different line manager it was difficult for the postholder to feel part of the Youthstart support team. It is clear that engaging with all young people, but especially the Youthstart target group, is a demanding and time consuming job. The post became vacant in March 2008 and this may be the best indicator of whether this role is necessary, redundant or could be performed adequately by another agency. Despite several people highlighting earlier difficulties with Community Learning and Development (CLD), this is one area where the Youth Inclusion Worker made recent progress and the results with newly settled CLD should be considered before a final decision on the value of the post is made.

Value for Money / Achievement of Objectives

- 6.27 *How effective have the funded projects/the partnership been in contributing to achievement of the objectives contained within the MROA?*

The total allocation of Community Regeneration and Community Voices funding over the 3 year period was £987,000, of which £191,156 was spent on core projects, £517,489 on other projects and £189,498 on support, administration, accommodation, networking events, training, etc. The annual report for 2007-2008 is not yet available and a third of the targets in the 2006-2007 report were awaiting the results of a Lifestyle survey to be published later this year. Nonetheless, the report indicated that progress was being made towards the targets and it was feasible that, with the exception of the number of JSA claimants, they could have been achieved by March 2008.

- 6.28 Unfortunately, there were a number of weaknesses in the targets selection process and some of the reports from partners were weak. Therefore it is not possible to say definitively how effective the funded projects have been in contributing to the achievement of the objectives. More subjectively, but based on numerous examples of successes, we believe the projects and partnership have benefited young people greatly in three out of the four objectives in the MROA. In the fourth case, although the numerical targets (ref 3a and 3b) had already been met in 2007, we are not convinced that access to secure housing has been achieved because this was cited as the main problem facing disadvantaged young people during our interviews.

6.29 *Has the partnership and the Moray Community seen value for money?*

Yes, as far as we can judge.

6.30 *Where are there areas of weakness in achieving the objectives?*

There were weaknesses in influencing the access to secure housing and enabling young people to influence community planning as described above.

6.31 There was also the potential to deliver even better results had a Partnership Manager been in post at the start of the MROA, and had a more pro-active management style been adopted. Some partners may have found this intrusive and uncomfortable but the level of trust exhibited and the weakness of some reports means that the Partnership did not have the knowledge to allow them to move resources to where they could be used most effectively.

6.32 *Are there areas of best practise which should be further developed?*

The PeB information bulletin proved effective at getting relevant information to people who might otherwise not have seen it. It was an unusual option to adopt in this modern age of technology and RSS¹³ feeds, but the human intervention proved worthwhile and saved the partners a significant amount of time.

6.33 The Support Team is also an example of best practise that could be adopted by other partnerships that have partners from mixed backgrounds without permanent staff. Not only can they do the routine admin but they can also assist the partners complete their tasks and keep the group focussed. The independence of a Support Team also helps to keep the group mindful of the bigger picture without getting sucked into the operational issues that often affect people working in a particular sector on a daily basis. The size and composition of the team would vary with the needs of the project being supported.

Future

6.34 *Is there a need for this partnership in the future and if so with the changes to Community Planning and the developments of strategies such as More Choices and More Chances, where could/should the Youthstart partnership concentrate its work on and what would its future role be within the Community Planning process?*

The answer to this depends on what that future will look like once SOAs and the Fairer Scotland fund have been evaluated and Moray Council decides how it will meet the Government's objectives with the resources it has been allocated. However, based on what we know now, we think there would be benefit in maintaining the Partnership in the future and that it should have a role in the Community Planning process.

6.35 *How best can Youthstart continue to work in improving the lives of disadvantaged young people in the future? Is there still a need for this?*

Disadvantaged young people will continue to need more support than the majority of the population. We conclude that broadening the target group, to all young people for example, would dilute effort and resources away from those who need it most and would become more difficult to manage effectively. Narrowing the group by

¹³ RSS is a system where news and information summaries on specific topics from different websites can be sent to a requesting user automatically. The user can then choose to read the detail if they so wish.

segmenting it would ignore the fact that many disadvantaged young people have multiple problems, and this would therefore waste the experience and inter-agency opportunities that currently exist. However, we did find evidence of some groups being protective of ‘their’ youngsters, and Youthstart should work to eliminate this so that the benefits indicated above are achieved.

6.36 *How important is it that the Partnership maintains its unique broad approach to its work?*

Without a broad approach to its work, the Partnership would be in danger of losing its partnership status and becoming simply a meeting. It is the wider Partnership goals that are focussed on the combined needs of disadvantaged young people that currently singles it out from many other agencies.

6.37 *Is there a need to revise the current structure – what would the roles of the core staff be assuming these posts are still required?*

We do expect that changes will be necessary and beneficial – some arising from new funding streams and commitments to those funders (Children 1st’s successful Big Lottery bid for example), others as a result of revised initiatives (More Choices More Chances), and also from different emphasis being accorded to other bodies (Community Learning and Development for example).

6.38 Taking into account that some of the funding management tasks under Communities Scotland will no longer be required and what else could have been achieved had more time been available, we recommend that one part-time manager and one full-time INSO/admin position would provide the most cost effective support.

6.39 *Should the remit of these posts change and to what?*

Notwithstanding our answer to the first question in this Section, Youthstart would still benefit from some changes to the roles of these posts. We cover this more fully in Section 4 and above, but in essence: the Partnership Manager should be more proactive, monitor outputs more closely, and reassign resources to where they would be most effective. The INSO should take on some of the clerical duties in preference to giving time to the website.

6.40 *In light of the new outcomes announced by the Government where could the partnership fit within this – where should it position itself?*

The strongest demonstration of the need for dedicated support to vulnerable young people may come from the discussion paper detailed in paragraph 3.4. Youthstart is an established resource, and hence a solution that can help the MCPP deliver the required services dictated by the Scottish Government. Youthstart has a cost but these are outweighed by the integrated service it can provide that also aligns with the SNP’s focus on the national outcomes and indicators given in Appendix C. Youthstart should also capitalise on its proven flexibility and willingness to adapt and work with other initiatives; particularly More Choices More Chances.

Summary of Positive and Negative Features of Youthstart

6.41 We provide a simple bullet point list below (in no particular order) of the aspects we thought were strengths of Youthstart and those that were not so good:

Positive Aspects

- Partnership Manager's role
- Work of the Support Team in general
- Increased trust and openness of Partnership members
- That reports are generated
- That the Partnership exists
- Not too much duplication
- Achievements for young people as a direct result of Youthstart projects
- The skills and experience that have developed as a result of having a Partnership
- Information bulletins from INSO
- Pressure from Youthstart that results in focussed activity
- Brings together partners
- Common goals set
- That somebody can coordinate and apply for funding toward a common cause
- Moray's experience with partnerships will be useful in developing SOAs
- Money that has been put into the problems facing young people
- That a link to Community Planning exists

Negative Aspects

- Targets were not SMART
- Poor external leadership, particularly from Community Planning
- No clear revision of MROA over time (formal annual review)
- Document control (no dates)
- Variation in standard of quarterly/six monthly reports¹⁴
- Not sure what's changed as a result of all the reporting
- Over protection by some organisations of 'their' young people
- Links between funded projects and main aims were not as clear as they needed to be
- LEAP framework not used as dictated in Appendix 1 of MROA
- Balance too much in favour of resources rather than need
- Young people are not effectively influencing Community Planning (not young people's fault)
- Over complicated, inter-tangled web of policies and strategies
- Youthstart website and library information database - The Base
- Resources have not kept up with demand

¹⁴ Appendix 1 of the Revised Operational Framework in the ROA requires reports to be submitted in accordance with a provided template.

Recommendations

6.42 We make the following recommendations based on our findings. We have made them in good faith from the information available to us, but decisions should take into account the changing nature of government, evolving initiatives such as SOAs, and local decisions on the implementation of community planning:

- Youthstart should continue as a partnership and be supported with a Support Team of one part-time manager and one full-time INSO/admin position.
- The need for a Support Team should be reviewed after 12 months to determine if its role can be undertaken more effectively by another body.
- The basic structure of Youthstart and the YIG should remain and always be open to new partners joining or partners leaving.
- The full board should have a greater focus on ensuring that services and funds are distributed efficiently to the areas of most need.
- Documentation standards should be improved to ensure traceability and an auditable trail of decisions.
- Youthstart should nurture its relationships with the MCPP and ChYPP and do all it can to support them.
- A robust system should be developed to ensure that the needs of disadvantaged young people are considered by the MCPP. This may mean a formal system involving support workers reporting to the Partnership and the Partnership reporting to the ChYPP.
- The PeB information bulletin should continue.
- Networking and training events should continue but be fewer in number. Regular 6 monthly meetings of the full board should be held and should provide sufficient networking opportunities.
- Young People should continue to be heard directly by the full board whether this be via TRAP or some other representation. Should TRAP not be sustained in the new structure, this should not be an excuse for not listening directly to the issues facing young people.
- If funds and time permit, the website should be improved – although this is a low priority, and unless the commitment is made then it would be better not to divert energy into this resource. Do it well or not at all.
- Hold a Practitioner’s Forum. This would be an alternative way for the people closest to young people to air, discuss, and consolidate their views.
- Keep an open mind and keep lines of communication open.

MORAY COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

A.1 This appendix puts the work of Moray Youthstart into the context of the Moray Community Planning Partnership (MCP). The MCP was formed in 1999 to take forward community planning within Moray. It began with 7 original members drawn from the key local public and voluntary sector agencies – membership has since increased to 13. A new Moray Community Plan (MCP) was published in September 2006 and covers the period 2006-10. It sets out the strategic priorities to be addressed by the Partnership over the next five years.

The MCP is divided into 7 key themes. Moray Youthstart sits in the Investing in Children and Young People theme.



Investing in Children and Young People

A.2 The Investing in Children and Young People theme covers the services and facilities available to young people from birth to age 26. The body responsible for addressing these issues is the Children and Young People's Partnership (ChYPP). The responsibilities of the ChYPP are to:

- Provide strategic leadership and direction in the planning and delivery of integrated services to all children, young people and families in Moray.
- Ensure that the resources of the Council and its partner organisations are effectively targeted on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged within the community.
- Assume corporate responsibility for the planning and delivery of council services in partnership with Grampian Police, Moray Health and Social Care Partnership, the Voluntary Sector, Authority Reporter, Elected members and Service Users.
- Oversee the development and implementation of the Integrated Children's Services Plan 2005-08.
- Respond to the practice/resource implications of new legislation or government guidance e.g. Additional Support For Learning Act, Anti-Social Behaviour legislation.

- Receive periodic evaluation reports on services provided by the Council and/or its partners within the context of Best Value.
- Consider and respond to the findings of formal internal and external audits and inspections.
- Provide formal advice and guidance to other key committees within the Council including Policy and Resources, Educational Services and Community Services Committees and the appropriate committees of NHS Grampian.
- Ensure that the Scottish Executive's vision for Scotland's children is promoted and realised within Moray ie all children and young people are safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, included, respected and responsible.
- Ensure that the role and functions associated with the Partnership are effectively linked to the wider Community Planning Partnership.
- Take on the role of investing in Children and Young People's Theme Group for Community Planning purposes.

Moray Youthstart is one of a number of multi-agency partnerships and community/voluntary umbrella groups which address defined goals within the Investing in Children and Young People theme and report and are responsible to the ChYPP. The full list of partnership groups responsible to the ChYPP include:

- Child Protection Forum
- Childcare Partnership
- Dialogue Youth
- For Moray's Children
- Local Community Networks
- Mobile Information Bus
- Moray Youthstart
- Youth Justice Strategy Group
- Young People's Tobacco Project (Fag Break)

Youth Strategy

A.3 The MCPP has issued a Youth Strategy for 2006-2010 and the ChYPP has responsibility for ensuring its implementation and monitoring. The overall vision expressed in the Youth Strategy is:

“We want Moray to be a place where young people thrive: a place where they have a voice, have opportunities, learn and get around. A place where they have a home and feel secure, healthy and welcome.”

In addition, the Strategy outlines a vision for each of the key areas of concern for young people. These are: having a voice, opportunities, learning, getting around, have a home, being healthy and feeling safe and secure and feeling welcomed.

The Youth Strategy is highlighted because it is at the beginning of its life cycle, is clearly written, and is readily available. However, it is not the only strategy that sits under the ChYPP; there are others, such as the Integrated Service Plan 2005-2008 and strategies developed by each of the partners.

Youth Involvement

A.4 The EU, Scottish Government and Moray Council also recognise the need to provide a platform for young people from which they can make their input into community planning. At Scottish Government level, a Scottish Youth Parliament has been set up comprising 150 elected young people from across Scotland. Moray has two representatives on the Youth Parliament. At local level, a Youth Council has been formed. The Youth Council collates inputs from other groups and influences community planning through a link to the MCPP. It also receives information from the MCPP that it can then disseminate. The groups that link to the Youth Council include:

- Scottish Youth Parliament.
- Moray College student representatives.
- Local Youth Forum 8+.
- Thematic Forums, eg: TRAP, Young Carers, Looked After Children, Single interest groups.
- Youth cafes and uniformed organisations.
- Gordonstoun and Aberlour House.

The first meeting of the Youth Council was held on 3 October 2006. Six meetings have been held so far with the most recent on 1 November 2007 (providing an input into the Moray 2020 strategy which was being refreshed). The link to the MCPP mentioned above is shown as a direct link in Appendix 1 of the Youth Strategy; however, in practice the link is through the ChYPP. The Youth Council is able to evaluate the inputs from the groups listed above and prioritise them. The inputs are then passed to the ChYPP who determine what to pass to the MCPP and what to address from their own resources.

MROA TARGETS AND ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES

Strengthening routes to secure employment founded on increasing skills and confidence

Ref	Outcome	Indicator	Target group	Baseline	Final target 2008	Achievements 2006-2007
1	Reduction in the number of unemployed Young People	Reduction in the number of 18-24 JSA claimant figures	18 - 24	357 (March 2003)	300 (March 2008)	2005 – 06 400 2006 - 07 389 (3% reduction) It is disappointing that the numerical milestone of 350 has not been achieved although the figure is an improvement on last year. However it is hoped that we will see an improvement in this figure as the NEET Strategy develops (see report). In addition with the emphasis by the government on moving people from inactive benefits to active benefits this may in effect have affected the reduction in this figure.
2a	Increase the proportion of school leavers pursuing training and further education	Reduce the proportion of 16-19 year olds not in employment, education or training	16 - 19	500 (revised baseline)	400 (20% reduction)	179 original base line (16%) of school leavers 162 (2006/07) (15%) school leavers The baseline used for this section appears to be the number of Young People who were registered with Careers Scotland and therefore is not representative of the true figure. There was limited information available at that time. However with the development of the NEET Strategy, figures are more accurate and available.
2b	Increase the proportion of school leavers pursuing training and further education.	Increase the proportion of “looked after” young people leaving care have entered employment, education or training	Care leavers	6/9 (March 2005 66%)	Target 75%	Figures will be available by Friday 21 st September

Improving access to secure housing and the skills and confidence to sustain independent living

Ref	Outcome	Indicator	Target group	Baseline	Final target 2008	Achievements 2006-2007
3a	Improved access to secure housing	Reduction in the average length of stay in temporary accommodation	16 - 24	>6 months (March 2004)	<4 Months (March 2008)	<3 months
3b	Improved access to secure housing	Annual Number of 16 –24 year olds moving into Scottish Secure Tenancies	16 - 24	34 (March 2004)	45 (March 2008)	53
4	Improved Skills and confidence of young people experiencing homelessness	Reduction in the number of re referrals of 16 – 24 year olds to Housing Needs as homeless	16 - 24	10 (March 2004)	4 (March 2007)	49/181 referrals. 49 re-referrals Note: The base line figure relates to when the recording of these figures started in that year and the current number will include Young People who are re-referred more than once and would be over previous years. It is also acknowledged that in March 2004 when the baseline figure was set Young People received far more supporting hours than they do now due to cuts in Supporting People. It has also to be established the actual reason Young People are seeking help for and this is an area which the Partnership may look at over the course of the next few months.

Improving access to information, advice, advocacy and services in support of health and wellbeing

Ref	Outcome	Indicator	Target group	Baseline	Final target 2008	Achievements 2006-2007
5a	Improved health and wellbeing of young people in Moray	Reduction in the number of conceptions among females 13-19 years	13 - 19	= 402/3 = 134 p.a. (2000-2)	5% decrease*	127 p.a (2003/04) 5.2% decrease
5b	Improved health and wellbeing of young people in Moray	Reduction in the number of STIs	15 - 19	592.1/ 100,000 (male) 1767.7/100,000 (female) (Grampian)	5% increase (due to better uptake of service) 5% decrease	Not available until next lifestyle survey See template 1.2
5c	Improved health and wellbeing of young people in Moray	Reduction in the percentage of 15-17 year old pupils reporting smoking daily or occasionally	15 - 17	25% (2003)	22% *	Not available until next lifestyle survey See template 1.2
5d	Improved health and wellbeing of young people in Moray	Reduction in the percentage of 15-17 year old pupils reporting drinking in excess of 20 units of alcohol in the previous week	15 - 17	46.5% (2003)	43% *	Not available until next lifestyle survey See template 1.2
5e	Improved health and wellbeing of young people in Moray	Reduction in the number of 13-24 year olds admitted to hospital for alcohol abuse	13 - 24	43 (2003)	40 *	22 (April 2006 – December 2006)
5f	Improved health and wellbeing of young people in Moray	Reduction in the percentage of 15-17 year old pupils reporting feeling frequently or continually stressed	15 - 17	38% (2003)	36% *	Not available until next Lifestyle Survey See Template 1.2
6	Improved identification and engagement of young drug users in Moray	Increase in the number of people below 24 years of age recorded on SMR 24 form**	< 24	6	> 30	Not available until next Lifestyle Survey See Template 1.2

Ref	Outcome	Indicator	Target group	Baseline	Final target 2008	Achievements 2006-2007
7	Improved access to information, advice, advocacy and services.	Increased number of young people accessing support through community points of access.	15 - 24	average 590 per annum over the last two years	> 650 per annum	>1200.

Developing the capacity of the partners and the partnership to engage with and meet the needs of disadvantaged young adults, on terms that work for them.

Ref	Outcome	Indicator	Target group	Baseline	Final target 2008	Achievements 2006-2007
8	Increased services and support to young people	The number of new or developed initiatives originating from our engagement with the target community	16 - 24	0 at 31 Mar 05	>6	<p>8 - Plus the achievement of the event milestone to fill the partnership manager post.</p> <p>Provision of drug and alcohol awareness sessions for S5 and S6 pupils.</p> <p>Provision of Anger Management Initiative Consultation events on the keyworker role and the formation of the Young Persons Services Action Group.</p> <p>4 keyworker events held – based on ROA outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement of YP ● Health and Wellbeing ● Keyworker role ● Employment and Training

Note: The record of achievements shown in this table have been taken directly from Annual Report to Communities Scotland 2006-2007.

NATIONAL OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

Source: Scottish Budget Spending Review, Scottish Government, 14 Nov 2007.

National Outcomes

1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.
2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.
3. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.
4. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
6. We live longer, healthier lives.
7. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.
8. We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.
9. We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.
10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.
11. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.
12. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
13. We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.
14. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.
15. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

National Indicators

1. Reduce the gap in total research and development spending compared with EU average (by at least 50% by 2011).
2. Increase the business start-up rate.
3. Grow exports at a faster average rate than GDP.
4. Reduce the proportion of driver journeys delayed due to traffic congestion.
5. Increase the percentage of Scottish domiciled graduates from Scottish Higher Education Institutions in positive destinations.
6. Improve knowledge transfer from research activity in universities.
7. Increase the % of school-leavers (from Scottish publicly funded schools) in positive and sustained destinations (FE, HE, employment or training).
8. Increase the proportion of schools receiving positive inspection reports.

9. Increase the overall proportion of area child protection committees receiving positive inspection reports.
10. Decrease the proportion of individuals living in poverty.
11. Increase the proportion of school children in primary 1 who have no signs of dental disease (60% by 2010).
12. Increase the proportion of pre-school centres receiving positive inspection reports.
13. Increase the social economy turnover.
14. Reduce the rate of increase in the proportion of children with their Body Mass Index outwith a healthy range by 2011.
15. Increase the average score of adults on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale by 2011.
16. Increase healthy life expectancy at birth in the most deprived areas.
17. Reduce the proportion of the adult population who smoke (22% by 2010).
18. Reduce alcohol related hospital admissions by 2011.
19. Achieve annual milestones for reducing inpatient or day case waiting times (18 week referral to treatment time by December 2011).
20. Reduce the proportion of people aged 65 and over admitted as emergency inpatients 2 or more times in a single year.
21. Reduce mortality from coronary heart disease among the under 75s in deprived areas.
22. All unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation by 2012.
23. Reduce overall reconviction rates by 2 percentage points by 2011.
24. Reduce overall crime victimisation rates by 2 percentage points by 2011.
25. Increase the percentage of criminal cases dealt with within 26 weeks by 3 percentage points by 2011.
26. Increase the percentage of people aged 65 and over with high levels of care needs who are cared for at home.
27. Increase the rate of new house building.
28. Increase the percentage of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a good place to live.
29. Decrease the estimated number of problem drug users in Scotland by 2011.
30. Reduce number of working age people with severe literacy and numeracy problems.
31. Increase positive public perception of the general crime rate in local area.
32. Reduce overall ecological footprint.
33. Increase the proportion of protected nature sites in favourable condition (to 95%).
34. Improve the state of Scotland's Historic Buildings, monuments and environment.
35. Biodiversity: increase the index of abundance of terrestrial breeding birds.
36. Increase the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport.
37. Increase the proportion of adults making one or more visits to the outdoors per week.
38. Increase the proportion of electricity generated in Scotland from renewable sources (31% by 2011; 50% by 2020).
39. Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill (1.32 million tonnes by 2010).

40. Increase to the proportion of key commercial fish stocks at full reproductive capacity and harvested sustainably (70% by 2015).
41. Improve people's perceptions, attitudes and awareness of Scotland's reputation.
42. Improve public sector efficiency through the generation of 2% cash releasing efficiency savings per annum.
43. Improve people's perceptions of the quality of public services delivered.
44. Improve the quality of healthcare experience.
45. Reduce the number of Scottish public bodies (reduce by 25% by 2011).

QUOTES AND COMMENTS FROM THE CONSULTATIONS

- E.1 This appendix takes the form of a discussion, albeit that the comments were made in isolation and not in response to somebody else's thoughts. In some cases the statements were those of one person, but we have grouped like comments together to demonstrate the range of opinions expressed. We have also added our own comments where we think these are useful, and have summarised our findings in Section 4.
- E.2 We have used italic text within double quotes where the words were recorded during an interview. Normal text in single quotes is an edited quote from a single person. Unqualified text indicates summaries and comments taken from our interview notes and edited for readability. We use the same headings as in Section 4.

Youthstart's Relationship with its Partners

- E.3 Comments about relationships fell in to two main groups: relationships between partner members and relationships with external agencies. We have grouped the quotes and comments under these two sub-headings.

Relationships Between Partner Members

'The services are integrated much better than they were under SIP and members now have recognisable roles'. "*Things got lost for a bit and became hard but they did survive.*"

"*Youthstart have worked hard to try and integrate and improve relationships.*" Examples were given to support this, including: the networking events, informal lunches, the INSO's weekly bulletins, directory of services and the Partnership meetings.

An insider said, "*The Partnership Manager is the glue and the information hub but the things that go on are done by the partners*". However, it was accepted that the Partnership tended to rely on a small group to get things done. Someone not so close said, 'Youthstart is achieving but slowly; mainly because a lot of the work is done by the Partnership Manager and the Chair. I recognise the partners have day jobs but ...' - "*Someone needs an overall view and bring together all the strands and do the donkey work.*" - 'I think the main reason the partners are there is to access funding; without that I don't think they will continue to meet and do things together. For the relationship to work, there has to be a coordinating function. There needs to be someone at the helm.'

'I think our team would say that Youthstart is not a very transparent organisation and one where people look after their own interests. They may not always work together but they are passionate about their own projects.'

Relationships with External Agencies

Some people were very happy with Youthstart and its relationship with its partners. 'I now have a better understanding of some of the partners than pre Youthstart.' - 'It is clear where it sits and that it reports to the ChYPP; the Partnership Manager has got all the structures in place and it does what it says it will do.' - "*The ChYPP does know about the work of Youthstart, it is mentioned quite regularly. For example at*

the last meeting they discussed the additional funding for April May and June.” Understanding the relationship is not always enough and one person mentioned that the ‘ChYPP agenda does not have young people’s input on its radar’. Sad and worrying.

However, the relationship with MCPP was less clear: *“Youthstart has done enough in the PR department but there are people in MCPP that still aren’t aware of Youthstart”* - ‘If I wasn’t involved with Youthstart, I would have no idea as a member of the MCPP Steering Group what it was all about’. Although the first commentator considers enough has been done, these comments must reflect to a degree on the effectiveness of Youthstart’s communication with a key stakeholder. As must a comment from the other side of the fence, ‘Youthstart has not had a good press, particularly within Moray Council, over the years’.

The Structure & Membership of Youthstart

- E.4 ‘The SIP was set up in a hurry and was loose as a result. Youthstart is a much better arrangement as the MROA was a much better fit with national strategic initiatives.’ - *“Youthstart is more stable and integrated than previously. It is not dominated by any one agency.”* - *“It hasn’t always been like that (it was confusing and not so well organised) but now the Partnership works well. The last meeting I went to was positive and people were open and honest.”* - *“The current system is not ideal but it does have the potential to make a difference”* (implying that that potential will diminish without Youthstart).

Most people thought Youthstart was a strong partnership. It had identified overlapping processes and issues that previously were being dealt with piecemeal and dealt with these to reduce duplication and increase effectiveness. *“Youthstart are the ones who have been able to look at the layers of acetate and see the whole picture.”* - *“Of all the partnerships I sit on, Youthstart is very proactive with good organisation and administration and is a very, very communicative group. It is also quite demanding - in a good way.”* - ‘I don’t go back to the original ROA targets, I do what I do, but the reports required by Youthstart keep me focussed, a good thing.’

It was disappointing to hear one group admit that *“our evaluation is quite weak and are systems not strong enough to show the individual benefits of the work we do”*. Internally, this group was addressing the issue. Another group said, *“we do not have any specific targets or outcomes from Youthstart in return for the money they give us.”*

“The Partnership meets the different and wide needs of young people. The holistic view is important.” This is brought into focus when the cross departmental needs of disadvantaged young people are considered. For example, of the young carers, those who self harm are in double digits, others have mental health problems. Some succumb to the easier access they tend to have to drugs and alcohol. Most are not reaching their academic potential because they stay out of school, sometimes as a result of emotional blackmail. ‘Youthstart helps the process of referrals from one partner organisation to another.’ - *“Youthstart are successful in engaging with the more difficult to reach groups.”*

Effectiveness of Youthstart's Communication

- E.5 The quotes and comments on communication are given under three sub-headings: Communication between the Partner Members, Communication with Funders and Sponsoring Bodies, and Communication with Young People.

Communication Between the Partner Members

The network is accessed by approximately 140 people and many of them pass the information they receive on to other interested parties so the circle of information is commendably wide. *"The YIG gets things done and keeps members informed."*

Although one negative comment was received about the style of the weekly Pathway e-bulletins (PeB), *"it doesn't help the Support Team's image"*, the information content was welcomed by all as a time saving source of news, facts, ideas, best practice and information that, on the whole, was relevant and useful. Several people commented that they would not have been aware of the information had it not been for the PeB and, therefore, the information bulletin contributed to their effectiveness and knowledge. The bulletins were particularly useful for organisations supporting young people and were described as *"extremely useful"* with *"occasional gems"*. Another said, 'I get information from the INSO that I am then able to share with the young people'; a system that worked well.

During February, over 30 people completed a survey about communication and information. This confirmed that over three-quarters of the respondents passed on the PeB to at least one other person either occasionally or frequently. Many favourable comments were added; such as, *"The PeB newsletter is excellent, informative and relevant"*, *"I have found a lot of useful items here and through the PeB, and I truly believe if it wasn't there we wouldn't know half of the things that are going on"* and *"A lot of the information in the PeB has been very helpful I have used a lot of the suggested services and put young people forward for events and activities based on information provided by the INSO"*

At the time of the survey 'The Base' had been live for less than a month so some unfamiliarity was to be expected. Given this, we were surprised that 23% claimed they checked the Base library once a month but not surprised that over 60% had not visited the library and over two thirds had never checked it for updates. *"I have used the Base twice so far but I didn't find what I was looking for."*

Overall, 70% found the INSO service very useful and 23% found it quite useful. Moreover the service had saved the 34 respondents time – equivalent to half a full time equivalent job over the course of a year. Even if no-one other than the respondents had benefited, this is a very worthwhile contribution to the Partnership. In contrast, nobody rated communication at work or between organisations as excellent and more were dissatisfied than satisfied, suggesting there was still more that could be done.

Communication with Funders and Sponsoring Bodies

Although it is not responsible for communications from other organisations, successful communication has to flow between parties, and Youthstart's effectiveness will be reduced without this flow. The following comments suggest there is more to be done in this respect. *"Communication from Community Planning*

is poor.” - “Community Planning doesn’t do its job as well as it should. The strategic groups get bogged down in operational issues.”

Communication with Young People

‘Young people are consulted to death but they didn’t feel anything they said made a difference. They are fed up with it.’ Several recent consultations were cited as examples, including those by national organisations such as Save the Children. ‘Personally, I have never been asked to represent young people’s views even though I work with them every day’. *“I agree, the MCPP are not hearing the views of young people.”*

“Youthstart are successful in engaging with the more difficult to reach groups.”

Youthstart’s Contribution

- E.6 At a fundamental level, the validity of the MROA was questioned and, in particular, why its aims were not encompassed by the Integrated Service Plan (although the Integrated Service Plan was described as *“quite fluffy, input driven and having few outcomes”* by one respondent). At a working level it was mentioned that ‘some things I have seen in old files are still issues’.

Anecdotally from someone not directly involved with Youthstart but with a broader outlook on support services, *“Youthstart has delivered valuable support to young people”*. Another said, *“Youthstart never turn anyone away, it’s a really good thing about the service”*. - *“I like to think we have been successful. We have had many young people through the doors, some may have matured and sorted themselves out but many would have been lost to society.”*

Examples of specific achievements have been given in Section 4 to reflect their importance. We also draw attention to the targets and outcomes from the 2006-07 Annual Report to Communities Scotland that are reproduced in Appendix 2 and invite the reader to consider the Lifestyle Survey and 2007-08 Annual Report when they are published.

Perceived Value of Youthstart

- E.7 The comments on the perceived value of Youthstart have been divided into three sub-sections as follows: Value for money for the Partners, Value for money for Moray Council, and Value for money for the young people.

Value for Money for the Partner Members

“Youthstart has been, could and would be valuable if the uncertainty was removed. I’m not convinced it is good value just now, partly due to Community Learning and Development.”

“The posts [of the Support Team] are making a difference and need to continue.” - ‘The YIG takes a broader approach; its forte is bringing the partners together, not divvying up the money. It reduces duplication and provides practical networking.’ - “I’m not convinced the services would have been integrated without Youthstart. There would have been duplication and overlap if all the partners had bid into a big pot.”

'Before the Partnership Manager came into post, opportunities, particularly to get funding, were lost.' - *"Having a Partnership Manager is a necessity. Life would be a lot harder without one."*

One person suggested that the statutory bodies struggled to meet their statutory commitments and, therefore, avoided initiatives such as key worker support and flexible help because it complicated their provision of essential services. Also, it was probably better that some services, such as flexible help, were provided by the voluntary sector. Bringing together these different strands, *"this is why Youthstart is so useful"*.

"The Support Team is definitely worth £100k/year" (the actual cost is lower than this). One person understandably described the benefits of the INSO post as *"intangible"*. Fortunately, the survey carried out by the INSO showed that the information provided saved other people time to the equivalent of at least half a full time equivalent post. Added to other comments about the service and the *"good events"* that have been run, the benefits of the INSO become more tangible. *"Somebody has to be at the helm and I doubt any of the other partners would want to take on the role of Partnership Manager; therefore, the Support Team is value for money."*

Value for Money for Moray Council

'I think the MCPP does get good value from Youthstart, especially over the last 18-24 months. Youthstart is now much better at informing them [not sure if 'them' refers to the MCPP, the partners or the respondent's department.] about the work being done and at supporting Youth Justice, Community Learning and Development, etc'. *"There is always room for improvement but for the resources it has, it does the best it can."*

"Moray has seen value for money from Youthstart. Notwithstanding the work of other partners, preventative work we have been able to do has reduced the number of people the local authority would have had to provide services to." - *"The pressure has also been taken off schools as we can take them in their last term. Christmas leavers are particularly disruptive to teachers and other pupils."*

'Moray Council definitely get good value for money from young carers. Independent figures from the University of Leeds for Carers UK has found that a young carer saves its local authority an average of £15,260 per year¹⁵.' - *"Our project has been excellent value for money. There are fewer drug and alcohol problems, the crime rate has gone down and nuisance calls have stopped."*

'Worries that the evidence isn't there to show Youthstart has been value for money. For example, can it be shown that the availability of housing has increased? If demonstratable that this is the case, it would be good news for Youthstart.'

Value for Money for Young People

"Youthstart has been crucial in protecting and delivering to young people." 'Without the money from Youthstart then Moray Youth Action probably couldn't provide a service to 16-24 year olds. This still might be the case after March, although we

¹⁵ <http://www.carers.org/local/south-east/herne-bay/carers-save-uk-87-billion-per-year,2555,NW.html>

would try and place them with other services, these would be more limited than we provide'. The SMS drop-in centre has been a great success because it has reached many young boys; traditionally a particularly difficult group to access.

'A central coordinating body is useful. However, I am not sufficiently up-to-date with the funded projects to say is Youthstart is value for money.' *"I do believe the [funded project] money has benefited the young people."*

Future Opportunities for Youthstart

- E.8 'The ROA has probably had its day (and was always billed as a 3 year programme running until Mar 2008) but Youthstart has provided some valuable functions, like the information service, that are still needed'. *"A more radical look at the whole thing [services delivered by Moray Council] would be useful but unlikely to happen due to the vested interests of the groups."* (varied funding lines also limit what can be achieved even if an ideal system were devised).

On the future of the Partnership, people commented:

- *"It will be a shame if it [Youthstart] goes, particularly if it isn't replaced. Some areas might be covered but other agencies are too busy or don't have the resources."*
- 'I would prefer it if the Partnership continued and I think there is enough commitment and good will for it to continue in some way. It can only do good for smoothing access to ensure young people get the advice and support they need.'
- *"My boss might disagree but I think people will go back to working in their own little way without Youthstart. How many for example will attend the Partnership meetings when they aren't reliant on Youthstart funding?"*
- 'I predict activity will slow, if they happen at all, without Youthstart.'
- *"The Partnership will survive, if the organisations can access the funds needed."*

'If unconstrained, Youthstart could:

- Provide a central service for all services.
- Provide shared assessments (currently someone being assessed for housing might get similarly assessed several times by different departments).
- Support further integration of services.'

It was thought that 'there are still a number of disadvantaged young people who do not come into contact with the statutory services even though they might have multiple issues'. *"Young people fall through the gaps because some agencies are not fulfilling their commitment - or pass the buck"*.

One person simply said, *"more of the same"*. Noting that they had already commented on Youthstart's flexibility and ability to adapt to changing circumstances and they were not, therefore, suggesting that there should be no changes. As was pointed out to us, *"one of the reasons the ROA appears out-of-date and there are mismatches between aims and projects is partly because Youthstart has responded to changing circumstances"*.

At a working level it was observed that, ‘the practitioners know that what we’re doing doesn’t work but managers don’t seem to appreciate this. We need to do things differently’. This might be an isolated view but we liked the practical suggestion to hold a Practitioner’s Forum in the future. This would be an alternative way of airing, discussing and consolidating the views of young people from the people who are closest to them; *“We see the real issues and the frustrations”*.

Several comments are spread throughout this report about young people’s limited ability to influence community planning. Summed up by, *“where are young people’s voice being heard?”* A colleague added, *“Without Youthstart, TRAP will collapse”* and, *“What strategic debate has gone on for young people?”* These are not issues that affect just the disadvantaged, but vulnerable people receive a large share of the services and benefit from extra support so it would not be inappropriate for Youthstart to lead or make a significant contribution to these issues in the future.

“Without TRAP the views of disadvantaged young people will be represented by some of the other theme groups, eg carers, but these will need strengthening to make sure young people do not fall through the gaps.”