



Youth Opportunities Fund / Youth Capital Fund

Case Study: North Somerset

Summary

The Youth Capital Fund has enabled the local authority to take action to address the local need of young people and the opportunity to respond to a recent Ofsted inspection of the Youth Service that highlighted “the quality of premises is variable”. This has been supported by young people’s management of the Youth Opportunity Fund which has raised the profile of the council’s participation agenda.

What young people have been engaged?

Young people in a number of youth projects have been very involved in saying that their youth club needs updating, and this has seen significant capital money going into two projects at Portishead and Worle. The Portishead Voluntary Management Committee consisting of young people and adults had raised substantial funds, which have now been supported by the YCF to expand and refurbish the existing provision in Portishead. The grant allocated for Worle will be for a new facility.

The authority is moving into an integrated Youth Service and developing Children Centres. The Youth Service is a key player in setting up Children’s Centres, and is keen to develop them as Children & Young People’s Centres where appropriate and give young people new facilities of a higher standard in their local area.

Role and involvement of young people

The Youth Opportunity Fund criteria for applying and the application form were drafted by North Somerset Youth Parliament. To attract different groups of vulnerable young people to form a funding panel local specialist youth agencies and organisations were asked to nominate two young people. This resulted in a total of 15 young people coming together and receiving training on decision-making and briefings on Every Child Matters outcomes.

Once the funding panel was fully established they reviewed the criteria and application form to include the provision for applications to be made via video or tape recording in addition to the written forms.

Information on YOF has been circulated widely with all 87,000 homes in North Somerset receiving information through North Somerset Life magazine. This was supported with a newsletter to all youth voluntary, statutory and sports groups, and has resulted in a steady stream of applications to the funding panel.

Changes to public service delivery and lessons learnt

The Youth Capital Fund has proved a valuable vehicle to direct other Council Capital Programmes into youth centre buildings, and engage young people in the design and delivery of much bigger capital schemes than would be possible if the Fund is considered as a stand alone programme.

Paula Bromley, Youth Officer states “the Local Authority has prioritised Youth buildings in the council’s Capital Asset Programme and requires all capital monies to be spent in line with it and to meet the outcomes of Every Child Matters. The involvement of elected members has raised the profile of YCF, and is encouraging the participation of young people.”

Benefits and outcomes

Ian McMaster Senior Youth Worker-Participation “the funding applications have included a number of new initiatives designed by young people which been ‘pump-primed’ increasing the activities available to specific groups”. The young people are taking a responsible role with “adults are being shown that young people are capable of managing the funding process from start to finish and making rational, well considered decisions”. This evidence will influence the participation strategy of the Childrens Trusts.

The young peoples achievements have been accredited through North Somerset Award Scheme and six of the fifteen young people who gained their award are pictured here at a [Youth Awards Ceremony](#) -

Further details are available from:

Paula Bromley, Youth Officer, North Somerset Tel: 01934 644 075
E-mail: Paula.Bromley@n-somerset.gov.uk

Ian McMaster, Senior Youth Worker-Participation Tel: 01934 625 431
E-mail: Ian.McMaster@n-somerset.gov.uk

