

**REPORT TO:** Community Planning Implementation Group  
**MEETING DATE:** 16 June 2006  
**BY:** Chief Executive  
**SUBJECT:** Dialogue Youth

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform CPIG of the Council's desire to extend the successful Dialogue Youth project in East Lothian which is due to cease operations in August 2006.
- 1.2 The report also provides an outline proposal to allocate partnership capacity building funding in support of the Dialogue Youth project.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the CPIG notes the valuable contribution made by the Dialogue Youth project to date, both nationally and locally within East Lothian.
- 2.2 That the CPIG supports the outline proposal detailed in this report including the allocation of partnership capacity building monies.
- 2.3 That major partners including Health, Police and Communities Scotland follow the Council's lead in committing towards the funding shortfall identified in the report.
- 2.4 Subject to reaching agreement on recommendations 2.1 to 2.3 that the Council on behalf of the partnership takes steps to secure continuation of the Dialogue Youth project/staff in East Lothian until March 2009.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Dialogue Youth has operated in East Lothian for the past 3 years. East Lothian Council established a Dialogue Youth information Unit, to work with Young People, Council Departments and Partner Agencies, which opened in December 2004 in the Gardeners Cottage in Lewisvale Park, Musselburgh. A number of key services, (career services/Integration Teams/changes community health project/smartcard/schools) and many

other local and national services use the unit and have been involved in its development. A successful bid to the Scottish Executive's Modernising Government Fund funded this first year of work.

3.2 2<sup>nd</sup> year Funding came from Youth Justice to fund proposals to move forward on the following five key priorities areas:

- Involving young people
- Community Planning
- Outreach Youth work
- Health
- ICT

3.3 3rd year funding was identified from within the Changing Children's Services Fund (supported by the Chief Officers Group on Children's Services) and was used to build on the strengths of the initiative and particularly to target the involvement of voluntary sector organisations working with children and young people across East Lothian. We are fortunate in East Lothian to have staff already employed who have experience steering the original setting up of the Eke-Out project in Edinburgh City and we also have commitment from Community Learning and Development (CLD) staff, East Lothian Voluntary Organisations Network (ELVON) and Volunteer Development East Lothian (VDEL) to support the project and to make it work.

3.4 Some of this work contributed to the establishment of a Children and Young People's Compact, which it is hoped, will assist in developing and planning services for young people, children and their families. The project also sought to actively engage with children and young people by adopting a range of innovative methods in order that they can positively contribute to and inform Children's Services Planning, Community Planning and the Council's Strategy for Youth.

3.5 The Dialogue Youth Project gives a number of outputs that are key to community planning in East Lothian. Dialogue Youth activity has fostered partnership working to engage and involve young people throughout East Lothian. Some examples are outlined in the table below.

<p><b>East Lothian Youth futures event.</b> Dialogue youth event to bring together School Councils' and other young representatives from across East Lothian. The aim of the event was to engage young people in thinking about the future of their community and to facilitate the election of young people representatives who will have an opportunity to really play an active role in community planning and the development of youth services across East Lothian.</p> <p>Students from all 6 secondary schools and other local groups were involved in a 'Question Time' session. Representatives from Education, Children's Services, Police, Health, Community Services and the Arts faced some tough questions from the young people on the issues that affect them.</p> <p>The Scottish Youth Parliament provided interactive voting panels to allow the</p>
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students' views to be gathered on various topics. The results of this consultation will be fed to the relevant departments/services to allow them to consider young people's views when taking forward their plans.

The students also visited a 'Market Place' with representatives from various organisations on hand to offer information about their services (eg, Young Scot, Bridges Project, Anti-bullying East Lothian, LGBT, Volunteer Development East Lothian, CREW 2000, The Bridge Centre's Motorcycle and Music Projects', Healthy Respect and Lothian and Borders Police and Fire Services.) Delegates completed questionnaires to identify their areas of interest.

'Have Your Say' questionnaire returns will be followed up by inviting respondents to attend training sessions and ultimately, planning groups.

Full 'Youth Futures' Consultation results will be published on the Young Scot website at [www.youngscot.org/local/east\\_lothian/](http://www.youngscot.org/local/east_lothian/)

**Participation:** Youth Parliament/school council forums Big Lottery funds distribution/community councils /housing etc

**Health:** Food in Schools/Sports Centers/Mental Health/ Promoting Health and Well-being

**Sports/Leisure.** Skate parks/sports centers/dance etc

**Arts/Music/Drama** Web journalist for your area video photography/music

Part of the working group for the **Choosing Life conference** was on the 20th May 2006, at Musselburgh Racecourse. 'Mind Your Head' had over 100 people attending with a range of speakers and workshops on; Mental Health First Aid/Recovery/Bullying & Mental Health/Homelessness & Mental Health/Young Men & Suicide/Self Harm/ Promoting Mental Health in Schools/ Parenting & Mental Health/ Mental Health in the Workplace/ Suicide prevention. Very positive feedback had been received

**The Research & Resource Base** called 'The Gatehouse' was operational in Lewisvale Park, Musselburgh, 'The Gatehouse' works with young people gather information, for Council Departments and Partner Agencies and carry out research into youth issues in the local area to inform community-planning partners. Skate parks, health issues, transport, youth services and citizenship programmes are all taking place. There is also to be number of services based in this venue from outreach youth workers, health workers community development etc. which will work in partnership to support young people to participate, promote young people's rights and ensure all young people can have their say about services in East Lothian

Promoting young scot information on-line: East Lothian now has 16 pages of local information in the Young Scot books given to all young people when they get their smart cards.

Working with groups of young people Improving skills re computer and getting to know each other/improving communication through 'virtual socialisation.' Bridges Project (a local voluntary sector project) and Dialogue Youth/ Young Scot are putting their information on their websites. (This will also link with ELC/ELLP/Libraries/Careers Scotland etc)

- 3.6 The third and latest tranche of short term funding for the post runs out at the end of August and alternative funding solutions must be identified

quickly to avoid the project coming to a close. Unfortunately, despite having been the subject of a budget development bid, due to many competing priorities it was not possible to incorporate any new funding within the Council's 2006-07 budget.

- 3.7 A total of £1m was distributed nationally to local authorities, on behalf of Community Planning Partnerships in February 2003, to spend on activities to increase the capacity of organisations to work effectively together to support Community Planning. In East Lothian we ultimately managed to secure approximately £35K from the Scottish Executive on the understanding that partners would need to collectively match this on a £ for £ basis. To date, partners have made further contributions either specifically in relation to earmarked projects such as the healthcheck or more generally towards costs of running the partnership publications and conferences. The Council's finance team have confirmed that although no additional contributions were received during 2005/06, a significant level of resource remains at the partnership's disposal.
- 3.8 There are not any known restrictions imposed with these funds and it is likely that the existing Dialogue Youth Project would legitimately meet many of the partnership capacity building objectives. Youth work principles and priorities can contribute significantly to both an individual's and a group's capacity to engage effectively with the key decision makers and service providers that make up the Community Planning Partnership. It is therefore vital that the partnership recognises young people as a key group of service users and that they are provided with an effective means of expressing their views. Engagement can also be regarded as a vital component in developing the individual's role within citizenship. Promotion of citizenship via the Dialogue Youth Unit and in conjunction with the voluntary sector should be valued and protected.
- 3.9 Should the partnership agree to support continuation of the Dialogue Youth Unit it would be wise to review (and if necessary modify) the existing project remit and objectives ensuring a meaningful and effective alignment with Community Planning structures.
- 3.10 Following discussion between senior officials within the Council there is widespread recognition of the achievements made via the Dialogue Youth Unit and a strong support for their continuation. An outline funding proposal has been prepared that if supported, would secure the project through until March 2009. Effectively this would require the allocation of the majority of the remaining partnership capacity building funds as well as additional but relatively smaller contributions from the Council and other statutory partners. Details of the proposed funding requirement are provided in the table below.

	2006/07 £	2007/08 £	2008/09 £	Total £
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Staffing	22,290	39,355	40,535	102,180
Gatehouse	2,915	5,150	5,305	13,370
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,205</b>	<b>44,505</b>	<b>45,840</b>	<b>115,550</b>
<b>Funding</b>				
CPP-CBF	14,375	24,205	25,230	63,810
ELC (CS)	2,915	5,150	5,305	13,370
ELC (E&CS)	2,915	5,150	5,305	13,370
Other Partners	5,000	10,000	10,000	25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,205</b>	<b>44,505</b>	<b>45,840</b>	<b>115,550</b>

- 3.11 It is hoped that the CPIG will also hear a presentation made by Davy Jones from CoSLA/Young Scot in relation to achievements both nationally and locally. It is anticipated this will also assist CPIG members with their deliberations on this proposal.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 If supported, the report recommendations sit comfortably with the emerging vision and objectives already supported by the partnership. Of most importance they provide real substance to the inclusion of a meaningful youth perspective and input to the work of the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Financial – the resource implications for both the partnership and individual agencies are identified within the table in Section 3.10. For the partnership, support for the proposals would represent a major but affordable funding commitment in relation to available capacity building monies. The consequences/implications of additional contributions required of individual partners would need to be considered by partners themselves although it is important to note that the proposal as currently drafted does require additional financial commitments to be confirmed.
- 5.2 Personnel – there are staffing implications for the Dialogue Youth project, which, should support be given, the Council would be prepared to act as lead agency to oversee.
- 5.3 Other – none

## 6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 Dialogue Youth background reports - a number of project reports have been produced over the lifetime of the project and these can be made available on request.
- 6.2 Report to JOG 23 January 2004 - Capacity Building Monies

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