The Role of the Area Youth Project Steering Group

What are we about?
The BELB youth service seeks to work with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development. We will also work to enable young people to gain a voice, influence their place in society in a period of transition from dependence to interdependence.

How do we do it?
We have 324 paid youth work posts and approximately 360 volunteers working for the benefit of young people in the city. We also have more than 200 registered youth groups.

What do we provide?
In Belfast we work directly with young people who attend the many youth centres and provide financial assistance and support to those centres. Each year we provide a range of training opportunities for adults involved in youth work, as well as a raft of courses for young people on issues such as personal development, inclusivity, communication skills, leadership, health and drug education. We also have 4 area based youth projects that work in partnership with communities across the city.

The 4 area teams operate within the 4 geographical areas of the city. They work in partnership with other key stakeholders to deliver programmes for marginalised young people and are accountable to a local steering group.

Steering Group Membership

The senior youth worker with the support of steering group members will identify individuals who have a demonstrable interest in the personal development of young people in the local area.

The members of the area youth project steering group shall be drawn from the following areas:

- Parents
- Young people
- Local residents
- Representatives of local community organisations
- Statutory bodies
- Local politicians
- Local businesses
- Youth workers in the local area
- Staff team (if and when appropriate)
- Belfast Education and Library Board area youth officer

The steering group should comprise a minimum of 12 persons. One third of the membership (excluding the staff team) of the steering group will constitute a quorum at meetings of the meetings.

The Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) youth service shall reserve the right to attend all meetings.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: senior youth officer Stephen Moore or area youth officers:
- Pauline Smart, south and east Belfast
- John McLaughlin, west Belfast
- Alan Wilson, north Belfast
  Tel 02890 564000
It is the Role of the Steering Group to:

- Give guidance and support to the project staff.
- Help prioritise and direct the work of the staff team.
- Help raise the profile of the area project.
- Share local knowledge and experience to ensure resources are targeted effectively.
- Ensure there is a co-ordinated and effective response to the needs of young people in the project’s geographical area.
- Help co-ordinate both statutory and community provision and resources.
- Consider long term needs set out in the Area Action Plan, ensuring that there is a strategic response to those needs.
- Lobby the appropriate agencies for resources on behalf of the project.
- Ensure the work of the project reflects the youth work curriculum laid down in the 'Model for Effective Practice'.
- Agree the project’s Unit Action Plan.
- Assist in the monitoring and evaluating of Unit Action Plan.

Steering Group Procedures:

The senior youth worker (SYW) will act as administrator to the steering group. It is therefore the role of the SYW to ensure the following procedures are adopted and followed:

- The group will elect a chairperson and vice chairperson at its first meeting or annual review day.
- The Chairperson should follow a previously circulated agenda.
- Minutes must be taken of all meetings.
- Agendas will be set by the SYW in agreement with the chairperson. The projects administration support worker (or other staff) may be utilised to take minutes.
- The agenda and minutes should normally be forwarded to group members at least 1 week in advance of steering group meeting.
- Meetings should be held bi-monthly; there will therefore be a minimum of 4 meetings per year. The steering group will not normally meet during the months of July and August.
- The SYW may call an extraordinary meeting at the request of chairperson/vice chairperson.
- The timing of meetings should encourage the attendance of young people.
- A meeting should last no longer than 2 hours.
- The SYW should present a work update at each meeting.
- An annual review day should be held to help evaluate the project’s work and to consider the steering group membership.