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**SERVICE REVIEW**

**SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

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**INTERIM REPORT**

<b>Review Sponsor:</b>	Rik Boxer (Assistant Director Achievement & Inclusion)
<b>Report Author:</b>	Charles Osunwoke

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Authors	Responsibility
Charles Osunwoke, BES Team Programme Officer	Draft
Karin McDougall, BES Team Programme Manager	Editing

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# Executive Summary

## Structure of the report

Section one outlines the purpose of the review, the approach and the background to the review. Section two identifies priority areas for improvements and section three proposes next steps for taking forward finding and recommendations.

## Summary of Findings

A number of positive practices were identified:

- **Council-wide.**
  - Neighbourhood Working provides additional capacity and resources and has contributed to the provision of youth facilities and activities based on priorities identified by local people.
  - Participation by young people in sports and physical activities has increased substantially.
  - Young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in London: satisfaction rates increased from 59.9% in 2008 to 67.2% in 2009, an increase of 7.3%.
- **Brent Youth Service**
  - Highly motivated youth workers and officers who have developed positive relationships with young people.
  - A track record of involving young people in developing projects and in decision-making through for example youth inspections, Youth Opportunity Funds and Brent Youth Matters 2, a forum which provides a voice for young people aged 13 - 19 (up to 25 with special educational needs).
  - Track record of successfully leveraging in additional resources. For instance, Brent is one of a selected number of authorities to be awarded MyPlace funding. £5 million is being invested in redevelopment of Roundwood Youth Centre in Harlesden.
  - High levels of satisfaction with provision and activities delivered by the youth service. According to a 2008 survey carried out by the Youth Service most young people feel positively about their youth workers.

However there are several potential opportunities for improvement and greater efficiency. These are grouped into two categories:

- (a) Cross-cutting areas which impact more than one directorate or the Brent Children's Partnership as a whole. These are:
  1. **Strategic Coordination**
  2. **Joint Needs Analysis and Commissioning**
  3. **Funding and Programmes**
- (b) Improvement areas which specifically relate to the Youth Service. The most significant areas to address are:
  1. **Strategic Performance Management**
  2. **Service Delivery Model**
  3. **Equality of Access**

The main recommendations are summarised below:

1. The Council should consider bringing together various commissioning functions and budgets for youth provision into one place, ideally within the Children and Family Directorate. It should also develop a joint commissioning framework or plan for positive activities informed by the audit of needs and supply
1. The Council should carry out robust audits of demand for and supply of provision for positive activities. A borough-wide survey of young people should be carried out.
2. A corporate communications plan should be developed and a campaign launched to publicise positive activities for young people across the borough. The campaign should be targeted at young people, parents and carers of young people.
3. The Council should consult on and publish a Brent Youth Offer setting covering a range of youth provision and providers across the borough
4. The Youth Service should review its plans and targets for reaching underrepresented groups. Working in partnership with other providers of activities for young people.
5. Brent Youth Service should review its current objectives/priorities with the aim of focusing on a lower number of key but outcome-focused objectives/priorities.
6. Brent Youth Service's commissioning and provider functions should be separated. A target should be set to externalise an increasing proportion of services currently directly provided by BYS over the next two to three years.
7. the Council should investigate and appraise alternative options for providing access to positive activities, for example youth opportunity cards and pre-paid cards

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background and Objectives of the Review

The new administration's Manifesto includes a commitment to: Conduct an audit of facilities and projects for children and young people and...listen to young people and voluntary groups about the quality of activities and make improvements as appropriate.

As part of the 2009 Residents Attitude Survey residents rated 'activities for teenagers' as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most important area for improvement behind crime. The TellUs4 2009 Survey of school children in Brent suggests the percentage of young people participating in a positive activity (within four weeks of the survey) fell from 72.3% in 2008 to 57.3% in 2009, a decline of 15%. This is the lowest performance in London based on the National Indicator 110 (Young people's participation in positive activities).

This review builds on the work carried out by a Youth Strategy Task Group comprising Members and senior officers from the Council which met between 2008 and 2009 to discuss issues relating to youth provision. The Group highlighted a number of areas for improvement to be looked at as part of the review including:

- Strategic Coordination of cross council services aimed at young people.
- Strengthening the commissioning and monitoring of voluntary sector partners.
- The need for sustainable funding.
- Performance against targets relating to the Youth Service.

In addition, Brent's Improvement and Efficiency Strategy stipulates that all reviews should lead to a robust service model design.

Specific objectives of the review are to make recommendations on:

- 1) Proposals for future service development, including strengthening the Youth Service's contribution to the Targeted Youth Support agenda.
- 2) More effective coordination of services, programmes and budgets across the Council and with partners.
- 3) Development of a future "Local youth offer".
- 4) Refocusing the priorities and objectives for the Youth Service.

## 1.2 Scope of the Review

The Review focuses on 'Positive Activities' which are delivered, commissioned or grant aided by the Council.

In Scope	Out of Scope
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Coordination of council youth service provision at strategic and operational levels.</li><li>2. Improving communication with Young People</li><li>3. Examining options to align and pool existing resources in key service areas.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Accreditation, the curriculum and staff development.</li><li>2. Audit of youth centres as this should be covered under the Strategic Property Review</li><li>3. The Brent Connexions and Youth Offending Services.</li></ol>

## 1.3 Interdependencies

The project is aligned to the following the One-Council Improvement & Efficiency Programme strands: service transformation and reviews, better commissioning & contract management and stopping lower priority activities. There is a downstream dependency on

the Strategic Property Review which means the outcomes from this review should influence the property review.

#### **1.4 The Review Methodology**

The review follows the Service Review Methodology which was developed by Rse Tribal for the Council. The methodology comprises five stages. Stages 1, 2, and much of stage 3 have been completed.

- 1) **Scope:** Defining the scope of the review and the vision for success.
- 2) **Evaluate:** Using existing service information to determine the current position of services.
- 3) **Analyse:** Identifying current issues and the root causes.
- 4) **Improve:** Improving services using inputs and resources from across the council.
- 5) **Sustain:** Monitoring and delivering benefits.

However, following the Council's move to a Portfolio and Project Management methodology instead of an improvement plan a concept paper will be produced followed by a business case and then a Project Initiation Document for those recommendations suitable to be delivered as projects.

Information was gathered using the following approach:

- Interviews with a wide range of officers across the Council (See Appendix 1).
- Documentation obtained from officers and from the internet and intranet.
- Researching practice and service delivery approaches in other councils.

Young People were consulted about the focus of review through the Youth Parliament event in December 2009. The Children and Families Scrutiny Board as well as the Brent Children's Partnership were also consulted during the course of the review.

#### **Mapping Council-wide Expenditure**

As part of the review some mapping of expenditure on positive activities delivered by the Council was carried out. Specific objectives of the mapping exercise are:

- To identify opportunities for more effective joint working and coordination.
- To identify where resources could be spent more effectively.
- To identify opportunities for further efficiencies by working in partnership and eliminating duplication.

The mapping process involves 'counting' funding streams coming into the borough which support positive activities in the borough. However this is still at a very early stage. The mapping data will need to support decision-making on alignment of resources and joint commissioning of projects and programmes.

#### **1.5 Overview of Positive Activities Delivered by the Council**

Brent Youth Service (BYS) runs three youth centres owned by the Council: Granville Youth Arts & Training Centre, Poplar Grove Chalkhill Youth and Community Centre and the Roundwood Club. The centres offer a range of activities from dance to sports to peer mentoring. BYS also runs youth projects at a number of satellite centres not owned by the Council including Wembley Youth Club, Dennis Jackson Youth Club, and St. Raphael's project. In 2008/09 a total of 6,715 young people participated in youth centre activities and

projects run by BYS. Further detail of projects and activities run by BYS is provided in **Appendix 2**.

The bulk of positive activities, as measured by usage rates, is delivered by service areas in the Environment and Culture Directorate. For instance the Sports Service delivers free swimming for the under-16s, the Parks service provides and manages Multi-Use-Games Areas, Culture and Heritage Service runs arts projects, events and festivals for children and young people, and the library service runs summer activities for young people. In addition to services delivered by the Council, a wide range of activities on offer to young people are run by voluntary sector organisations, other public sector bodies such as the Police's Kickz project, and through extended services.

## 1.6 What Young People Say

Several surveys and consultations relating to positive activities have been conducted by different service areas. Key findings relating to surveys, consultations and mapping projects are detailed in **Appendices 9 and 10**. Key findings from the surveys are summarised below:

- According to the latest 2009 TellUs4 Survey:
  - The percentage of young people saying they participated in a positive activity fell 15 points from 72.3% in 2008 to 57.3% in 2009 - Brent had the lowest performance in London based on the NI 110 youth participation measure.
  - The percentage of young people rating their parks or play areas as good or very good increased from 59.9% in 2008 to 67.2% in 2009, an increase of 7.3 points -
  - Brent had the 2nd highest performance in London in 2009 based on the NI 199 measure.
- According to the 2008 TellUs3 Survey:
  - 58% of young people feel activities and things to do in their area are fairly or very good (49% nationally)
  - The top five things young people had been to within *the last 4 weeks* of the survey were: Local Parks or playground (80%), Sports club or class (57%), cinema or theatre (55%), library/museum (54%), and swimming pools (45%).
  - the top five activities young people say they would like to go to but don't at the moment are: Cinema/theatre (43%), Gym (41%), swimming pool (37%), music concert or gig (35%), and art, craft, dance, drama, film/video-making group or class (34%).
  - The main barriers to taking part in sports and physical activities are: time, friends not taking part and cost.
- According to a survey of young people by BYS during term-time most young people prefer to attend positive activities on weekdays.
- The top five sporting preferences for boys and girls respectively according to the 2008/09 Schools Sports Survey are football, basketball and swimming for boys, and ice skating, swimming and dance for girls.
- At a consultation event organised by BYS young people were asked *if Brent council was to invest money in more out of school activities, where would you advise the council to spend that money*
  - 65.2% said put on more events where a large number of young people can gather
  - 21.3% said More activities based in local youth centres
  - 9% said more activities based in the school (after school hours).

## 2. Key Issues

This section of the report provides an analysis of the key issues, the impacts and recommendations. The recommendations are not final recommendations – discussions with the Review Board and managers will inform the final set of recommendations. The recommendations have been informed, among other things, by suggestions from officers and lessons learned from other authorities.

The key benefits to be achieved from implementing the recommendations are:

- **Improved Services for Young People:** by providing access to a wider choice of high-quality provision and more effective communication about existing activities and facilities.
- **Financial Savings:** which could potentially be achieved by reconfiguring the current service delivery, reducing lower priority activities, reducing duplication and rationalising commissioning arrangements.

The issues requiring improvement are presented in two parts:

(c) Cross-cutting issues which affect more than one directorate or to the Brent Children's Partnership. These are:

4. **Strategic Coordination**
5. **Joint Needs Analysis and Commissioning**
6. **Funding and Programmes**

(d) Issues which specifically relate to service planning and delivery by the Youth Service. The two most significant areas to address are:

4. **Strategic Performance Management**
5. **Service Delivery Model**

### Cross Cutting Issues

#### 2.1 Strategic Coordination

There is scope to improve strategic coordination of planning and delivery of positive activities across the Council. The review found evidence of silo working particularly between directorates. Positive activities in the borough are not marketed or publicised in a joined-up approach and this is having a negative impact on the proportion of young people that participate in positive activities within the borough. Young people's participation in positive activities as measured by National Indicator 110 and through the annual TellUs Survey of school children is falling. The TellUs4 2009 Survey of school children suggests the percentage of school children that participated in positive activities declined from 72.3% in 2008 to 57.3% in 2009. Specific issues in relation to strategic coordination include:

##### 2.1.1 Duplication in Service Delivery

- An example of duplication is the publication of separate summer activity brochures by the Sports and Youth Services. Volunteering is another activity which would benefit from a joined-up approach. Individual services areas run separate volunteering schemes for young people with little or no coordination between volunteering schemes. Evidence of this includes the absence of up-to-date information on the Brent Youth Volunteer website about the range of volunteering schemes run by the Council. There is scope to improve

coordination of volunteering schemes and to publicise volunteering opportunities for young people in a more integrated approach.

**Recommendation 1** - Establish a Youth Strategy Steering Group with a remit for positive activities and information and advice for young people. Responsibilities of the group could include: sharing information and intelligence about needs and demand; agreeing priority target groups and geographical areas, developing and implementing a Brent Youth Offer and joint commissioning of positive activities

**Recommendation 2** - The Sports and Youth Service Teams should consider merging their summer university activity brochures.

### 3.1.2 Marketing and Communication

- Youth provision and positive activities generally is not well publicised or joined up between service areas council-wide. The impact of this is that young people and residents are not well informed about opportunities for positive opportunities in the borough. Joint marketing and publicity is needed to make information about positive activities more accessible for young people and their parents. It will also reduce costs of producing information and publicity material
- Coordination of information and publicity about positive activities by the Council needs to be improved particularly between Children and Families and Environment and Culture Directorates. An example of the current fragmented approach is the plan in the Sports Strategy to develop and maintain a web-based directory of sport and physical activities. Publicity and marketing of positive activities should be holistic and client-centred, not structured along directorate or service lines.
- Concerns about lack of information have consistently been raised in various surveys and consultations. For example young people at a recent Youth Parliament conference in December 2009 said they were not well informed about opportunities for participating in positive activities. Young people say services and opportunities are not advertised well enough and communication with YP in the borough needs to improve significantly.
- The Youth Strategy Group agreed that a website for young people be developed to enable better communication with young people. The website is being developed by and is due to be launched in Spring 2010 by the Communications Team. The website in its current configuration will not address statutory expectations relating to publication of positive activities because of the lack of up-to-date supporting information from service departments about positive activities. More involvement in shaping this website from the Children and Families department would be beneficial.
- A Family Information Directory aimed at parents due to be launched by Spring will contain information about positive activities. However like the website for young people its impact will be limited as robust systems to provide up-to-date information are not in place.

**Recommendation 4** – The Youth Offer should be effectively marketed and promoted increasing participation and access for all young people

**Recommendation 5** - A corporate communications plan should be developed and a campaign launched to publicise positive activities for young people across the borough. The campaign should be targeted at young people and parents and carers of young people

**Recommendation 6** - A range of communication channels should be employed in addition to the website, including Brent Magazine, posters, leaflets, and SMS

### 3.1.3 Complying with Legislation and Statutory Guidance

- Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 sets out local authorities' duties in respect of positive activities. Under the Act local authorities have a duty, so far as reasonably practicable, to secure access for young people sufficient leisure and recreational activities and sufficient facilities for such activities. The duty applies to the 13 – 19 age range. For those with learning difficulties the duty extends to young people aged up to 24.
- The review has identified areas where more work is needed to ensure the Council fulfils its statutory duties. The impact is that the Council is at risk of being challenged for not meeting its statutory obligations.
- The Council does not currently have a Local Youth Offer that explains what “sufficient” provision means in a Brent context. The Council needs to determine what it deems to be “sufficient” provision and communicate this in the offer. The Youth Offer should provide clear statements of what is available for young people, the standards they can expect, local charging arrangements, young people’s responsibilities when participating in activities; and any rewards available for different activities eg volunteering. In determining the local offer emphasis should be placed on the needs of groups of young people at greatest risk of negative outcomes whose engagement in positive activities is often limited, e.g. young people in care and young people with disabilities.

**Recommendation 7** - The Council consult on and publish a Brent Youth Offer covering all forms of youth provision and providers from different sectors

### 3.1.3 Setting Joint Targets

- There is a need for targets which are jointly owned by individual service areas. Having cross-cutting targets will support improved joint working and alignment of objectives between different services. By way of evidence the review found that no overarching target for the borough has been set for the NI 110 indicator. Currently the Parks and Sports Service Area plans do not contain any performance metrics relating to the NI 110. Similarly the Youth Service Plan does not include any reference to NI 57 *Children and young people’s participation in high-quality PE and sport* even though it delivers or commissions various sporting and physical activities.

**Recommendation 8** - All service areas responsible for delivering or commissioning positive activities for young people should set out measurable contributions to the National Indicator 110 *Participation of Young People in positive activities*. Each relevant service areas should include specific contributions to the NI 110 within their service area plans

## 3.2 **Joint Needs Analysis and Commissioning Arrangements**

Robust cross-cutting arrangements to manage strategic planning, commissioning and delivery of positive activities across the Council are not well developed. The risks of current arrangements include duplication, gaps in provision, and inefficiencies in use of resources.

### 3.2.1 Joint Planning

- The Council does not have a comprehensive picture of needs and supply relating to positive activities. This means the Council is not in a position to determine whether it is fulfilling its statutory duty to secure access to sufficient provision. Nor will it have

sufficient evidence that it is meeting needs with the services currently being provided. Local authorities are required to undertake a detailed analysis of the provision of positive activities currently available to young people and accessibility of the provision.

- Effective understanding of needs and supply is the basis of effective planning. Individual services carry out separate consultations and surveys of young people and mapping of provision. However these are not well coordinated between different services and feedback is often not shared effectively with young people and other service departments. Evidence of the weak information base includes the lack of data reported on provision of positive activities for young people in the private and third sector as part of returns to the DCSF in February. The impact, which discussions with officers have confirmed, is that the data and evidence currently available is insufficient to inform robust service planning for commissioning arrangements which potentially means resources are not being used efficiently and effectively.
- The review found examples of local authorities are increasingly undertaking their own integrated surveys of young people for instance Westminster, Islington and Newham. Wiltshire carried out a survey of 2,000 young people and was able on the basis of clear evidence to challenge Government and assumptions about the need for more provision on Friday and Saturday nights.

### **Building a Picture of Demand and Supply – A Recommended Approach**

#### **(1) Consulting Young people and analysing demographic data**

- The Council with its partners should carry out joint audits of demand for and supply of provision for positive activities. This should include an integrated borough-wide survey of: young people's participation rates, service usage, preferences, and barriers to increasing participation and barrier should be carried out.
- Carry out analyses of population densities, population projections, crime and anti-social behaviour patterns, and socio-economic indicators.

#### **(2) Map Gaps in provision and capacity: (Supply)**

Key steps based on practice in other councils are:

- Review existing data and assemble evidence from consultations with providers about their current and planned capacity.
- Identify key constraints in developing and expanding activities for young people including availability of coaches and trainers, mentors, volunteers, facilitators, youth workers, suitable facilities etc.
- Evaluate projections of increased future capacity due to new and major development eg the civic centre, Building Schools for the Future, regeneration in priority neighbourhoods, Extended Services etc.
- Audit of Youth Centre facilities as part of the Strategic Property Review Project.

- The surveys and consultations which have been carried out provide a valuable overview of young people's needs and preferences in Brent. However an integrated survey would significantly enhance the quality of information for purposes of service and strategic planning. An integrated survey would provide localised intelligence for locality working. It would also provide richer and usable information on the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of young people. Duplication and costs will be reduced if service areas increasingly combine to commission joint surveys of young people. Information from young people will also be better maximised for instance by ensuring cross-cutting opportunities such as 2012 Olympics and Paralympics Games and volunteering are properly covered in surveys or consultations.

- Joint working should be strengthened so that there is a shift to a more strategic approach underpinned by robust evidence. There is a need for greater sharing of intelligence and information relating to young people. Coordinating systems and structures should be developed, for instance by establishing a cross-Council steering Group to plan and review provision of positive activities and to share information and data.

**Recommendation 10** - The Council should conduct integrated research audit of demand for and supply of provision for positive activities and a borough-wide survey of young people should be carried out covering public, private and third sector providers.

**Recommendation 11** - The results of the needs and mapping analyses should be clearly set out as part of the next the local children and young people's plan together with a summary of actions to deliver the local offer.

### 3.2.2 Strategic Commissioning

- Current arrangements for commissioning positive activities across the Council are not coordinated. The impact of a lack of a holistic approach is that partnership and grant-aid arrangements with third and private sector providers are fragmented, and there are duplicated services as well as gaps in provision.
- The statutory guidance on positive activities requires local authorities to introduce measures to enhance contestability when securing provision for young people and to ensure they do not assume the default position of automatic provider. There is very little evidence this requirement is being delivered across the council. There is no overarching strategic commissioning framework in place for positive activities council-wide and very little by way of joint commissioning takes place.
- Discussions with several officers from Children's And Families Directorate (CFD) revealed concerns about the Children and Family element of the Council's Main Programme Grant (MPG) being managed in Housing and Community Care Directorate. CFD officers expressed the view CYPP priorities are often not properly reflected in the grant approval process and mentioned examples of inconsistencies between the VCS programme and CFD grant-aid and commissioning processes.

**Recommendation 12** - The Council consider how best to bring together current strategic commissioning functions and budgets for youth provision within CFD. It should also develop a joint commissioning framework or plan for positive activities informed by the audit of needs and supply

**Recommendation 13** - Investigate the feasibility of transferring management responsibility for the Children and Young People strand of the Main Programme Grant over to CFD following completion of the current three-year MPG funding cycle in 2010/11

## 3.3 **Funding and Programmes**

- Reliance on external funding poses risks to continuity of certain projects and programmes. The review found that funding programmes which support delivery of preventative work and positive activities are at risk or under pressure for instance the Junior Youth Inclusion Programme. Given the current financial climate and the

commitments to cut public spending there is a real risk many of these programmes such as the Positive Activities for Young People will be cut or cancelled after 2010/11. The impact of this would be a significant reduction in provision of positive activities.

- A number of local authorities are investigating alternatives to direct in house provision of facilities which are potentially cost effective alternative service models. This may help to widen access to universal services to vulnerable and disadvantaged young people, as well as groups under accessing universal provision. For example youth opportunity cards and pre-paid cards which are being used in Tower Hamlets and Camden as a means of providing greater choice and spending power for young people and engaging them in positive activities (See appendix 8)

**Recommendation 14** - A report examining the risks and impact of funding cuts to programmes should be produced. The report should set out contingency plans to minimise the impact of funding discontinuation and service disruption including alternative funding and delivery arrangements

**Recommendation 15** - CFD should investigate the potential to pool and align funding aimed at the delivery of positive activities across the Council

**Recommendation 16** – As part of a concept paper and business case the Council should investigate and appraise alternative options for providing access to positive activities, for example youth opportunity cards and pre-paid cards which are being used in Tower Hamlets and Camden as a means of providing greater choice and spending power for young people and engaging them in positive activities (See appendix 8)

## Issues for the Brent Youth Service

This section highlights issues and recommendations of specific relevance for the Youth Service.

### Overview of Brent Youth Service

- Brent Youth Service (BYS) sits within the Achievement and Inclusion Division of the Children’s and Families Directorate. BYs’s service mission is “To deliver quality youth work that will enable young people to fulfil their potential and contribute to their communities”. The service achieves this by providing informal education opportunities for young people.
- BYs works with young people between the ages of 11 and 25. Resources are focused on the 13 to 19 age groups. The service has three teams: the first is focused on youth participation universal/ generic work, the second targeted youth inclusion work and the third partnerships with the voluntary sector.
- BYs has a total of 43.33 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff. Of this number 35.6 FTE staff are Youth Workers.

**Table One: Breakdown of planned efficiency savings for 2010/11**

Saving Description	Saving to be delivered in 2010/11 (£)
Staffing-Head of Service(amalgamation of post with Connexions)	60,000
Finance Post	24,000

Training cost centre	15,000
Publicity cost centre	10,000
Curriculum activities	83,125
Fieldwork staffing 2 FTE	72,125

- The service manages its budget well. There was a slight under-spend of £27,453 against the 2008/09 budget. The size of variances has steadily improved since 2005/06 when there was a considerable overspend of £264,401.

**Table Two: Five-Year Budget and Expenditure Analysis for BYS**

	Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance
2008/9	£2,679,000	£2,651,547	-£27,453
2007/8	£2,100,000	£2,018,112	-£81,888
2006/7	£1,900,000	£1,696,519	-£203,481
2005/6	£1,759,000	£2,023,401	£264,401
2004/5	£1,523,000	£1,523,000	£0

- The three largest expenditure items relating to BYS's 2009/10 budget are the Youth Office (25.1% of net expenditure), PAYP (15.7%) and the Outreach service (6.8%). (See Appendix 3 for details of budget and expenditure). In 2008/09 employee costs in the Youth Service accounted for roughly 19% of actual expenditure.
- The youth service is delivering efficiency savings of £132,125 this financial year 2009/10. These savings relate to staffing costs, curriculum activities and increases in external income. Efficiency savings of £264,250 are planned for 2010/11. Table xx below provides a breakdown of planned efficiency savings from 2010/11.
- Detailed definitions and background to the key PIs used s of the Youth Service's most recent performance management framework and performance figures are shown in Appendix 11. The Government discontinued the BVPIs 221a (Accredited outcomes) and 221b (Recorded outcomes) in 2008/09 and performance is no longer being benchmarked. As Figure 2 shows performance against both previous BVPIs has steadily improved since 2007/08.

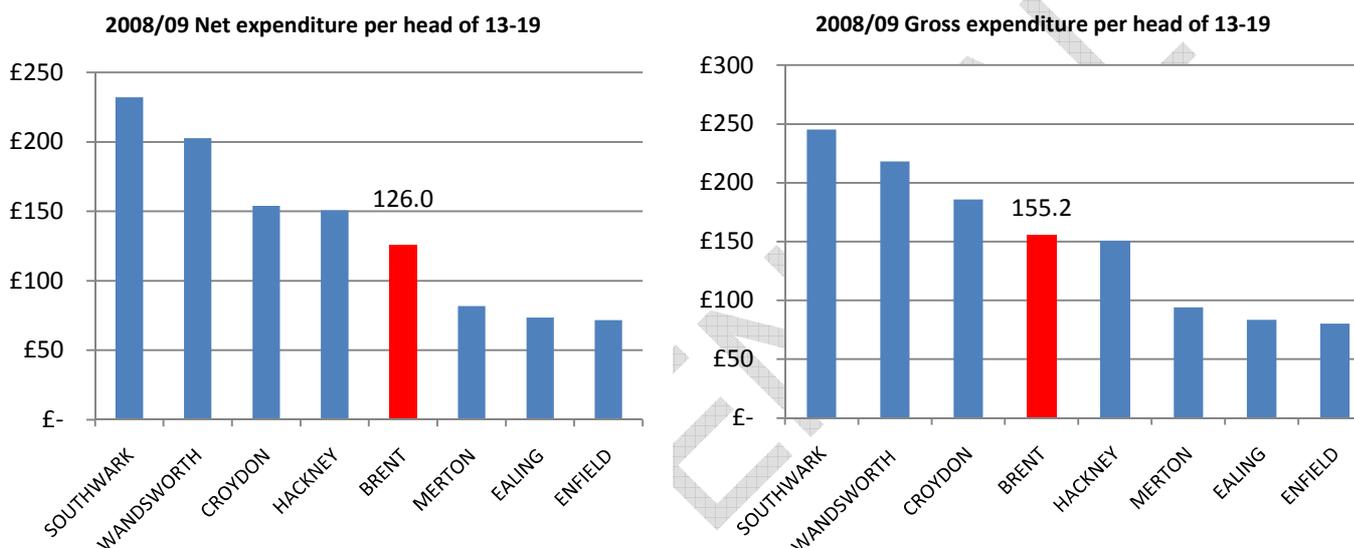
Benchmarking data for 2008/09 was compiled from Section 52 outturn statements published on Councils' websites. Only a handful of councils have published their latest 08/09 outturn statements so the data needs to be treated with caution. Gross and net expenditure per head of young people aged 13-19 are below the average levels of expenditure for comparable authorities.

**Explanatory Note**

**Net youth service expenditure** = local authority 'mainstream spending' on the youth service.

**Gross total expenditure** = mainstream local authority youth service expenditure plus other funding received by the youth service excluding income such as lettings.

**Figure 1: Benchmarking gross and net expenditure 2008/09**



Source: DCSF Section 52 Outturn Statements and Council Websites

**Future Plans for Brent Youth Service**

- The Integrated Youth Support Service will be further developed following the merger of the Connexions and Youth Services Teams under one head of service. The merger will be implemented from April 2010. The Connexions Service falls outside the direct scope of the review, however the issues and recommendations raised below inevitably have wider implications for any future reshaping of the new unified structure.
- At the time of drafting BYS was in the process of seeking National Youth Agency Quality Mark accreditation. This is a management tool to support an organisation's development and improvement of its quality management systems.

The two main priority areas relating to the Youth Service are:

- **Strategic Performance Management**
- **Service Delivery Model**

In addition the review has identified **equality of access to youth services** as an area for improvement.

**2.4 Strategic Performance Management**

Performance against targets is one of the areas for improvement identified by the Youth Strategy Group. This was on the basis of performance reports presented to the group in

October 2008 which revealed BYS missed both its local targets and national targets in relation to accredited outcomes by a wide margin in 2007/08. In addition the service was not meeting national targets in relation to proportion of young people it was contacting. The impact was that the service was underperforming its peers in relation to the relevant Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) 221b (Accredited Outcomes).

The review has identified a number of areas for development in relation to the Youth Services' performance management arrangements which stretch beyond achievement of targets. For instance the key performance measures reported by the Youth Service are not adequate to measure the impact of the service in terms of its universal and targeted youth work. This means that the service cannot readily demonstrate that it is delivering value for money.

#### 2.4.1 Strategic Priorities and Planning

- The merger of the Youth and Connexions Services presents an opportunity to review the priorities for the Youth Service and to ensure these are closely integrated with those for the Connexions Service. The review found that the priority groups and geographical target areas for BYS are not comprehensively documented in any one place. Priorities appear to vary from plan to plan or project document without any clear explanation for apparent changes in priorities. Priority geographical areas and target groups for the service need to be reviewed and clearly communicated within the service plan and key strategic documents. A risk created by the lack of clear priorities is that BYS is driven by external funders' priorities when bidding for funding rather than an assessment of strategic fit with the priorities of the Council or Brent Children's Partnership.
- There needs to be a tighter focus reflected in the extremely broad range of universal and targeted youth services delivered by BYS. For instance one of the service agreements covering a youth project included a list of at least 32 priorities. Several officers interviewed during the review revealed they were unclear about what the BYS does and what its priorities are. The service risks becoming overstretched as a result of a lack of focus. The review found that some BYS staff have expressed concerns about increasingly being expected to work with vulnerable groups of young people, such as young people at risk, without having received adequate training and support to perform these expanding roles.
- Strategic planning by BYS should be reviewed. A few medium-term actions are contained in the 2009/10 Service Plan but these need to be reformulated based on a more robust medium-term strategic planning process which incorporates demand and supply analysis, consultation with young people and partners, definition of priorities and objectives, resource analysis, and agreed options for delivery including partnership and commissioning arrangements. One of the cross-cutting recommendations is development of a borough Youth Strategy. This should be the focus of BYS's strategic planning approach.

**Recommendation 17** - BYS should review current its objectives/priorities with the aim of developing fewer but more outcome-focused objectives/priorities. Lower priority projects should be identified and stopped in line with One-Council objectives.

**Recommendation 18** - Enhance strategy and policy development capacity and capability within the Youth Service. An option is to designate a post within the youth and Connexions Service with specific roles for strategy/service development and strategic coordination.

#### 2.4.2 Performance Measurement and Reporting

Recent developments have impacted on the focus of this priority area:

- The Government dropped the two relevant BVPIs – Recorded and Accredited Outcomes from its National Indicator Framework in 2008. As a result these indicators are no longer monitored or benchmarked as performance measures of performance for youth services. These indicators have largely been replaced by NI 110 *Youth Participation in Positive Activities* and NI 57: *Children and young people’s participation in high-quality PE and sport*.
- More recent performance figures for 2008/09 indicate that the target for Contacts was achieved. The number of Accredited Outcomes in 2008/09 was significantly higher than in 2007/08. However the target for 2008/09 was not achieved.

**Table Three: Youth Service Vital Sign Performance Indicators**

	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2006/07 Actual</b>	<b>2007/08 Actual</b>	<b>2008/09 Actual</b>	<b>2008/09 Target</b>	<b>2009/10 Target</b>
1.	Contacts (13-19)	3294	4764	6715	5800	5800
2.	Recorded Outcomes (13-19)	1469	2043	2124	2088	2088
3.	Accredited outcomes	287	464	816	1044	1044

The evidence to support the need for improvements to performance management includes the following:

- The Youth Service operates a detailed and robust quality assurance system which involves young people in assessing the quality of services delivered as part of the Youth Inspection Service. However performance information produced as part of the Vital Signs reports are not robustly aligned with the Council’s wider strategic priorities. Several officers interviewed commented about the Youth Service focusing too narrowly on its service targets. The focus on monitoring contacts, recorded and accredited outcomes derived from the national youth work standards agenda may be inhibiting BYS from demonstrating its contributions more fully to local priorities such as tackling anti-social behaviour and regeneration. The review picked up tensions between traditional youth work values and the community safety agenda particularly around monitoring, sharing information and surveillance issues.
- In the current tight financial climate Council-run youth services are coming under increasing pressure to demonstrate value for money. The current performance management framework operated by Youth Service operates can be enhanced in terms of robust or accurate measures of value for money. The current framework of performance indicators focuses on processes and volumes of activity rather than outcomes. For example the impact and difference made to young people requiring additional support is not captured in the performance measures.
- Performance information setting out performance against targets contained in the service plan is not currently reported to the Assistant Director (Achievement and Inclusion).
- Robust evaluations of programmes and major projects to measure and communicate impact of what the Youth Service has achieved are not currently carried out. Whilst Brent was one of the pilots as part of a national PAYP evaluation carried out in 2005 the report did not contain any specific information on Brent’s performance and outcomes. An evaluation was carried out of an extended services PAYP project but the design and quality of the evaluation report leaves scope for improvement.
- The quality of data used to underpin various performance metrics needs to be strengthened. For instance the review found the population data used to calculate a number of the metrics eg ‘Number of contacts as a percentage of the youth population

aged 13-19' is based on the wrong statistic. The review also found that the National indicator 110 Young People's participation in positive activities is measured incorrectly using the old NYA methodology for measuring participation rates. A number of the national standards which BYS works to are out-of date or incorrect eg the target of 2% of current education budget as a basis for benchmarking youth service cost per head of youth population aged 13 to 19. The review found that Youth Service's figures unit cost figures used to measure Cost per Contacts are likely to underestimate the full costs.

**Recommendation 19** – BYS should review its performance management framework and incorporate outcome-focused measures aligned to CYPP and Corporate priorities. The performance standards should be revised and reflect the new Quality Standards for Positive Activities recently published by DCFS

## 2.5 A Service Delivery Model

The review was tasked with identifying options to integrate the work of the Youth Service more closely with the targeted youth support (TYS) agenda and in particular find out what other authorities are doing to support young people with additional needs (level 2 provision). In addition, Brent's Improvement and Efficiency Strategy states that all reviews are expected to produce a robust Service Model Design.

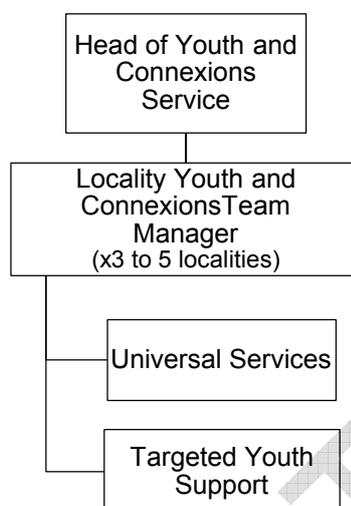
The review found other authorities rely almost exclusively on the Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme to support TYS client groups. Most authorities focus their entire PAYP programme on TYS groups. Brent's practice has been to support a mix of universal provision and targeted youth groups via PAYP. During the course of the review it has been confirmed the PAYP programme will be transferred from the Youth Service to the Early Intervention Locality Team (EILT) under the Strategy and Partnerships division. No findings or recommendations specifically relating to the PAYP are included in the review as the EILT sits outside the scope of the review.

Below are a number of potential service delivery model options for consideration:

- 2.5.1 The Youth Service could be more structurally integrated into the Children and Families Directorate's localities model. Currently only three of the five localities are represented by a Youth Service manager. The Youth and Connexions Team arrangements could be reshaped around the five localities so that each locality is fully covered by one Youth and Connexions Locality Team. A maximum of two to three locality teams could cover the five localities. This is more cost-efficient than having one team per locality. The teams could vary in size and resources depending on the population and needs for each of the respective localities. The locality based Youth Support Teams would have shared responsibility with the EILT and Extended Services Teams for developing and implementing Locality Action Plans. The locality action plans should be clearly integrated into team and service planning which is not the case at the moment.
- 2.5.2 The Youth Service should consider shifting more from universal provision to targeted work aimed at vulnerable young persons. The Youth Service should consider prioritising fewer target groups, say four to five. These could be reviewed annually on the basis of needs data and significant gaps in service provision. Baseline information showing the current funding mix between universal and targeted provision by the Youth Service is needed to set targets for reallocation of services.
- 2.5.3 Each locality team could be split into universal and targeted youth support (TYS) services similar to current IYSS structures in Westminster and Camden. This arrangement has the advantage of enabling Youth Services to focus more closely on

vulnerable and disadvantaged young people needing extra support via TYS. This arrangement is depicted in figure two below:

**Figure 2: Illustrative Locality Structure**



2.5.4 CFD should consider separating the commissioning and provider roles of the Youth Service. Under this arrangement the provider role could be significantly or wholly externalised and separated from the Commissioning role. This arrangement has a number of potential benefits including greater capacity to broker and implement shared objectives with other service/partners, it is more likely to deliver greater value for money, and it is more likely to facilitate provision of a wider range of activities which meet young people's preference. The commissioning role could either be based within the Youth and Connexions service as in Southwark or located in central commissioning teams as in Islington.

2.5.5 The Youth Service could consider reviewing its outreach/detached model:

- Current long-term programmes and geographical target areas of the detached/outreach service should be scrutinised to confirm that the model properly focuses on geographical areas with greatest needs and priority target groups, and is aligned with the Council's wider priorities as well as the CYPP priorities.
- Brent's model of detached working relies heavily on the Equipped-2 Go Youth double-decker Bus. The bus is in high demand by other services. Concerns were raised by officers such as the waiting time and costs of booking the bus. The bus is rapidly ageing and this has risks in terms of maintenance costs and reliability of use. It was suggested during the review that the Council consider procuring smaller buses or mini-vans (as in Camden) on the basis that having smaller buses will enable wider and more flexible mobile provision.
- However the Equipped 2 Go Bus programme suggests in practice detached working focuses more on universal provision rather than vulnerable young people. If a distinct Targeted Youth Support Teams are created as part of the new Youth and Connexions service it is recommended the Detached Teams Service be based located within the Targeted Youth Support Team to ensure the outreach and detached working delivers a preventative services and targets its work more closely on vulnerable and harder-to-reach young people. This is the model operated in Westminster and Southwark.

- Under the extended schools agenda schools play an increasingly important role in providing positive activities. Nationally The Government is providing over £200m funding from 2008-11 to help support children and families from disadvantaged backgrounds, through the extended services subsidy. A key objective for the new service model should be to ensure the Youth Service plays a key role delivering the targets for positive activities as set out in the recent Government Pupil and Parent Guarantee framework. The Youth Service could consider and adopt a number of practices from other authorities about further developing its relationships with schools. For example Waltham Forest delivers information and advice services to a large number of schools including teenage pregnancy, mentoring, support for new arrivals, and NEETS. Waltham Forest is also considering introducing nominal charges for these services of £15/hr to £30/hr per youth worker time.
- There is potential for duplication between the targeted youth support work delivered by the Youth Service, for instance the PAYP activities for young people at risk of becoming involved with gangs, and the preventative projects delivered by the Youth Offending Service (YOS) including the Youth Justice Improvement and Community Support Programmes. Whilst the preventative work involves more intensive forms of support and activities our benchmarking of practice in other authorities suggests there are opportunities to reduce duplication and integrate the various preventative services delivered by the Youth Service and YOS programmes such as the YJIP are delivered or managed by the Youth Service under their Targeted Youth Support programme.

**Recommendation 20** - The Youth Service's commissioning and provider functions should be separated. A target should be set to externalise an increasing proportion of services currently directly provided by BYS over the next two to three years.

**Recommendation 21** - The Youth Service could be reshaped so that its organisational structures and service delivery arrangements are fully aligned to the five localities model

**Recommendation 22** – The Connexions, Youth Offending Service and Targeted Youth Support services should be included within the scope of any future project or service models options to maximise opportunities for eliminating overlaps in backroom support eg performance management, quality assurance and administration, integrating the Connexions and Youth Services and to achieve increased cost savings and efficiencies for instance by rationalising delivery of duplication in preventative programmes between PAYP, the Youth Justice Improvement and Community Support Programmes.

## 2.6 Equality of Access

- Research carried out for the Youth Strategy Group in 2008 found young people of White and Asian ethnic backgrounds are underrepresented as users youth centres and projects. Initial analysis for this review indicates that progress needs to improve significantly with regards to this issue and there is still significant underrepresentation of these groups. This means BYS is not reaching groups of young people from various backgrounds
- The Youth Service plan contains targets to increase participation of young disabled people. The targets are: 100 for 2009/10, 110 for 2010/11 and 120 for 2011/12. These targets appear low given the total number of disabled children and young people aged under 18 in the borough is estimated at up to 3,900<sup>1</sup> This target equates to only 2.6 per cent of all disabled children in the borough.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Joint Commissioning Strategy - Short Breaks and Preventative Services for Disabled Children and Young People 2009-11.

**Recommendation 24** - The Youth Service should develop/commission services and set clear targets for reaching communities of groups of young people under accessing mainstream provision

### 3. Next Steps

The next steps are:

- Convene a Steering Group to review and approve the report's recommendations.
- The Steering Group should distinguish between recommendations which can be taken forward as 'business as usual' and those which can potentially be delivered as a project.
- Produce a concept paper which builds on the review and sets out the idea for a potential project.
- The concept paper should be presented to the CFD DMT for approval to start up a project and Corporate Management Team for endorsement.

Key tasks to be undertaken as part of producing the concept paper are:

- Arrange idea generation sessions, workshops, stakeholder engagement through discussions/meetings. The lead officer should engage any council service areas that are key providers or commissioners of positive activities that were not contacted during the review
- Invite practitioners from other local authorities to learn from and share their approaches to service improvement and achieving cost efficiencies. Suggested authorities are Camden, Westminster, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth and Islington.
- To outline high level financial and non-financial benefits.