

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Monday 10 December 2007

at 4.30pm

**in the Red Room at
the Avondale Centre, Dyke House School
(Raby Road entrance)**

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors S Cook, Coward, Fleet, Griffin, A E Lilley, London, Plant, Preece, Shaw, Simmons and Worthy

Co-opted Members: Elizabeth Barraclough and David Relton

Leigh Bradley, Jonathan Simpson, Chris Lund, Kelly Goulding, Cassie Jeffries and Gillian Pounder

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge, Evelyn Leck and Michael Ward

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November (attached) and 19 November 2007 (to follow)
- 4. SHORT ICE BREAKER EXERCISE**
- 5. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.

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6. CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No items.

7. FORWARD PLAN

No items.

8. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No items.

9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'

9.1 Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – *Director of Children's Services*

9.2 Evidence from Hartlepool Constellation:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Presentation by support workers and users of the Hartlepool Constellation group.

9.3 Evidence from a Selection of Organisations that Support Vulnerable Children / Young People and their Families in Hartlepool:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Verbal Evidence from a Selection of Organisations in Hartlepool (Subject to Response from Written Invitations and Press Release).

9.4 Consultations with Groups Representing Residents from Minority Communities of Interest or Heritage:-

(a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Verbal Evidence from representatives from Groups Representing Residents from Minority Communities of Interest or Heritage (Subject to Response from the Invitation Extended).

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9.5 Feedback from Seminar (Everyone is Born In – Including People with Disabilities): -

(a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*, and

(b) Feedback from Seminar by the Chair of the Forum and one of the Forum's Co-opted Members.

10. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of Next Meeting, Monday, 7 January 2008 commencing at 4.00 pm in the Avondale Centre, Dyke House, Raby Road, Hartlepool

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

5 November 2007

The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm in the Maritime Experience, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Jane Shaw (In the Chair)

Councillors: Shaun Cook, Mary Fleet, Sheila Griffin,
Alison E Lilley, Frances London, Christopher Simmons and
Gladys Worthy

Co-opted Members:

Elizabeth Barraclough

Resident Representatives:

John Cambridge

Officers:

John Mennear, Assistant Director (Community Services)
John Robinson, Children's Fund Manager
Peter Davies, Principal Youth Worker
Stephen Haley, Head of Finance, Children's Services
Alan Kell, Project Manager, Children's Services
Jonathan Wistow, Scrutiny Support Officer
Tracy Liveras, Young People and Play Co-ordinator
Danielle Swainston, Early Years Manager
Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present:

Beth Hawkrigge, Barnardos
Stuart Thompson, Boys Brigade
Eric Priest, Sea Cadets
Rebecca Wise, West View Project
Dave Wise, West View Project
Joseph Waugh, West View Project
Toni Mason, West View Project
Michelle Mincher, West View Project
Arran Frame, West View Project
Tom Rayner, Eldon Grove Tennis Club
Decker Dunlop, Consultant
Alex Sedgewick, Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre
Brian Carter, Scouts

39. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Co-opted Member David Relton, Resident Representatives Evelyn Leck and Mike Ward and Young People Representatives, Leigh Bradley and Chris Lund.

40. Declarations of interest by Members

None

41. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2007

Confirmed

42. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None

43. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None

44. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

None

45. Scrutiny Investigation into Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools – Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer)

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a scoping report for the Forum's investigation into Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools. Background information relating to the referral, as outlined in the report was provided.

The aim of the investigation

To gain an understanding of the key issues involved in sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools and suggest areas for improvement.

The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were proposed:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of the role of the local authority in relation to sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the role of schools in relation to sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools;
- (c) To consider what good practice / guidance, if any, exists for sustaining externally funded community initiatives;
- (d) To explore the role of Sport England as the funding body for community initiatives in schools;
- (e) To consider how the Authority's community leadership role should be interpreted in terms of the sustainability of community initiatives in schools; and
- (f) To identify suggestions for improvement / future management processes geared to enhancing the sustainability of community funded initiatives, in schools.

Potential Areas of Enquiry/Sources of Evidence

- (a) Portfolio Holder for Children's Services;
- (b) Officers from the Children's Services Department;
- (c) Independent Advice / guidance from consultant;
- (d) Head Teachers from Brougham, Owton Manor, Stranton and West View Primary Schools;
- (e) Ward Councillors; and
- (f) Resident Representatives.

Members were advised of the tight timescales for completing this review, details of which were included in the report. Consideration had been given, through the background research for this scoping report to the need to request funding from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry. Members' views were sought with regard to the request for funding as detailed in the pro-forma attached at Appendix A, which outlined the criteria and the reasons for seeking additional funding. The Scrutiny Support Officer highlighted an amendment to Appendix A in relation to the proposed costs as a result of additional support at £350 per day and sought approval to the appointment of an independent consultant for up to 3 days.

Discussion ensued in relation to the sources of evidence and queried why all

the schools in the town had not been included. Members were advised that this would be explored at the next stage of the scrutiny programme.

Members agreed the potential sources of enquiry/sources of evidence as outlined in the report with the addition of consultation with governing bodies..

Recommendation

- (i) The proposed remit of the investigation was agreed as outlined in the report and the potential areas of enquiry/sources of evidence approved with the addition of consultation with governing bodies.
- (ii) That additional funding be sought from the dedicated overview and scrutiny budget to assist the Forum in their enquiry as detailed above.
- (iii) That the comments of the Forum be used to assist with the scrutiny investigation.

46. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool – Evidence from the West View Project *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the Forum's ongoing investigation into Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool representatives from the West View Project had been invited to attend the meeting to provide a presentation which focused on the following:-

- Background to the West View Project
- Types of activities provided
- Age range – 8 to 24s
- Opening hours
- Barriers – dark nights, lack of funding
- Enjoyable activities – free play, visits to Marina, water sports

AT THIS POINT IN THE MEETING COUNCILLOR CHRIS SIMMONS DECLARED A PERSONAL AND NON PREJUDICIAL INTEREST AS A COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BOARD OF THE WEST VIEW PROJECT.

Discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised:-

- (i) What type of assistance/guidance was provided. The representative advised that assistance was provided to young people with social problems. All staff were volunteers who had completed youth work training programmes.
- (ii) Members commented on the excellent work and facilities provided and highlighted the need to support this project.

- (iii) In response to a query regarding the current number of members, it was reported that activities were delivered to schools and the project had been involved with over 4,000 people the previous year. There was a current membership of over 40 children/young people.
- (iv) The issue of facilities for children/young people with special needs and disabilities was discussed.
- (v) The lack of funding to the voluntary sector, the risks of staff redundancies as well as the need for Council funding was highlighted. It was suggested that the Council should ensure funding was accessible to allow voluntary organisations to continue to operate. The Chair added that the Forum would be considering the budget at the next meeting and suggested that a report regarding funding be discussed at a future meeting of the Forum. A representative from the Boys Brigade pointed out that voluntary organisations received no funding or concessions from the Council for the hire of Council facilities.
- (vi) Do you have any views in relation to Free Play (somewhere to "hang out"). The young people representatives advised that they enjoyed organised activities, making things and the opportunity to talk and listen to music. The Principal Youth Worker added that recent studies had indicated that children/young people required space with support and advice from skilled and sensitive staff.

The Forum supported the comments and highlighted the need for both organised and free play.

Recommendation

That the information given, be noted and discussions be used to assist the Forum in completing the scrutiny investigation.

47. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool – Evidence from a Selection of Providers of Organised Recreation Activities in Hartlepool – Covering Report (Scrutiny Support Officer)

As part of the Forum's ongoing investigation into Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool representatives from groups providing organised recreation activities, including uniformed organisations had been invited to the meeting. Representatives from the Boys Brigade, Sea Cadets, Boy Scouts, Eldon Grove Tennis Club and Belle Vue Centre were in attendance.

The representative from the Boy Scouts provided background information

relating to the organisation, number of members and the types of activities provided which included pot holing, rock climbing, arts and crafts, assistance with employment prospects as well as involvement with fund raising. The aim of the group was to contribute to the development of young people and encourage fun and enjoyment. Members were advised that the scouts employed 198 people nationally, however, there was a huge reliance on volunteers. As there was no other funding provision, there was a reliance on grant funding.

A representative from the Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre gave details on the types of activities and services provided for children/young people as well as the ageing community which included support to young people with behavioural or emotional problems, music, drama and family befriending projects.

A representative from Eldon Grove Tennis Club advised that the club had 200 members in the summer, however, membership was limited in the winter months as there were no indoor facilities. There were links with schools in the town and the facility was self funded with the exception of grant funding. Members were advised that there was a high demand for the service, however, assistance was required in terms of facilities as there was no access to Council facilities at weekends.

A representative from the Sea Cadets reported that the Sea Cadets was a registered charity with no direct funding. Facilities were provided for 50 Sea Cadets between the ages of 10 and 18. Details of the skills and qualifications obtained were outlined.

A representative from the Boys Bridge gave details of the types of activities and services provided and expressed concerns regarding the lack of funding provision.

In response to a Member's question on how the organisations advertised their services, the representatives indicated that services were advertised mainly through word of mouth, local press, local radio, activity leaflets, website, local libraries and posters.

In conclusion, the Forum sought the representatives' views on what could be done to improve the provision of organised recreation services/activities in Hartlepool. The Forum was advised that in addition to the issues previously outlined, security for staff, concessions for use of Council facilities as well as funding assistance would assist with improvements to the services and activities currently provided.

The Forum acknowledged the benefits these services brought to the town and suggested that they be supported.

Recommendation

That the information given, be noted and discussions be used to assist the Forum in completing the scrutiny investigation.

JANE SHAW

CHAIRMAN

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

19 November 2007

The meeting commenced at 5.00 p.m. in the Avondale Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Jane Shaw (In the Chair)

Councillors: Shaun Cook, Sheila Griffin, Frances London, Michelle Plant,
Christopher Simmons and Gladys Worthy

Co-opted Member: Elizabeth Barraclough

Resident Representative: John Cambridge.

Young People's Representatives:
Leigh Bradley, Kelly Goulding, Hannah Shaw and Chris Lund.

Also present: Councillor Cath Hill, Children's Services Portfolio Holder

Officers: Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
Charlotte Burnham Scrutiny Support Officer
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

48. Apologies for Absence

Councillors Mary Fleet and Arthur Preece, Co-opted Member David Relton,
and Resident Representatives Evelyn Leck and Michael Ward

49. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

50. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

51. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

52. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents – Children's Services Department: Budget and Policy Framework Initial Consultation Proposals 2008/09 - Scrutiny Manager

The Scrutiny Manager reported that At its meeting on 15th October, 2007, Cabinet determined the initial 2008/2009 budget proposals it wishes to put forward for consultation. The overall report submitted to Cabinet was considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 2nd November, 2007 which, determined to consider these proposals on a departmental basis. Accordingly, the details submitted to this forum were as follows:

Appendix A – Schedule of Budget Pressures 2008/2009

Appendix B – Schedule of 2008/2009 Budget Pressures Treated as Contingency Items

Appendix C – Schedule of Budget Priorities 2008/2009

Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee has also determined a timetable for Scrutiny's initial involvement in the budget process and the comments of this forum would be fed to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 23 November. Scrutiny's comments would then be fed into a meeting of Cabinet scheduled to be held on 17 December 2007.

The Director of Children's Services, Adrienne Simcock and the Children's Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Cath Hill were present at the meeting. The Director outlined the issues set out in the three appendices to the report.

Appendix A

Children and Families – Placements - Costs of increased numbers of looked after children - £507,000

Children and Families – Preventative Care – Children coming into care linked to drug issues within families - £40,000

Children and Families – Placements – Shortfall in Special Guardianship Order savings - £60,000

Children and Families – Placement Team Staffing – Additional Social Care Staffing - £133,000 plus a one-off cost of £40,000 to relocate the Leaving Care team to the Connexions Office.

The Forum questioned the budget pressure put forward by the Director. The Director indicated that the department was facing significant additional pressure due to the numbers of looked after children. Historically the authority had looked after 120 – 125 children a year. That number had now increased to over 150 and the number was not seen as temporary 'blip'. This placed

significant additional pressures on the budget and also accounted for the need for additional social care staffing. The numbers of children coming into care linked to drug issues within families was linked to the Police becoming involved much earlier in family situations with officers trained in family protection issues.

Members questioned if the authority had enough foster carers. The Director indicated that the authority had undertaken a recruitment drive in the recent past to meet the previous demand. These carers were much better trained than in the past. The authority was having to use more agency workers to cover the demand and this was incurring significantly higher costs.

The additional staffing related to a Manager and two Social Workers to cover the additional workload. There were strict guidelines on the manager/worker ratio. Members were concerned at the relocation costs of £40,000. The Director commented that this was in line with the Council's accommodation policy and would involve staff moving out of Station Lane. There was comment that these costs may be reduced as more firm estimates became available as the budget process continued.

Members expressed the view that the protection of these vulnerable children was an essential role for the authority.

The Director indicated in the meeting that there were likely to be additional pressures linked to the additional children in the care system. These related to school transport (£30,000) and legal costs (£60,000). The Director stated that these additional costs would be factored into the pressures reported to cabinet.

Members indicated their general support for the issues raised in Appendix A.

Appendix B

Performance and Achievement – School Improvement Partners - £20,000

Members questioned why this could not be funded by the schools themselves. The Director indicated that it would be difficult to deal with this grant in isolation. The Director highlighted that there were a number of other grants that would cease next year. The service provided by this grant was one the schools had to have and the local authority had an obligation to set up the appropriate arrangements. Until the authority could see how all the grants came through from central government it was difficult to say how the services should be approached. Grants were most likely to fall in cash terms, so consideration may have to be given to ceasing some services next year.

Appendix C

Human Resources and Developing Services (HRDS) Grant - £40,000
Parenting Commissioners Grant - £14,000

The Director commented that the pressures in the area were difficult to predict. Information was only just starting to come through that may reveal a

reduction in the National Strategies Grant of £200,000. This situation may only become clear in the run up to Christmas. Members were concerned at the staff that this could affect and asked if the majority of these staff were on fixed term contracts linked to the term of the grant regimes. The Director commented that many had been with the authority over three years and were effectively permanent and subject to redundancy. There was the potential that for some services, the grant may end but schools would still want to buy in to the central service. It was, however, a very worrying time. Councillor Cath Hill, Children's Services Portfolio Holder, commented that there were some areas where the authority was faced with no choice but to either pick up the services with schools buying in, or reduce or even end some services.

Members indicated their support in principle to the issues outlined by the Director of Children's Services.

The Scrutiny Manager summarised the forum's comments, as they would be reported to the meeting of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 23 November 2007.

Recommendation

1. The Forum supported in principle the increasing pressures, contingencies and grant terminations of the Children's Services Department.
2. Members acknowledged that such proposals were likely to increase pending confirmation of grant awards and additional service pressures.

53. Items for Discussion

None.

JANE SHAW

CHAIRMAN

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

10 December 2007



Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO 'ACCESS TO
RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL' –
VULNERABLE CHILDREN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information on access to recreation for children and young people who are vulnerable due to special needs, poor life chances or disadvantage.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 16 July 2007 the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved for the Forum's 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' investigation.
- 2.2 The agreed definition does not exclude any children and young people other than by age. In order that members have a clear view of activities provided for vulnerable children it was agreed that the meeting on 10th December will focus on how we support children who have additional needs or are in some way perceived as vulnerable.
- 2.3 This report has combined information from a number of organisations who provide services for vulnerable children. The Forum will also hear evidence from some providers. This report is not an exhaustive list of services but attempts to give a view of what is available in Hartlepool for vulnerable children at the current time.

3. EXISTING RESOURCES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Statutory Services

- 3.1 **Looked after Children** - Staff in the Settled Care Team have provided comments from young people that suggest that looked after children are able to access services which meet their needs, with support from their carers or Children's Services staff. The experience of staff seems to be that whatever the young person has asked for they have been able to find. Our young people attend a wide range of activities including street dancing, drumming, scouts, Young Firefighters, Sea Cadets, football, gym, badminton, drama, boxing and swimming.
- 3.2 The gaps seem to be during school holidays particularly for young people of secondary age. We arrange some activities of our own at these times. Suggestions are: football tournaments/games in the parks and activities such as fixing/maintaining bikes and art based groups.
- 3.3 **Connexions** - Connexions Positive Activities for young People Programme provides a plethora of out of school activities for individual young people, groups and whole family activities including evenings, weekends and school holidays - including the Christmas break.
- 3.4 Following recommendations within the JAR many of these activities now form part of broader accredited programmes through either Open College Network or Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.
- 3.5 Accredited courses include the below which continue to grow in relation to the ideas and aspirations of the programmes users:-
- (a) Healthy and Hygienic Cooking on a Budget Courses;
 - (b) Personal Development Courses;
 - (c) Preparation for Employment Courses;
 - (d) Outdoor Activity Courses;
 - (e) Peer Mentoring Courses; and
 - (f) Physical Fitness Courses.
- 3.6 General activity programmes have incorporated opportunities such as:
- (a) Residential experience;
 - (b) Overnight Camping;
 - (c) Overnight River Tees Barge Ecology activities;
 - (d) 2-3 Day European Educational Trips;
 - (e) Moor Expeditions;
 - (f) Canoeing;
 - (g) Kayaking;
 - (h) Bell Boating;
 - (i) Gorge Walking;
 - (j) Rock Climbing;
 - (k) Orienteering;
 - (l) Hill Walking;

- (m) Country Trekking;
- (n) Skiing;
- (o) Sea Fishing;
- (p) Motorcycle Maintenance;
- (q) Caving;
- (r) Mountain Biking;
- (s) Archery;
- (t) White Water Rafting;
- (u) Sailing;
- (v) High level Rope Activities;
- (w) Cultural visits – museums;
- (x) Photography;
- (y) Cartoon Workshops;
- (z) Creative Writing Workshops;
- (aa) Safety Awareness; and
- (bb) Fire Education Programmes

3.7 Alongside this the programme also provides financial and staff contribution to both the Hartlepool Interventions Project and FAST teams to ensure that vulnerable young people supported by these projects have access to all of the above.

3.8 **The Youth Service** - In addition to our ongoing open programmes of work in our projects and mobile / detached there is:

- (a) Work with young carers - Rossmere Centre - Wednesday 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm;
- (b) PHAB group - Rossmere Centre - Wednesday 7.00 pm to 9.00pm;
- (c) Duke of Edinburgh's Award - Catcote School - Bronze Award 15 young people;
- (d) Midnight Football BME young people - Rossmere Monday 12.00 midnight;
- (e) Throston Project are establishing links with Exmoor Grove to establish work at the project on Sunday evenings;
- (f) Helen White has spoken with staff at Springwell School regarding participative work;
- (g) Ongoing daytime partnership working with Brierton School, Connexions, High Tunstall School and Dyke House School offering support to pupils who are in need of additional support;
- (h) Project worker at Rossmere Centre oversees programmes of work for young people from Bangladeshi community on Sunday afternoons at the centre; and

- (i) Partnership with Connexions with referred young people who are in the NEET category.
- 3.9 **Sport and Leisure** - Concessionary category for the Active Card children in foster care and their carers.
- 3.10 Concessionary charges for all activities "means tested" for want of a better expression - all children automatically included subsidised activities during school holiday periods - instructional programmes - also free junior swimming Disability Sports Officer in post - development programme more about "Inclusion" not only within HBC but also the voluntary sector rather than providing exclusive activities.
- 3.11 Work in partnership with Hartlepool Sportability Club - providing activity opportunities to young (and adult) with disabilities.
- 3.12 Football Development programme created around the issue of inclusion - some good examples - Hartlepool U18 League created in partnership with the FAST team out of anti-social behaviour hot-spots.
- 3.13 Work with Youth Offending and Connexions - Outdoor Activity Programme DIP Physical activity project.
- 3.14 **Children's Fund** - Since opening its first services in November 2001 Hartlepool Children's Fund has worked with 901 children and has pioneered the development of a range of preventative services for vulnerable children that have had a major impact on services to children and their families across the town. The key principles of providing referred services through the voluntary sector and ensuring service users are central to programme development has culminated in the provision of wide ranging locally accessible activities. Children's Fund has three Activity Centres that provide out of school activities. These are based at Belle Vue, West View and Manor Residents. There is also a one to one mentoring programme run by Barnardos Hartbeat. The Children's Fund also supports parents of vulnerable children.

Voluntary Sector Services

- 3.15 **Barnardos B76 Project** has been involved in the provision of programmes of activities during half-term and summer holidays for vulnerable young people referred by Connexions. It is currently unclear as to whether the funding for these projects will continue in future. B76 also have two evening YIP/Artreach groups, that are run on an outreach basis in the Manor and Dyke House areas with young people as part of the crime reduction strategy and a voluntary evening group for young people who require additional support around emotional wellbeing.
- 3.16 **The Hartlepool Families First SNIPs Project** provides an after schools club at Belle Vue Centre for pupils of Springwell school. This project provides an opportunity for some young people who are facing real challenges in their lives to participate in a range of individually tailored activities supported by

caring adults. The Manager of Families First has been invited to attend the forum to join the discussion on activities.

- 3.17 **Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group** provides a range of services to families who have children with special needs. This service that is run from its own base on Park Road, includes drama and music as core activities.
- 3.18 **Belle Vue Project runs "The Fun 4 All Club"** and is currently running four sessions per week with a further three in the pipeline for the New Year, pending funding. The project is continuing to reach vulnerable children and young people in the NDC area, providing a safe and secure environment with supportive staff. The sessions are getting attendances in excess of 170 children and young people per week across the four sessions (not including Smart Kids at Grange Road).
- 3.19 **West View Project** offers its range of youth clubs for 8-15 year olds that are accessible at the following times. The senior club specifically targets those in Y7 and Y8 at secondary school:-
- Monday: 5.00 pm - 7.00 pm (8 – 11 years) and 7 - 9 (11-15 years)
 Tuesday: 5.00 pm - 7.30 pm (8 - 11 girls only)
 Wednesday: 5.00 pm - 7.00 pm (8 – 11 years) and 7 - 9 (11-15 years)
 Thursday: - 5.00 pm - 7.30 pm (8 - 11 boys only)
 Friday: 5.00 pm - 7.00 pm (8 – 11 years) and 7 - 9 (11-15 years)
- 3.20 In addition to the youth clubs we offer the projects that are linked to the **AIMS project, the outreach and development projects**. These projects support vulnerable young people both in their personal development and to overcome barriers to learning and moving into further education. These projects operate throughout the year including school holiday times. For young people who are particularly vulnerable our Children's Fund work can support access to the youth clubs and allow those young people who wouldn't otherwise access a youth centre or other support.
- 3.21 **The adventurous activity project** has also worked with a range of organisations who support those young people who are in care and also young people who are at risk of offending.

4. **USAGE OF ORGANISED RECREATION ACTIVITIES BY VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL**

- 4.1 The Forum will take evidence from a range of key stakeholders during this meeting.

5. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 That Members note the information provided and consider the opportunities open to vulnerable children accessing recreational activities.

Contact Officer:- John Robinson – Senior Children's Services Officer
Children's Services Department
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523348
Email: john.robinson@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Scoping Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 16 July 2007);
- (ii) Setting the Scene Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 20 August 2007);
- (iii) Aiming High for Young People: A Ten Year Strategy for Positive Activities – July 2007 (Department of Children, Schools and Families)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

10 December 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL
- EVIDENCE FROM HARTLEPOOL
CONSTELLATION – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that representatives from Hartlepool Constellation have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 16 July 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence for its investigation into access to recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool. The categories of recreation activities to be explored during the investigation were further defined by the Forum on the 1 October 2007 as being:-

- (i) Organised activities (e.g. Scouts and Guides, etc.);
- (ii) Free play (e.g. meeting friends); and
- (iii) Other Interests (e.g. stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making).

- 2.2 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of support worker and service users of groups that provide recreation activities for vulnerable children / young people. To assist in obtaining these views Hartlepool Constellation have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence on:-

- (i) The services / activities they provide and who they are aimed at;
- (ii) Who takes advantage of the services / activities;
- (iii) What the future holds for the group;

- (iv) What their service users feel are the barriers to accessing your services / activities;
- (v) What has been done to make their services / activities more accessible?

2.3 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-

- (a) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool?
- (b) What would you like to see done to improve the provision of organised recreation services / activities in Hartlepool?
- (c) Do you have any views in relation to 'Free Play' which could be fed into the Forums discussions on the issue at the meeting on the 21 January 2008?
- (d) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Members note the presentation and consider the information provided during the formulation of the Forums final report.

Contact Officers:- Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Scoping Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 16 July 2007);
- (ii) Setting the Scene Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 20 August 2007);
- (iii) Results of Existing Consultations and Research - Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 1 October 2007).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

5 November 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL - EVIDENCE FROM A SELECTION OF GROUPS SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that, representatives from a selection of groups in Hartlepool that provide support for vulnerable children and their families, together with service users, have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of representatives from groups that provide support for vulnerable children and their families, and their service users, in relation to the access to recreation facilities in Hartlepool. To assist in obtaining these views written invitations have been extended to groups identified by the Forum during its scoping of the investigation. A wider invitation has also been extended to groups in Hartlepool through a recent press release.
- 2.2 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
- (a) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool?

- (b) What services / activities do you provide and who they are aimed at?
- (c) What do your service users feel are the barriers to accessing organised recreation services / activities?
- (d) What would you like to see done to improve the provision of organised recreation services / activities in Hartlepool?
- (e) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Forum consider the views of those in attendance at this meeting in relation to the questions outlined in Section 2.2 of this report.

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- (ii) Setting the Scene Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 20 August 2007);
- (iii) Results of Existing Consultations and Research - Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 1 October 2007).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

10 December 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL – CONSULTATIONS WITH GROUPS REPRESENTING RESIDENTS FROM MINORITY COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST OR HERITAGE – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Forum of the views received from a selection of groups representing residents from minority communities of interest or heritage on the issue of Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of groups representing residents from minority communities of interest or heritage. To assist in obtaining these views, and raise awareness of the Forum's up and coming meetings, the Scrutiny Support Officer attended meetings of the All Ability Forum, the Talking with Communities group, the and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) group, on the 5 September 2007, 28 November 2007 and the 3 December 2007, respectively. The views expressed at each of these meetings are outlined in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 At each of these meetings contact details were provided and views sought. A formal invitation was also extended to all members of the group to attend today's meeting to submit evidence of a local perspective to the Forum (subject to availability). At the time of production of this report no responses had yet been received and an update on this situation will be provided at the meeting.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1** That the Forum consider the views expressed by representatives from groups representing minority communities of interest or heritage at today's meeting and their respective meetings on the 5 September 2007, 28 November 2007 and the 3 December 2007.

Contact Officer:- Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer
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ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL

Additional Information – Consultations with Groups Representing Residents from Minority Communities of Interest or Heritage

1. Talking with Communities

1.1 Views expressed at the meeting held on the 5 September were as follows:-

- (i) The group identified the main barriers to accessing recreation facilities as being physical accessibility, transportation, parking for parents with disabilities and personal safety;
- (ii) The provision of facilities / activities which children and young people with disabilities can access alongside their peers during evening and holidays is very important;
- (iii) The Council needs to have the vision to provide quality of provision over quantity;
- (iv) The drop off of suitable transport for young people with disabilities to access recreation activities is a real problem; and
- (v) A lack of information about what is on can be a problem and often you can only find out when you already know where to look.

2. The All Ability Forum

2.1 No comments available at the time of distribution of these papers. Update to be provided at the meeting.

3. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

3.1 No comments available at the time of distribution of these papers. Update to be provided at the meeting.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

10 December 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL – FEEDBACK FROM RECENT SEMINAR

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To enable the Chair of the Forum, and one of the Forum's Co-opted Members, to feedback information and views obtained at a recent seminar on the provision of recreation activities for vulnerable children and young people.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of support workers and users of groups that support vulnerable children and their families in relation to provision of recreation activities in Hartlepool. To assist in obtaining these views the Chair of the Forum, and one of the Forum's Co-opted Members, attended a seminar entitled 'Everyone is Born In – Including People with Disabilities' on the 24 November 2007. During the course of the seminar responses to the following questions were sought:-
- (a) What do you feel are the barriers vulnerable children / young people and their families experience in accessing recreation services / activities nationally, regionally and in Hartlepool?
 - (b) What would you like to see done to improve the provision of recreation services / activities for vulnerable children and young people in Hartlepool?

- (c) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?
- 2.2 Feedback on the responses received to these questions, and any other issues that might have arisen, are outlined in **Appendix A** (to follow). This will be supported by verbal feedback at the meeting by the Chair of the Forum and Liz Baradough (Co-opted member of the Forum).
- 2.3 In addition to this, on 19 September 2007, a group of parents of young disabled children were asked to identify what a fun day out is and details of the responses received are outlined for the Forum's information in **Appendix B**.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Forum considers the views expressed in response to the questions outlined in Section 2.1 of this report.

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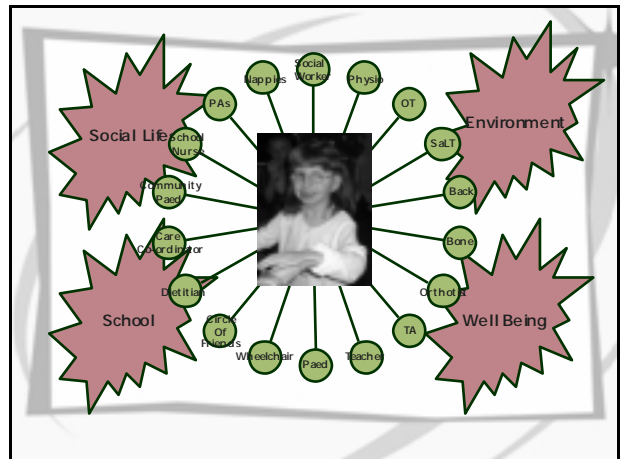
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- (ii) Results of Existing Consultations and Research - Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 1 October 2007).

Everyone is Born In...feedback from a regional event held on 24th November 2007

Liz Barraclough
10th December 2007



"Everyone is born in..."

showed how Nigel moved from isolation into inclusion using person centred planning



John O'Brien linked the play to his experiences over 30 years of working with people with learning disabilities and made it relevant to people's concerns raised (please see handouts of his slides)



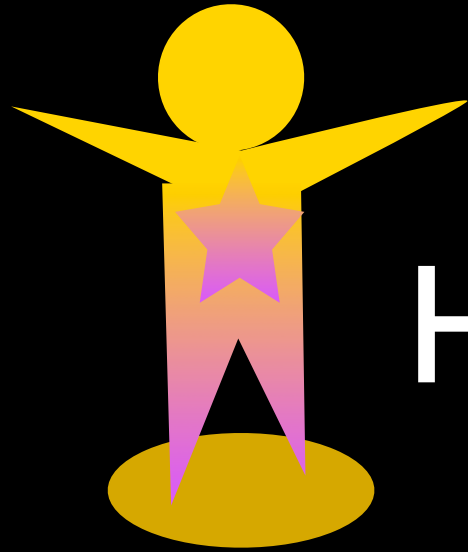
The day ended with a performance by "MixIT" an inclusive pop group

Every Disabled Child Matters
national survey of disabled children and their parents and found:

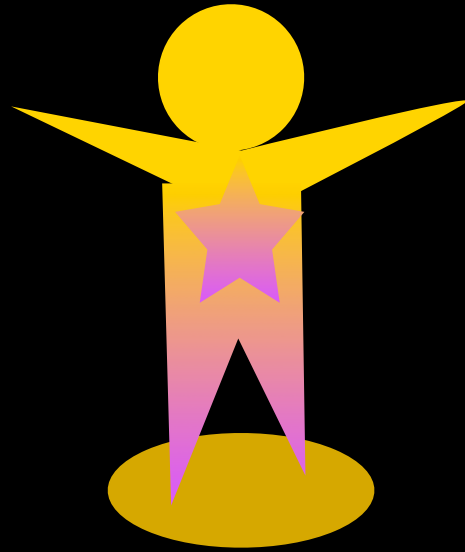
Disabled children wanted more fun things to do
Parents of disabled children wanted their children to be accepted by the community



Everyone is born in
Everyone needs to be with
Everyone is ready
Together we're better



How can this person
show up in ordinary life
as a valued friend and a
contributing citizen?



How can we work to become a
community where more and more people
know that
there is nobody we do not need?



Rev. Jim Lawson

The beloved community is not a utopia, but a place where the barriers between people gradually come down & where the citizens make a constant effort to address even the most difficult problems of ordinary people. It is above all else an idealistic community.

It's easy to get caught in a deficiency view, worried more about what might go wrong than about what will allow people's gifts to shine forth. Recently, psychologists have begun to study human flourishing & have identified three paths to happiness. Looking at our lives on all three paths can open up new possibilities.

AUTHENTIC HAPPINESS

*Using the New Positive Psychology to
Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*

Martin E. P. Seligman, Ph.D

“Psychology should be just as concerned with what is right with people as it is with what is wrong.”



APA President, 1998

The background of the slide features a dark, textured teapot with a curved handle, positioned centrally. It is surrounded by lush green leaves and numerous small, delicate pink flowers with yellow centers. The overall lighting is soft and slightly dim, creating a serene and natural atmosphere.

The Pleasant Life

Practice

Gratitude

Forgiveness

Mindfulness

Learn to savor pleasures

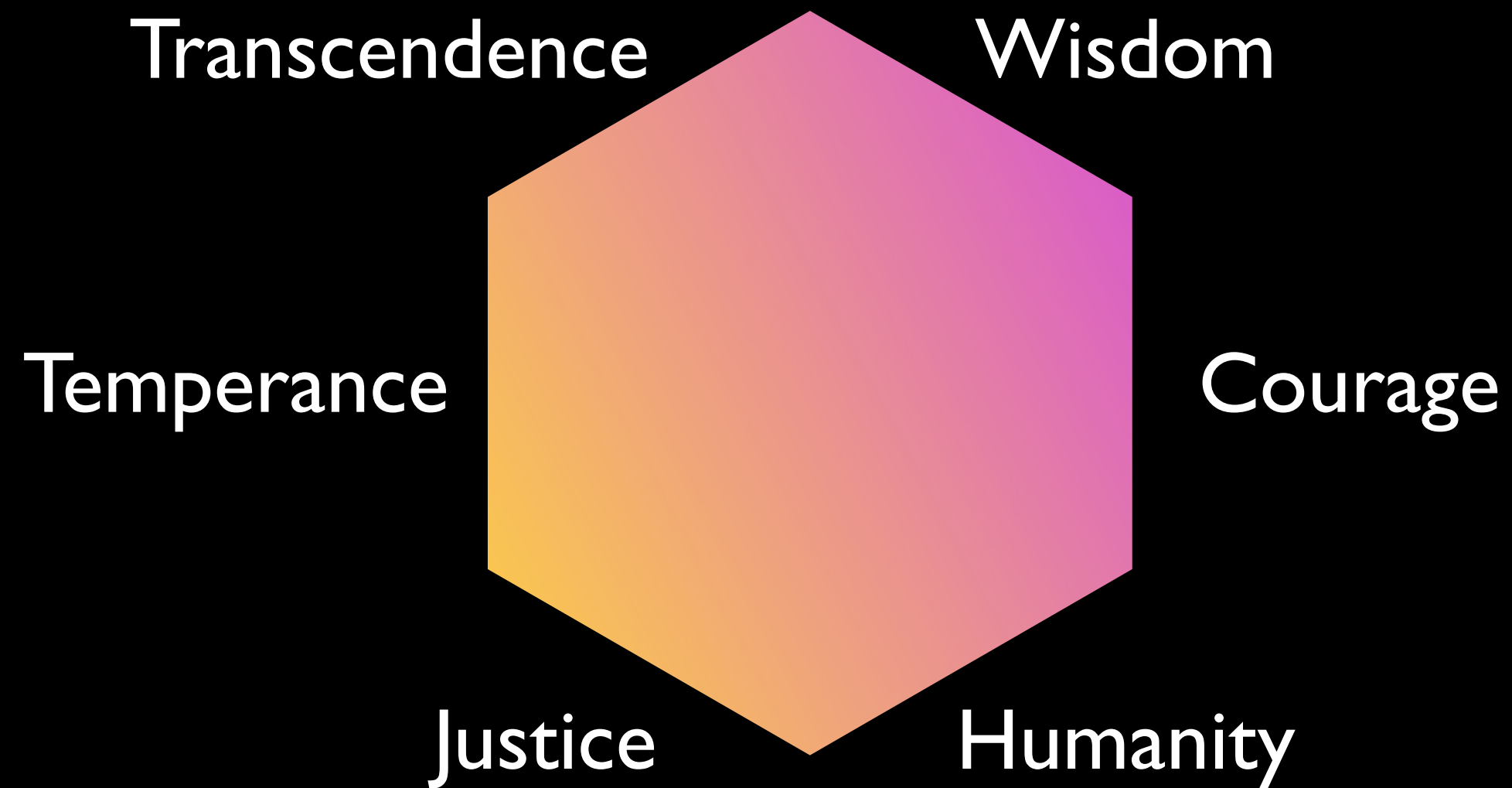
A person is captured in mid-air, jumping over a large, dark rock in the foreground. The person is wearing a red and white athletic top and dark shorts. Their arms are outstretched, and their legs are bent, suggesting a powerful leap. The background is a clear, bright blue sky with some light clouds. The overall scene conveys a sense of freedom, movement, and achievement.

The Engaged Life

Full use of our signature strengths

“Flow” experience

Build signature
strengths into the
day & week



To profile your signature strengths & learn more about
positive psychology, visit
www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/



The Meaningful Life

Using signature strengths in service of something larger than yourself.

Satisfies desire for purpose in life.



Pleasure + Engagement + Meaning

John O'Brien

johnwobrien@gmail.com



books from

www.inclusion.com/jobrien.html

Saturday 24th November 2007 10.00am – 4.30pm at The Venue, Annfield Plain, Co Durham
Everyone is born in - including people with disabilities in ordinary activities.

A day with John O'Brien and MFA
for people with disabilities and their families

Evaluation

| | Good | | | Poor |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| |  | | |  |
| MFA performance | 18 | 1 | | |
| John O'Brien Speaker | 18 | 1 | | |
| Organisation | 15 | 3 | | |
| Location - The Venue, Annfield Plain | 13 | 3 | | 1 |
| If you know a good alternative venue please let us have the details, thanks | | | | |
| MLTC in Middlesbrough | | | | |

What I liked best about today

Five people put everything! A couple of people mentioned the pop group, one delegate saying:-

"MIXIT are going to make it big!"

Three people liked the way the day flowed, thus,

"How MFA tied in with John's presentation"

There were a few comments about the number of people who turned up and how good it was to get a chance to meet together with like minded people, thus,

"The day focused me and regenerated me. I benefit enormously from these days would like 2 – 4 get togethers a year"

What could have been better about today

It was encouraging that over half the responses left this space blank. The main criticism was about the directions to the venue. I have asked people for specific suggestions for improvement. One delegate would have preferred to look more closely at their own situation, thus,

"That we should look at an individual and positives and how that could turn a life for the best"

Taken from KIDS email network newspaper 15th November 2007

EDCM update

If I could change 1 thing - Disabled children and young people tell Government they need more fun things to do!

Over 800 disabled children, young people and their parents tell government what needs to change in their lives in a recent report launched by the Every Disabled Child Matters campaign (EDCM) at the Labour Party Conference. While most parents wanted not to have to fight for services, Disabled children and young people wanted more places to go to be with their friends.

The top three things children and young people wanted to change were:
to have more fun things to do
more respect for disabled people
to make it everyone's right to get a good education

The top three things parents wanted to change were:
to not have to fight for basic support
to be included in their communities
to get education to meet their child's needs

To help make sure that Disabled young people have more places to go, EDCM is calling for Disabled young people to be fully involved in deciding how the funding from the government's 10 year youth strategy will be spent. Steve Broach, EDCM Campaign Manager, comments: 'Our report makes clear that all families with Disabled children are asking for is the right to live ordinary lives. Disabled children and young people want the same things other young people are asking for – respect, a good education and most of all the chance to play and socialise together. Another key recommendation of the report is that every children's centre and extended school are to be made accessible to Disabled children and young people.'

MPs urged to try again to give families a break

Following the announcement of an additional £280m to be invested in short breaks (as outlined above); EDCM is campaigning for a Private Members Bill that is designed to give Disabled children and their families a legal right to short break care.

The **Disabled Children (Family Support) Bill 2007**, if it became law, would ensure a specific duty is placed on local authorities to provide short break care for families with disabled children who provide a high level of care. The Bill is being launched on 13th November with the aim of being taken forward at the private ballot on 15th November, EDCM are asking supporters to write to their MPs in support. To download the full report and a briefing on the new bill go to the resources section of the EDCM website: www.edcm.org.uk

EDCM launches PCT charter The Every Disabled Child Matters campaign is challenging primary care trusts to sign up to a new campaign charter, which prioritises health services for disabled children and young people across England. The PCT Charter follows on the success of the campaign's Local Authority Charter, which has now been signed by 40 of 150 English Local Authorities. The Charter sets out nine commitments for PCTs to sign up to by January 2009. More information can be found at www.edcm.org.uk/pct_charter