

FUNDAMENTAL SERVICE REVIEW

**NORTHERN IRELAND
EDUCATION AND
LIBRARY BOARDS'
YOUTH SERVICES**



'Developing the Citizens of Tomorrow'

**CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT UNIT
FOR
EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS**

DECEMBER 2004

FOREWORD

As a young man growing up in a primarily working class, marginalized, nationalist community, I was fortunate enough to receive the assistance of the Youth Service of the Southern Education and Library Board. My experiences in Barcroft Community Centre and Shannaghmore helped me to break down the social, cultural and political barriers prominent in my area; thus these interactions provided me with a diverse and educational base from which to develop and mature. Furthermore, my experiences in SELB centres fostered an interest within me, which led to a career focused in youth work and outdoor education with troubled young people from marginalized communities.

The courses offered by Youth Service enhanced my interests in this field and motivated me to further my own education culminating in my receipt of a BSc Honours Degree in Community Youth Work from Jordanstown University. The training and support the Youth Service provided was instrumental to my development and led me to become a confident, self-assured, and ambitious adult. The skills that I obtained as a result of my involvement with youth development programmes have enhanced more than my career and educational aspirations; they were the base for my unwavering interest in outdoor pursuits; specifically mountaineering. Without the perseverance and self-reliance that I learned in youth programmes I would not have been able to reach the pinnacle of my aspirations in the spring of 2003, making an unaided ascent of the summit on Mount Everest. This demanding expedition tested far more than my physical strength; it challenged my mental capabilities, resolve, drive and commitment; all of the attributes which the Youth Service nurtured and enhanced.

The Youth Service was a pivotal factor in my own personal successes, thus I have made a commitment to sharing my experiences and knowledge with young people today in the hopes that another generation of youth can reap the benefits of programmes, which emphasise positive role models and leaders as well as the development of independence and self-esteem.

‘Follow Your Dreams’

Terence ‘Banjo’ Bannon

This report has been prepared by the Central Management Support Unit (CMSU) for Education and Library Boards.

The Youth Service is the fifth area to be considered as part of an ongoing programme that will examine all major services delivered by Education and Library Boards.

Further copies of the report may be obtained from CMSU, The Southern Education and Library Board, 3 Charlemont Place, ARMAGH, BT61 9AX.

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This information can also be made available on request in alternative formats, including large print, on computer disc, Braille, on audio cassette and in minority languages, to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English. The document is also available on the website of each Education and Library Board.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Management Support Unit commenced a fundamental review of the Education and Library Boards' youth services, hereafter referred to as service, in January 2004. The review has examined major aspects of the service to identify examples of good practice and areas requiring further development.

It is important to remember that the service operating within each Education and Library Board does so with limited resources: similar, in fact, to the delegated budget for a post-primary school of approximately 1,000 pupils. The service is much admired in the community and members of staff are viewed as being professional and dedicated. The main aim is the personal and social development of young people, to promote the responsible citizens of tomorrow.

The review has been carried out using Best Value principles through a process of Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete and in accordance with Projects in a Controlled Environment methodology. The process of gathering and examining statistical data, in conjunction with the consultations undertaken, has informed the key findings and recommendations.

Several key findings were made and have been grouped in the following categories:

- Needs of Young People
- Resources
- Service Delivery
- Leadership and Administration
- Partnerships
- Community and Environment
- Equality
- Service Profile

In light of the findings, the review team came to a series of conclusions that summarised the existing service. These conclusions have been classified as strengths and areas for development. Examples are listed below:

Strengths:

- A clear sense of purpose
- Complements and supports voluntary youth sector
- Delivers a wide range of services
- Highly valued staff

Areas for Development:

- Service profile
- Funding arrangements
- Management of estate
- Information and communications technology

The report makes 12 key strategic recommendations that, if implemented, will ensure Best Value and delivery of an efficient, effective and economic youth service. The recommendations relate to:

- Inclusion and participation
- Youth service strategy

- Marketing strategy
- Relationship with formal education
- Performance management
- Partnerships
- Bureaucracy
- Communications
- Funding
- Workforce planning
- Estate
- Information and communications technology

Members of the review team would like to record their gratitude to all people who participated in the process and expressed frank and informed views.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Act 1999, introducing “Best Value”, came into effect on 1 April 2000 in England and Wales as part of the Labour Government’s commitment to modernise local government.

The Act, which primarily centres around a culture of continuous improvement with a focus on customers and quality, requires organisations to be committed to and undertake a programme of “Fundamental Reviews”.

In Northern Ireland, similar legislation was introduced for District Councils in April 2000. Formal arrangements came into effect for the education sector on 1 April 2003, through the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003.

In anticipation of this legislation, coupled with a desire to deliver quality services, Education and Library Boards (ELBs) entered into a voluntary arrangement in 1999, to develop a comprehensive approach to managing best value in the education sector.

A Best Value Project Board was established (*Appendix 1*), the membership of which included senior officers from ELBs, the Department of Education (DE) and the Classroom 2000 Project (C2K). Representatives with observer status included Trades Unions and the Staff Commission. The Project Board agreed the broader terms of reference for a Central Management Support Unit (CMSU). CMSU is an inter-board unit established in 1999 and its roles are to co-ordinate the process of best value and conduct a programme of fundamental service reviews across ELBs.

An agreed programme of service reviews was established on the basis of those services which:

- constituted significant spend;
- were the subject of an independent or external enquiry e.g. Northern Ireland Audit Office; and
- also had a significant focus on schools.

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Following selection of the ELBs Youth Service, the Best Value Project Board nominated the Head of Youth Service in the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) to chair the review. The Chairman and Heads of Youth Service from the remaining four ELBs in association with CMSU established the terms of reference for the review.

2.1 THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AGREED WERE AS FOLLOWS:

“The Fundamental Performance Review of Youth Services will examine the area in accordance with statutory arrangements approved by the Department of Education under Article 37 of the Education (NI) Order 1986, as amended.

The review will examine the delivery of services in pursuit of the boards’ statutory duties in the above area and take into account the requirements under Section 75 (Statutory Duty) Northern Ireland Act 1998. The review will clearly define the scope and standards of the service, challenging and questioning the existing arrangements and producing meaningful comparisons and benchmarks both internally and with other providers.

This review will involve extensive consultation with stakeholders in the service area and make recommendations for the future management and delivery of the Youth Service.”

2.2 THE SCOPE OF THE REVIEW WILL INCLUDE:

- A. Service funding from the Department of Education and additional sources**
- Levels of funding (recurrent and capital)
 - Breakdown of expenditure
 - Financial reporting
 - Accountability
 - Funding trends
 - Financial indicators and targets
- B. Allocation of resources**
- Facilities available
 - Use of Information Technology (IT)
 - Types and value of resources
 - Value for money
- C. Administrative support**
- Levels of support
 - Recruitment
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Training
 - Communications
- D. Operational support**
- Levels of support

- Recruitment
- Roles and responsibilities
- Training
- Communications
- Health and safety (including security of staff)

E. Controlled Service Provision

- Types of service provided
- Levels of service provided
- Service standards
- Planning and target setting
- Complaints processes
- Value for money

F. Residential and outdoor centres

- Number and capacity of centres
- Usage levels and uptake trends
- Costs
- Facilities available

G. Grant aid to the voluntary sector

- Selection criteria
- Schemes of assistance
- Partnerships
- Value for money

H. Equality Issues

- Compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

3.0 CONTEXT

3.1 STATUTORY FRAMEWORK AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1.1 The arrangements for the provision of youth service activities are set out under Article 37 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 (*Appendix 2*). A summary of these arrangements is outlined below.
- 3.1.2 Under Article 37, each ELB is required to provide facilities, within its own area, for recreational, social, physical, cultural and youth service activities.
- 3.1.3 Furthermore, services ancillary to education may be provided with the approval of the Department of Education.
- 3.1.4 The service may be provided directly by the ELB or through assisting other bodies to organise activities. Such assistance relates to financial and non-financial support.
- 3.1.5 ELBs must take account of service provision within its area and of that provided by other boards.
- 3.1.6 ELBs may make bye-laws for purposes of regulating the use and management of land or buildings, controlling admission times and charges to such land or buildings and for the preservation of order and to prevent nuisance.
- 3.1.7 Within the statutory obligations of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, DE has overall responsibility for the youth service and for ensuring as far as is possible that policy is carried out with uniformity.

3.2 HISTORY OF THE YOUTH SERVICE

- 3.2.1 Prior to 1973 the youth service was provided through a combination of local authorities and voluntary organisations.
- 3.2.2 In 1973 ELBs were established as part of a local government reorganisation and became responsible for the statutory provision of youth services within Northern Ireland. The present policy for the youth service was introduced in 1987 by DE. A target age range of 5-25 was identified, with an emphasis on the 10-20 age band. The policy also set out clear aims and objectives for the service, including a core youth curriculum. In 1999 the target age range was extended to include four year olds. Activity across ELBs is co-ordinated by the Heads of Youth Service within the Inter-Board Youth Panel.
- 3.2.3 The youth service has historically encompassed both controlled and voluntary sectors. With approximately 2,200 organisations, the voluntary sector, incorporating uniformed, church and community organisations, has comprised the vast majority of youth clubs across Northern Ireland. ELBs make direct provision for 134 youth clubs and 14 residential centres and also provide financial and non-financial support to the voluntary sector.
- 3.2.4 In response to recommendations by the Northern Ireland Youth Committee and DE, the Northern Ireland Youth Forum was created in 1979 to increase

involvement of young people in the youth service. The Youth Forum has approximately 50 affiliated groups and represents the views and interests of 16-25 year olds at local and national levels. Additional information is available at www.niyf.org

- 3.2.5 In 1989 the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) was established under the Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. The Youth Council is responsible for funding the regional voluntary organisations, which provide support and training for many local youth groups. The Youth Council also has an advisory, encouraging and grant-making role. See www.youthcouncil-ni.org.uk
- 3.2.6 YouthNet was formed in 1991 as an independent body to represent the interests and aspirations of voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland. It currently has a membership in excess of 70 youth agencies and organisations covering approximately 3,500 affiliated groups and more than 155,000 young people (the term ‘young people’ refers to children, young people and young adults aged between 4 and 25 years). Further details at www.youthnetni.org.uk

3.3 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.3.1 Across the five ELBs, service aims and objectives may differ to reflect the particular needs within each Board’s area and according to the priorities set within each individual organisation. The service must support and complement the individual corporate plans and objectives of ELBs. However, according to the definition established by DE “the youth service should include all those organisations and projects whose primary purpose is the personal and social development of children, young people and young adults”.
- 3.3.2 The mission statement of the service is “to ensure opportunities for children, young people and young adults to gain for themselves knowledge, skills and experience to reach their full potential as valued individuals”.
- 3.3.3 Key objectives of the youth service are:
- To encourage social development and social education, shaped in part by young people, based on learning from experiences in safe and enjoyable environments
 - To promote health and well being at all stages of development
 - To build positive self esteem and well being at all stages of development
 - To build positive self esteem, self awareness and self acceptance as a support to young people in making informed life decisions
 - To promote respect for individual differences and an acceptance of the individual’s right to personal choice
 - To encourage and give opportunities for involvement in initiating, planning, management and evaluation of youth work, at all levels and in all areas

- To encourage understanding of diverse groups in society and the involvement in peace building and conflict transformation
- To challenge young people to develop their role as active citizens and to identify issues at personal, local and global levels and create strategies for action

3.4 CURRENT PROVISION

3.4.1 The youth service is a large operation, involving statutory (controlled) and voluntary organisations. Details of provision in 2002/03 are detailed in table 1:

(Table 1: Provision in 2002/03)

Provision	Belfast	North Eastern	South Eastern	Southern	Western	Total
Full time staff (controlled & voluntary clubs)	81	16	27	20	27	171
Part time staff (controlled & voluntary clubs)	400	561	223	236	387	1,807
Volunteers (controlled & voluntary clubs)	2,824	5,044	5,608	2,881	3,275	19,632
Controlled clubs	35	32	24	11	32	134
Voluntary clubs registered with ELBs	344	482	435	320	365	1,946
Controlled residential & outdoor centres	2	4	3	3	2	14
Young people using the service	31,336	39,365	42,942	33,826	35,240	182,709

Source: ELBs

3.4.2 Table 2 provides information on populations trends of young people within each ELB area.

(Table 2: Population of young people (4 to 25 years of age) 1994-2002)

ELB Area	Population		
	1994	1997	2002
Belfast	98,043	97,609	91,468
North Eastern	127,961	123,972	120,469
South Eastern	118,424	118,214	116,013
Southern	118,331	115,365	115,319
Western	104,330	101,760	98,003
Total	567,089	556,920	541,272

Source: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

3.4.3 Current percentages of the overall NI age group 4 to 25 within each ELB are:

- Belfast: 16.90%
- North Eastern: 22.26%
- South Eastern: 21.43%
- Southern: 21.31%
- Western: 18.10%

Source: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

3.4.4 Table 3 provides details of percentage uptake of the service by young people within the designated age range.

(Table 3: Percentage of young people (age 4 to 25) attending the youth service 1994-2002)

Year	Population	Attendance	Percentage
1994 *	567,089	142,314	25.10
1997 *	556,920	193,510	34.75
2002	541,272	182,709	33.76

* Age range 5 to 25

Source: Department of Education Statistics Branch and NISRA

3.4.5 The main ethos of the youth service is based on personal development and is delivered through the Northern Ireland Youth Work Curriculum. Curriculum delivery incorporates:

- Organised trips (including residential and international)
- Educational work
- Personal and social development
- Community relations
- Sports
- Drama
- Music

3.4.6 Specialist programmes delivered through the residential centres include:

- Orienteering
- Canoeing/kayaking

- Mountaineering
- Hiking
- Discussion groups
- Conservation work
- International expeditions
- Environmental work

3.4.7 Youth clubs tend to operate during the period from September to June with a number of locations running summer schemes during July and August. Opening days and times vary according to part-time and full-time status, from one day per week up to seven days. The most common opening times are evenings from Monday to Thursday. However, many clubs open during the day and from Friday to Sunday.

3.5 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE YOUTH SERVICE

3.5.1 The **Curriculum Development Unit** was established in April 2002, to enhance and support curriculum development within the Youth Service in Northern Ireland. The unit is funded through the DE Executive Programme. Further details at www.youthworkni.org.uk

3.5.2 The **Youth Service Curriculum** was established in 1997 in the document “Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice”, which was updated in 2003. The curriculum promotes personal and social development through the promotion of three core principles:

- Commitment to preparing young people for participation
- Testing values and beliefs
- Acceptance and understanding of others

3.5.3 The **Education and Training Inspectorate** provides inspection services for DE, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). As part of this service, the Inspectorate assesses youth groups, in the controlled and voluntary sectors, and residential and outdoor centres. The assessment involves using quality indicators across 3 key areas: ethos, quality of experiences and management arrangements.

3.5.4 The **NI Youth Service Liaison Forum** (YSLF) has been established comprising DE, ELBs, YCNI, Education and Training Inspectorate, YouthNet. YSLF has a non-executive advisory role, co-ordinating activity across the youth service.

3.5.5 DE is currently developing a **Youth Work Strategy for Northern Ireland**, with the assistance of YSLF, to cover both the statutory and voluntary sectors. This will provide a framework for promoting and developing the service through effective partnership whereby agreement will be reached on specific roles and responsibilities of all key participants. The four priority areas of the strategy are delivering effective inclusive youth work, participation, resources and funding and implementation of the Youth Work Strategy. A draft document was produced in August 2004 for wider consultation.

3.5.6 In February 2003, the Minister for Social Development established a task force on resourcing the voluntary and community sectors, including the youth service. This task force reviewed the contribution of the sectors, funding, accountability, relationships and infrastructure. A position paper '**Pathways for Change**' was produced in December 2003 and sought considered responses. It is planned that the task force will make a final report with recommendations to the Minister during 2004. Further details can be found at www.taskforcevcsni.gov.uk

3.5.7 In May 2004 DE published the results of an **Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)** of the youth service in compliance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Under this legislation public authorities, including ELBs, in carrying out their functions must have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between certain different individuals and groups:

- Between persons of different religious belief
- Between persons of different political opinion
- Between persons of different racial group
- Between persons of different age
- Between persons of different marital status
- Between persons of different sexual orientation
- Between men and women generally
- Between persons with a disability and persons without
- Between persons with dependants and persons without

The EQIA has made a number of key findings relating to:

- Involvement of young people
- Involvement of Section 75 groups
- Working with over 25s
- Working with under 10s
- Faith-based organisations
- Voluntary organisations in general
- Data collection
- Funding, structures and resources

As part of this fundamental review, equality of provision and levels of participation have been assessed with regard to the above categories. Details can be found in Sections 3.6 and 7.2.7

3.5.8 **Joined in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence (JEDI)** is a youth service partnership, established in 1998 to achieve two key aims:

- Develop a coherent strategy for community relations youth work and education for citizenship within the Northern Ireland youth sector
- Embed the inter-related principles of equity, diversity and interdependence into the ethos, policies and programmes of the organisations, which comprise the youth sector

Further details can be obtained at www.jedini.com

3.5.9 **Youth Education Social Inclusion Partnership (YESIP)** comprises twelve organisations from the statutory and voluntary youth sectors, including all five Education and Library Boards. The Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) is the lead organisation and YouthNet is the sectoral partner. The

partnership is responsible for development of Measure 2.2 and part of Measure 2.8 of the European Union Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. See www.yesip.org

3.5.10 A number of **key partnerships** have been established as a means of improving the service and obtaining maximum benefit from the limited resources available. These partnerships include organisations from the voluntary sector, health bodies, neighbourhood communities, local authorities and other statutory agencies. The main driver behind the partnerships is to deliver a comprehensive and holistic approach to the development and wellbeing of young people.

3.5.11 A **Review of Public Administration** is presently being carried out, which has the potential to impact upon ELBs and their youth services. It is anticipated that the Government will present draft proposals in autumn 2004 with consultation taking place by spring 2005.

3.5.12 OTHER ISSUES:

- The youth service receives approximately 1.5% of an ELB's **recurrent budget**, with which it must provide a service for 4 to 25 year olds, across a large geographical area. This creates a problem of balancing the use of limited resources against the need to make a difference.
- An annual **ring-fenced budget** is allocated to the service and this may be supplemented by short term funding e.g. Executive Programme Funds.
- The youth service effectively manages with very limited resources and is expected to provide a quality service. There is a situation of chronic under-funding and an insufficient baseline budget to provide an effective service, particularly for the most marginalised.
- Details of **capital expenditure** are tabled in Chapter 6. However, the current levels are insufficient over the long-term to deliver the necessary building and refurbishment programme that will provide for large numbers of young people.
- Through the consultation process it became evident that the service has a **challenge regarding image**, which does not convey the true quality and value of the service and, as such, impacts on the recruitment of staff and the availability of volunteers.
- **Direct competition** from the private sector is not encountered with regard to its main functions. However, there are many organisations and channels that offer activities to the same target group. If the service did not prove to be competitive, it could very quickly lose its popularity among young people.
- The service must adhere to a raft of **legislation** including child protection and the need to carry out criminal record checks. ELBs, although not responsible for the vetting of staff in the voluntary sector, do offer support for training of staff. Within ELBs, these processes and checks are complied with as a matter of procedure through training and awareness sessions and the involvement of law enforcement agencies.
- **Job evaluation** has been carried out in accordance with the Greater London Whitley Council scheme, to ensure all aspects of work are fully considered and an appropriate level of pay is set. The scheme relates to Administrative, Executive, Clerical, Professional and Technical staff. Negotiations are due to be concluded in 2004 on a job evaluation process

for youth workers. As a matter of parity the position of youth service officers, who do not have access to job evaluation, should be reviewed. This process should also provide coherence regarding the grading of posts.

- DE, with the assistance of ELBs and the Youth Council of Northern Ireland, is undertaking a **geo-mapping project**. The project aims to collect data on the youth service that will enable informed decisions to be taken on the future delivery of the service taking account of socio-economic and demographic trends.
- The youth sector, encompassing statutory, voluntary and community organisations, has produced an investment proposal for an **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)** project in support of the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government. This programme recognises the need to equip citizens with the confidence, skills, knowledge and values to live their lives to the full and create a stronger, peaceful society. At the time of this review, DE has made no commitment to fund the proposed ICT programme.

3.6 EQUALITY STATISTICS

Available statistical information, relating to participation by groups designated within Section 75(1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, is detailed in this section. Data is collated annually through a statistical return form compiled by each youth group in Northern Ireland. The sections below reproduce, where available, the overall percentages and the corresponding uptake within the youth service for groups identified in Section 75. Qualitative issues arising from the consultation process are incorporated in Chapter 7. It is anticipated that information gathered as part of the fundamental review will support implementation of the EQIA of the youth service.

DE has established a target that by 2007 there will be a 10% increase in participation in the youth service by groups currently under-represented. These include young people with a disability, young people from lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities and young people from ethnic minorities. (*DE Business Plan 2004-5*)

The ELB's have gathered information on participation by religious affiliation, ethnic group, gender and disability since 2002. Returns are forwarded annually by each youth centre/club. The information is passed to YCNI as lead partner in a statistical analysis pilot exercise. To date, the returns have not been completed in a consistent manner and are, therefore, not totally reliable. Steps are being taken to improve the data collection. However, the figures in the following tables, although not completely accurate, give an indication of the levels of participation.

3.6.1 Persons with different Religious Beliefs

(Table 4: Breakdown of NI Population aged 5 to 24 by Religious Affiliation)

ELB Area	Roman Catholic	Protestant	Other/None
Belfast	46,836	33,899	626
North Eastern	37,761	66,670	311
South Eastern	35,242	62,843	397
Southern	64,401	38,023	238
Western	64,055	23,721	167
Totals	248,295	225,156	1,739
Percentage	52.25%	47.38%	0.37%

Source: NISRA (Census April 2001)

(Table 5: Religious Beliefs of Users of the Youth Service)

Category	2002		2003	
	(n)	%	(n)	%
Protestant	98,620	63.9	100,253	64.3
Roman Catholic	54,419	35.3	54,626	35.0
Other	1,175	0.8	1,103	0.7
Totals	154,214	100.0	155,982	100.0

Source: YCNI

It would appear from the tables that the participation level of young people from the 'Roman Catholic' community is under represented within the service by approximately 17%. This is mainly due to the high concentration of uniformed and church-based organisations, which tend to attract young people from the Protestant community. Among voluntary, community and sporting clubs, Roman Catholics are in the majority, at approximately 60%.

Participation levels by the 'Other' communities are almost double that of the general population: 0.7% compared to 0.37%. The levels of usage by both 'Roman Catholic' and 'Others' reduced slightly from 2002 to 2003.

3.6.2 Persons from different Racial Groups/Ethnic Backgrounds

(Table 6: Ethnicity of Young People within NI aged 0 to 24)

Ethnicity	Population	Percentage
White	602,858	98.91
Irish Travellers	830	0.14
Chinese	1,798	0.29
Indian	465	0.08
Pakistani	296	0.05
Bangladeshi	128	0.02
Black Caribbean	79	0.01
Black African	192	0.03
Other Black	160	0.03
Other Ethnic	429	0.07
Mixed Ethnic	2,240	0.37
Totals	609,475	100.00

Source: Census April 2001

(Table 7: Youth Service Participation Levels by Ethnic Group)

Ethnic Group	2002		2003	
	(n)	%	(n)	%
White	159,063	99.52	152,345	99.23
Chinese	185	0.12	292	0.19
Asian	157	0.10	275	0.18
Afro-Caribbean	117	0.07	206	0.13
Travellers	196	0.12	296	0.19
Others	116	0.07	120	0.08
Totals	159,834	100.00	153,534	100.00

Source: YCNI

Although, the categories employed by the NI Census and YCNI vary, it is evident that the ethnic communities overall are under represented within the service. Within the general population the percentage of the ethnic groups is 1.09% compared to a participation rate of 0.77%. Nevertheless, an increase in use by the ethnic minorities of 418 or 54.2% was recorded from 2002 to 2003.

3.6.3 MALES AND FEMALES

(Table 8: Gender of NI Population aged 4 to 25 in 2002)

Gender	Male	Female	Totals
Totals	276,236	265,036	541,272
Percentages	51.03	48.97	100.00

Source: NISRA

(Table 9: Youth Service Participation by Gender)

Gender	2002		2003	
	(n)	%	(n)	%
Male	83,429	52.1	83,066	51.6
Female	76,654	47.9	77,904	48.4
Totals	160,083	100.0	160,970	100.0

Source: YCNI

The breakdown of usage by gender mirrors very closely that of the overall population and the balance improved from 2002 to 2003.

3.6.4 PERSONS OF DIFFERENT AGES WITHIN NI AND PARTICIPATING IN THE YOUTH SERVICE

(Table 10: Membership by Age Groups in 2002)

Age Group	NI Population	Percentage of NI Population	Membership of Youth Service from Age Group	Percentage of Age Group Using Service
4-9	145,688	26.91	58,224	39.96
10-15	158,518	29.29	92,560	58.39
16-18	80,472	14.87	24,521	30.47
19-25	156,594	28.93	7,404	4.73
Totals	541,272	100.00	182,709	33.76

Source: DE Statistics Branch and NISRA

3.6.5 PERSONS WITH AND WITHOUT A DISABILITY

The review was unable to unearth any detailed statistics for the number of people with disabilities for the age group 4 to 25. However, according to the NI Census 2001, 20% of the population have some degree of disability, which is estimated at 343,000 people. The level of disability increases with age and 6% of those aged 16 to 24 have a disability (*Disabled People in the Labour Market, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2001*). As such, it is likely that there are approximately 30,000 young people with disabilities from a total population of 541,272.

(Table 11: Participation in the Youth Service by Young People with a Disability)

ELB	2002		2003	
	(n)	%	(n)	%
Belfast	554	15.7	1,066	26.4
North Eastern	1,139	32.3	713	17.6
South Eastern	450	12.7	513	12.7
Southern	633	17.9	762	18.8
Western	748	21.2	991	24.5
Totals	3,524	100.0	4,045	100.0

Source: YCNI

Taking the approximation of 30,000 young people with disabilities, it seems that somewhere in the region of 13% of those people avail of the youth service. A positive sign is that participation increased by 521 people from 2002 to 2003.

3.6.6 PERSONS OF DIFFERENT SEXUAL ORIENTATION

A survey was undertaken by YouthNet of 362 people under the age of 25 in Northern Ireland who identified as being of LGBT community. It is acknowledged that this is a relatively small survey; however there is a limited amount of research in this area. The key point is that people of different sexual orientation do participate in the service and this must be taken account of in terms of training and sensitivities to related issues.

(Table 12: Percentage of Respondents who were or are Members of Youth Organisations)

Type of Organisation	Percentages
Youth club	44
Youth group	27
Uniformed organisation	25
Church based youth group	21

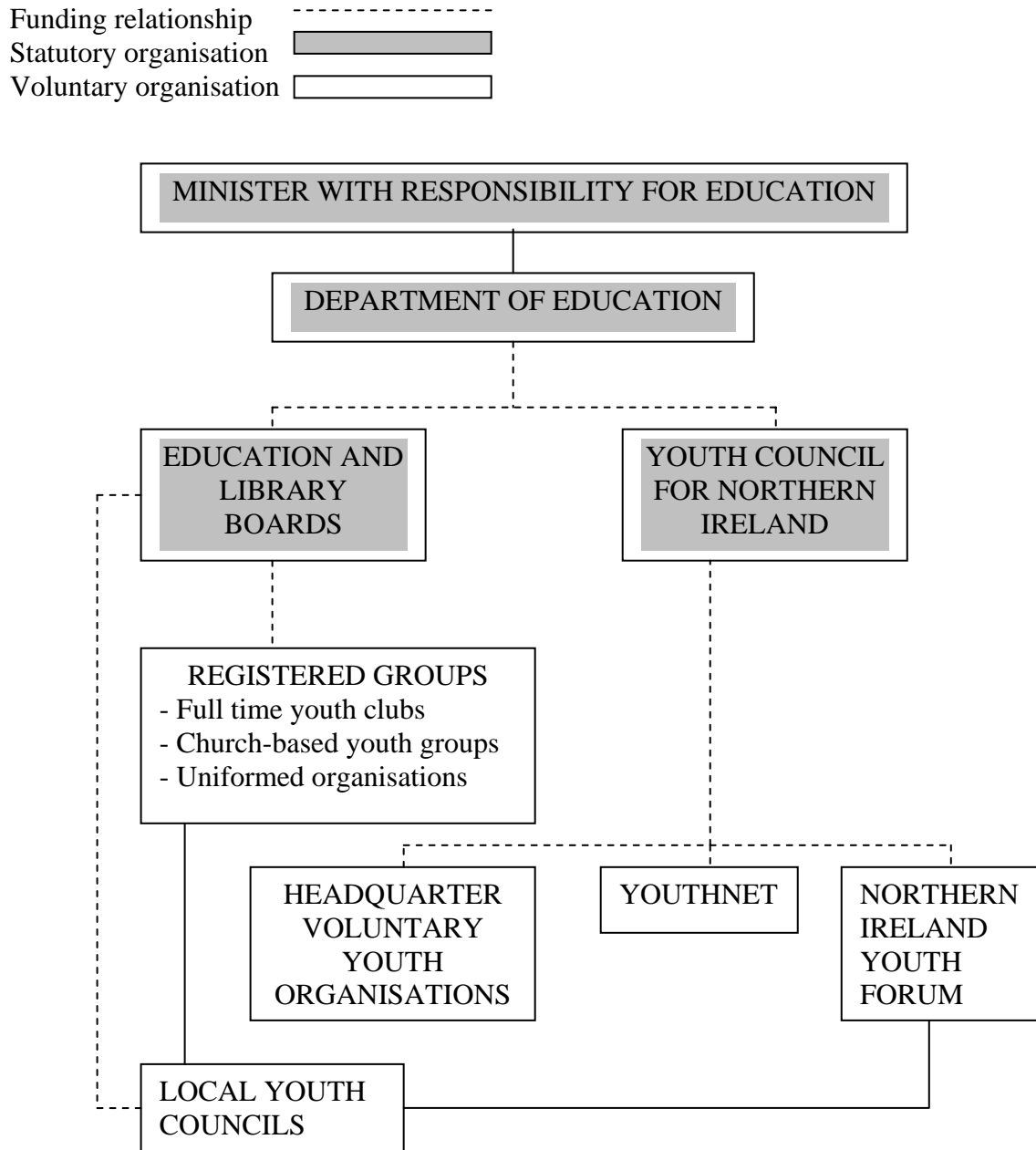
(Some respondents were members of more than one organisation)

Source: Shout Research Document, 2003. Produced by DE and YouthNet

3.7 STRUCTURE OF THE YOUTH SERVICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Figure 1 outlines the structure of the youth service showing the funding relationships between statutory and voluntary organisations.

(Figure 1: Structure of Youth Service in Northern Ireland)



4.0 METHODOLOGY FOR THE REVIEW

The purpose of a fundamental review is to improve the quality of services delivered. This is achieved by firstly identifying areas for development and, secondly, by sourcing examples of good practice that can be disseminated and adopted.

The methodology followed the “**four Cs**” approach of Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete, drawing on the experience of previous service reviews carried out by ELBs and CMSU.

The **Best Value Project Board** approved the methodology and the management of the project undertaken in accordance with government recommendations, using the PRINCE 2 system. As part of this process a Project Initiation Document was produced (*Appendix 3*) detailing project objectives, scope, terms of reference, structure, risk log and timetable.

A **Central Steering Team** was established (*Appendix 4*), the membership of which included the Head of Service from each ELB and representatives from DE, Equality, Finance, Human Resources and CMSU. The Head of Youth Service from the NEELB chaired this team.

In addition, three sub-groups were formed to manage the detailed workings of the review in specific areas:

- The **Consultation Group** (*Appendix 5*) was chaired by the Head of Service from the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) and comprised representatives from NEELB, Northern Ireland Youth Forum, Scouts Association, PHAB (NI) Inclusion Matters, Youth Link, St Theresa’s Youth Centre (Belfast), CMSU and Best Value Officers from the SELB and WELB.
- The **Controlled Provision Group** (*Appendix 6*) was chaired by the Head of Service from the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) and included representatives from youth service staff in Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB), NEELB, SEELB, SELB and WELB, Finance Officers from SEELB and WELB, Human Resources Officer from BELB, the Best Value Officer from SEELB and CMSU.
- The **Support to the Voluntary Sector Group** (*Appendix 7*) incorporated youth service staff from BELB, NEELB, SEELB, SELB and WELB, the Best Value Officer from NEELB and CMSU. The Head of Service from BELB chaired the group.

The role of the three sub-groups, in liaison with CMSU, was to compile and evaluate information and be updated at each step of the review, in addition to critically challenging how the service is delivered as outlined in section 4.1.

4.1 CHALLENGE

- 4.1.1 The process of challenge completely underpins the approach to carrying out a best value review. It marks the beginning of the review and sets the scene for what follows by way of recommendations, whilst instilling discipline in the thought process.

In England, local authorities have rejected a number of best value reviews as they were deemed to be insufficiently challenging.

The challenge process should be rigorous enough to penetrate the organisation and, in doing so, should question the status quo of the service in terms of role, purpose and existence and identify and explore the feasibility of all alternatives including “thinking the unthinkable”.

- 4.1.2 The stages of challenge examined:
- Why is the service provided?
 - How is the service configured?
 - Can the service be delivered differently? (i.e. delivered by other means than ELBs)
 - What are the constraints?
 - Are there different means of resourcing the service?
 - How does this service relate to others?
- 4.1.3 The challenge process formally commenced in March 2004. In a series of workshops, members of the central steering team and sub-groups considered the service against a number of key areas. (*See Appendix 8*)

4.2 COMPARE

- 4.2.1 The comparison stage entailed gathering data both internally from ELBs and externally from other youth service providers, residential centres and training organisations.

As in previous reviews, templates were agreed for the presentation of both statistical and financial data as a means of simplifying the collection and comparison of information across ELBs.

- 4.2.2 Criteria were agreed by the Central Steering Team in order to identify suitable organisations for external comparison. These criteria are detailed below.

- 4.2.2.1 Holistically with similar service providers:
- Based on population of young people aged between 13 and 19
 - Budget established for youth service
 - Youth service allied to education
 - Providing grant aid to the voluntary sector
 - Supporting and advising voluntary sector
 - Within United Kingdom

- 4.2.2.2 Residential centres:
 - Providing youth activities
 - Overnight accommodation
 - Within Northern Ireland

- 4.2.2.3 Training organisations:
 - Providing Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts (OCR) or Open College Network (OCN) staff accreditation
 - Providing youth service activity related qualifications for young people
 - Within Northern Ireland

4.3 CONSULT

- 4.3.1 The concept of consultation and customer involvement underpins the current drive for “best value”. Listening to and involving users of services in making improvements, setting standards and reviewing services is fundamental to the process.

The Youth Review Central Steering team approved the consultation strategy proposed by the Consultation Group. As part of the strategy, the Consultation Group identified a list of stakeholders as well as appropriate methodologies for consulting the various groups.

- 4.3.2 The key stakeholders comprised three groups: core, others education and others non-education. The groups are listed below by category.

Core:

- Young people attending a youth club
- Young people not attending a youth club
- Parents of young people attending a youth club
- Local Youth Councils
- Young people attending a residential centre
- Voluntary youth organisations with ELB support
- Voluntary youth organisations without ELB support
- Senior Youth Workers
- Youth service operational staff
- Youth service administrative staff

Others education:

- DE
- Education and Training Inspectorate
- YCNI
- Other ELB services – Finance, Human Resources, Legal and Insurance, Maintenance, Salaries and Wages and Transport
- Schools in receipt of youth services

Others non-education:

- Voluntary youth organisations
- Partnership and liaison groups
- Minority groups

4.3.3 Key themes to be addressed with the core users, as part of the consultation exercise, were identified as follows:

- Reasons for attending/not attending a youth club
- Frequency of attending
- Favoured/least favoured activities
- Suggestions for improvement
- Staff attitude
- Activities outside of youth club
- ELB support to voluntary sector
- Job satisfaction
- Health and safety/security

The above themes formed the basis of the consultation survey with users, non-users and parents and were used as the agenda for discussions with other core stakeholders through meetings and focus groups.

4.3.4 The main part of the consultation comprised questionnaires for the collection of quantitative data from users, non-users and parents. CMSU was aided in this process by ARK Social and Political Archive (a research organisation established by Queen's University, Belfast and University of Ulster).

ARK advised that the most efficient method would be to consult a random sample of users, non-users and parents. The methodology was employed to consult:

- Users of controlled youth clubs
- Users of voluntary youth clubs
- Parents of all users randomly selected
- Non-users of the service

The survey was distributed on a pro-rata basis according to the population of users within each ELB area. A pack containing questionnaires was issued to 47 randomly selected youth clubs in March 2004 (*Appendix 9*).

It was decided to send surveys to young people aged 10 years and older. A random sample of young people aged 4 to 9 was consulted through focus groups at 10 youth clubs.

A separate questionnaire was issued to all controlled residential and outdoor centres during March 2004 (*Appendix 9*).

A list of all youth clubs and residential/outdoor centres that participated in the consultation process is attached (*Appendix 10*).

4.3.5 All questionnaires were returned to CMSU and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Summaries of the results have been produced on a Northern Ireland aggregate basis, highlighting the position for ELBs in total, and on an individual ELB basis. Percentage results within the report refer to the valid responses from those respondents to which the various questions apply.

4.3.6 In addition to the postal surveys, focus groups and meetings with core and non-core consultees provided a wide range of qualitative information. Results of the surveys and views gathered through alternative methods have been included in the relevant sections of the report. Consultees are listed at *Appendix 11*.

4.4 COMPETE

4.4.1 During the review process it proved difficult to identify direct competition in relation to organisations that provide a similar service. The controlled and voluntary sectors were viewed as complementary elements of the same service. ELBs tend to establish controlled youth clubs in areas where there is no provision by the voluntary sector and would not set one up as direct competition. Furthermore, there is a distinct absence of provision in this area by the private sector, which prevented any assessment of the potential for competition from profit-making organisations.

4.4.2 It was agreed that competition could be perceived as any alternative activity undertaken by young people that would preclude them from going to a youth club. Therefore, the opportunity was taken through the user and non-user surveys to ascertain a range of common activities that young people were involved in and the reasons why.

It was anticipated that such information would prove useful to management when trying to attract young people to the service.

5.0 CHALLENGE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The challenge process was undertaken through a series of workshops, to which all members of the Central Steering Team and Working Groups were invited. This was in contrast to previous fundamental reviews, which were carried out through discussion forums. The workshops employed in this review were judged to be both interactive and productive. Consideration was given to a number of key issues, identified by the Central Steering Team, and the process was carried out in a rigorous and objective manner. As a result of these sessions a number of issues came to light, which are detailed in 5.2. **These issues are the perceptions and views of the workshop members, in their capacity as youth service staff, representatives of voluntary youth organisations and other officers within ELBs.**

5.2 ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

5.2.1 YOUTH SERVICE CONTEXT

- Exists to provide a necessary and important facility
- Provides personal and social development
- Maintains control and accountability in the distribution of public money
- Ensures level of consistency within the service across NI
- YSLF involves all key players within the service
- Too great an emphasis placed on formal education
- Single NI-wide service would bring increased lobbying powers and influence

5.2.2 SERVICE FUNDING

- Service perceived to be under-funded
- Short term funding leads to problems of sustainability
- Additional mainstream funds would enable an enhanced service to be delivered
- Short term funding creates additional bureaucracy and administration
- The service demonstrates value for money in many ways
- A degree of administration and accountability is necessary when working with public funds

5.2.3 STAFFING

- Need for additional staff, as current personnel are over-stretched
- Lack of consistency across ELBs in relation to staffing levels
- Problems in recruiting impacts on staffing levels
- Staff absenteeism is not viewed as a widespread problem
- Training for staff is relevant to roles and responsibilities

5.2.4 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

- Range of challenges facing the service in a social context
- Changes in acceptable behaviour of young people have evolved over the years
- Young people are subject to greater levels of peer pressure

- Young people demonstrate increased levels on independence and sophistication
- Geographical influences are not as constraining as previously
- Economic factors impact on the available time and money young people have
- Short-term funding can lead to a rise in expectation levels, which are difficult to sustain
- Demographic changes affect the service
- Movement of people requires careful management of the service
- ICT is changing the way that all services operate
- ICT can be used to help marginalized young people
- ICT is essential for staff to carry out work in a more efficient manner and as a key facilitator for training.
- Service is affected by changes in legislation
- The service is heavily involved in cross cutting issues and a range of partnerships
- Demands from external agencies/organisations can skew service planning and priorities

5.2.5 OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Deficit in maintenance and capital expenditure can have a detrimental effect on the service.
- Compliance with legislation e.g. disability access, paid out of recurrent and capital money
- Budgetary constraints impact on equipment levels
- Current opening times are convenient for the majority of users.
- Transport facilities provided by ELBs are considered appropriate and reasonably priced

5.2.6 YOUNG PEOPLE

- Many implications for the service in catering for such a wide age range from 4 to 25 years
- Changes in the behaviour of young people over recent years
- Historically, the service has developed a good rapport between staff and young people
- Key to making the service more attractive to young people is through the staff

5.2.7 CONTROLLED SECTOR

- ELBs make a direct provision as part of their statutory responsibilities
- Efficiency and effectiveness of the controlled service is measured through a range of mechanisms
- Level of complaints is historically low as activities are generally well managed
- Customer needs are identified through direct consultation
- The percentage of the population engaged by the controlled service is perceived to have remained constant

5.2.8 VOLUNTARY SECTOR

- Voluntary sector has developed through a combination of church, uniformed and community organisations
- Voluntary sector offers an alternative yet complementary approach to the controlled sector
- Voluntary organisations become aware of the support available from ELBs through a range of mechanisms
- Funding for the voluntary sector has not kept pace with inflation
- The number of registered groups has decreased over the last decade

5.2.9 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Leaders promote the ethos, values and principles of the youth service
- Leaders act as role models for service personnel and display a range of qualities
- Managers and staff are motivated and encouraged
- Managing change is important to address external and internal influences
- All members of staff are involved in planning to some degree
- The planning process produces measurable targets

5.2.10 CORPORATE CONTEXT

- Service objectives align with corporate objectives
- The service contributes to the overall achievements of ELBs
- Infrastructure in place to deliver an effective youth service
- Education is an integral part of the service
- Youth work tends to revolve around irregular work patterns and individual needs and does not lend itself easily to a routine.
- Many benefits to the ELBs in having a youth service:

5.2.11 COMMUNITY

- The service impacts on the quality of life of its users
- The service brings added value to the local community
- Satisfaction in the local community is measured
- The service constantly considers alternative ways of meeting the needs and aspirations of the community
- The current share of the overall education budget limits the service's ability to increase value within the community
- The service operates at optimum levels based on existing budgets

5.2.12 PARTNERSHIPS

- ELBs work together in a number of ways to promote consistency and harmonisation within the youth service
- Working in partnership promotes synergy and brings about many advantages
- There may be too many partnership meetings
- ELBs operate in partnership with the voluntary sector through
- The youth service has developed a number of strategic partnerships

6.0 COMPARE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter compares inputs, processes and outputs with similar service providers. Comparisons are made with regard to levels of resources and participation, holistic youth service providers, leadership training providers and residential centres.

To enable ongoing comparisons to be made, a discrete set of Performance Indicators has been agreed by service management, in conjunction with DE, as a means of carrying out inter-board comparisons on a like-for-like basis. This will enable different outcomes to be quickly identified and addressed, where necessary. Establishment of Performance Indicators will also, over a period of time, produce evidence of trends and continuous improvement. The Performance Indicators relate to core areas of service and are accompanied by initial targets for year 2005-2006.

Performance Indicators Agreed:

- Participation ratio of 4 to 18 year olds compared with population – target by 2005 of 34% (DE target of 36% participation by 2007)
- Involvement by 18 to 25 year olds in youth organisations, including young people in leadership – target 8%
- Satisfaction rating for ELB youth work adult training provided – target 80%
- Satisfaction rating of overall service provided to youth organisations – target 90% satisfactory or better
- Satisfaction rating of young people participating in selected youth activities, such as centre-based, issue-based or school projects – target 85% satisfactory or better
- Satisfaction rating of parents of young people working on specific projects – target 80% satisfactory or better

6.2 RESOURCES

6.2.1 EXPENDITURE

Detailed expenditure trends for ELBs for financial years 2001-2, 2002-3 and 2003-4 are contained in *Appendix 12*.

Table 13 contains details of the total sums allocated by DE to ELBs for both recurrent and capital expenditure of youth services, in respect of the three-year period 2001 to 2004. It should be noted that the funding for earmarked services includes approximately £1.2m each year for a Cross-Community Contact Programme involving school pupils and young people from the youth service.

(Table 13: DE Approved Budgets for ELB's Youth Services)

Budget Designation	2001-2 (£000s)	2002-3 (£000s)	Increase (percentage)	2003-4 (£000s)	Increase (percentage)
Recurrent					
Block Grant	14,878	15,830	6.40	17,352	9.60
Earmarked Services*	1,891	2,040	7.80	2,630	28.90
Executive Programme Funds*	273	692	153.50	882	27.50
Total	17,042	18,562		20,864	
Capital					
Block Grant	1,330	677	-50.00	602	-12.00
Executive Programme Funds*	592	588	-1.00	473	-20.00
Total	1,922	1,265		1,075	

Source: ELBs

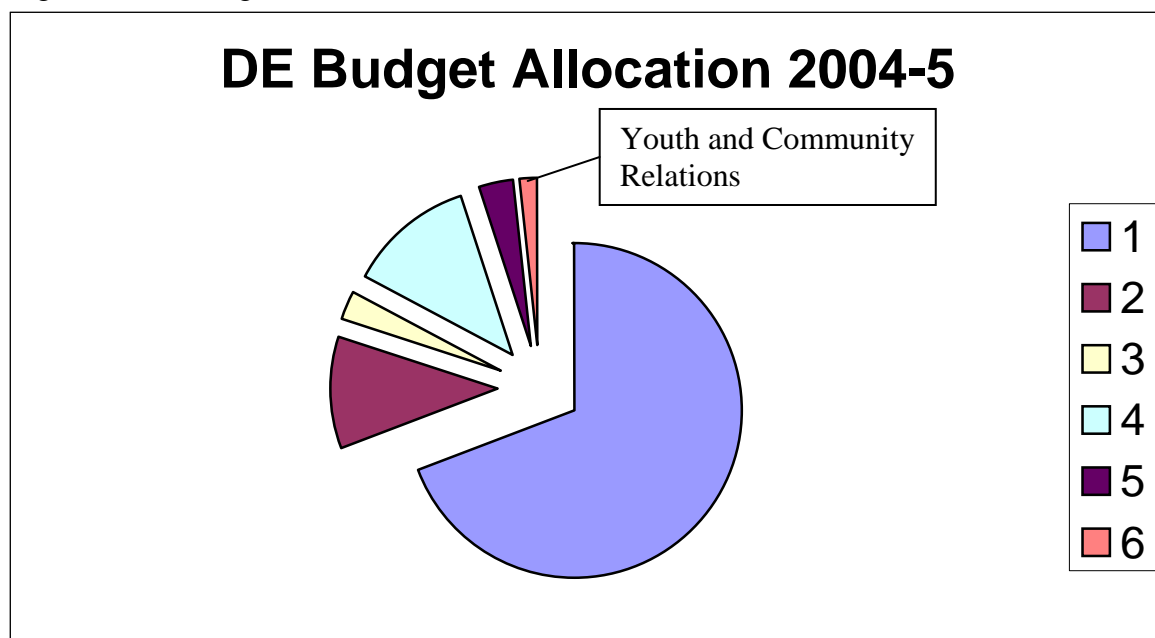
*Notes

1. Earmarked services include funding for Youth Services Support Scheme, Cross-Community Contract Scheme and Additional Support for North Belfast
2. The Executive Programme includes funding for Children at Risk, Social Inclusion and Additional Support for Shankill/West Belfast and North-East Belfast







6.2.2 BUDGET ALLOCATION

Figure 2 provides a breakdown of the DE budget allocation for 2004-5, with 1.6% of total expenditure given for Youth and Community Relations.

(Figure 2: DE Budget Allocation 2004-5)



Source: *DE Business Plan 2004-5*

-  1 – Schools Resource (ELBs) 69.3%
-  2 – Schools Resource (Voluntary Grammar Schools) 10.6%
-  3 – Schools Resource (Grant-Maintained Integrated Schools) 2.9%
-  4 – Schools Infrastructure 12.2%
-  5 – Other (DE administration, Non-Departmental Public Bodies, Miscellaneous) 3.4%
-  6 – Youth and Community Relations 1.6% (breakdown approximately 1.4% to Youth Service and 0.2% to Community Relations including schools community relations budget)

6.2.3 STAFFING

The number of people operating the service i.e. paid staff and volunteers has risen since 1994. Trends across the controlled and voluntary sectors are revealed in table 14. This has been achieved through a period of increasing difficulty in recruiting suitable people. The requirement for additional staff has exacerbated these problems of recruitment.

(Table 14: Youth Service Staffing and Volunteer Trends from 1994 to 2002)

Staff Category	1994	1997	2002
Paid Full Time	134	113	171
Paid Part Time	1,551	1,508	1,807
Volunteers	15,979	17,586	19,632
Totals	17,664	19,207	21,610

Source: DE Statistics Branch

It is notable that, although the total membership has reduced from 1997 to 2002, the numbers of staff and volunteers have grown over the same period. This reflects the increased levels of responsibility, administration and activities.

A sample of controlled youth clubs (44) was asked to supply details of volunteer support trends over the last five years. In 23 locations the number of volunteers had risen since 1999. Volunteers show a great degree of loyalty to the service as 21% of people in this sample have been with the same club in excess of five years. The value of volunteers' contribution is significant: in excess of three million hours per year across the controlled and voluntary sectors. Based on minimum wage levels, this equates to £14.4m per year.

Within ELBs, youth service 'leadership' staffing levels for 2002/3 are detailed in table 15. These figures relate to the numbers of full time and part time paid leaders and youth tutors.

(Table 15: ELB funded youth service staffing levels within ELBs)

	Full Time Leaders		Paid Part Time Leaders		Youth Tutors		Total	
	Vol	Con	Vol	Con	Vol	Con	Vol	Con
Belfast	45	36	285	115	2	2	332	153
North Eastern	0	16	219	342	1	12	220	370
South Eastern	6	21	107	116	1	3	114	140
Southern	10	10	157	79	1	5	168	94
Western	6	21	214	173	8	9	228	203
Totals	67	104	982	825	13	31		

Source: ELBs/DE Management Frameworks (2002/03)

6.2.4 LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE TO VOLUNTARY SECTOR

The levels of assistance provided to the voluntary sector vary across ELBs dependent upon availability of resources and organisational priorities. The Inter-Board Youth Panel is currently addressing issues of uniformity and consistency. Financial support to the voluntary sector for year 2002-3 is shown in table 16. It should be noted that the following figures do not take account of the value of other types of support such as training and advice. At least 50% of the time and support of service officers and clerical staff is provided for the voluntary sector.

(Table 16: Financial Support to Voluntary Sector)

ELB	Financial Support (£)
BELB	1,066,862
NEELB	475,099
SEELB	563,660
SELB	945,121
WELB	672,988
Total	3,723,730

Source: ELBs

6.3 PARTICIPATION

(Table 17: Attendance at Youth Service in NI by young people in Age Groups (1994 to 2002))

Age Group	1994	1997	2002
5-9	57,391	62,469	
4-9*			58,224
10-15	78,740	94,324	92,560
16-18	28,983	25,758	24,521
19-25	12,525	10,959	7,404
Totals	142,314	193,510	182,709

*The age range was extended to include 4-year old children in 1999

Source: DE Statistics Branch

Although the overall total membership has reduced by 10,801 from 1997 to 2002, as population numbers have also been falling, the **percentage** of young people using the service has remained relatively static from 34.75% to 33.76%.

6.4 SIMILAR SERVICE PROVIDERS

The National Youth Agency (NYA) provided comparative information on a number of local authorities delivering a holistic youth service. Tables detailing this information are provided at *Appendix 13*.

Six authorities were selected from England that covered a representation of urban, rural and mixed areas. Information for year 2001-2 was provided and comparisons have been made with ELBs for the same year. It is acknowledged that the following comparisons are not made on a like for like basis but similar enough to provide a reasonable picture of performance.

The authorities were:

- Birmingham
- Essex
- Gateshead
- Hampshire
- Kent
- Lancashire

6.4.1 MAINSTREAM FUNDING

This examines the percentage of an authority's total recurrent education expenditure committed to the youth service.

- The English authorities ranged from 0.67% to 1.30% and averaged 0.90% (to cater for ages 11 to 25)
- ELBs ranged from 1.42% to 1.97% and averaged 1.57% (to cater for ages 4 to 25)

6.4.2 GRANT AID

The percentage of the youth service budget provided to support the voluntary sector.

- The English authorities ranged from 2.24% to 20.72% and averaged 8.35%
- ELBs ranged from 15.03% to 30.99% and averaged 22.81%

6.4.3 STAFF TRAINING

This section covers the percentage of youth service expenditure allocated to staff training.

- The English authorities ranged from 0.96% to 6.46% and averaged 3.37%
- Details of training expenditure were limited to three ELBs, which equated to an average of 1.33%

6.4.4 SPEND PER HEAD OF POPULATION

This relates to the average spending on each young person within the population. Again it is important to take account of the differing age ranges catered for.

- The English authorities ranged from £17.58 to £39.35 and averaged £23.01
- ELBs ranged from £24.89 to £39.57 and averaged £29.45

6.4.5 SPEND PER HEAD OF YOUNG PEOPLE ATTENDING

This refers to the average spending on each young person that actually uses the service.

The English authorities ranged from £139.60 to £252.46 and averaged £161.30
ELBs ranged from £71.24 to £115.50 and averaged £87.24

6.4.7 CONTACTS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

These are the percentages of young people that actually avail of the youth service.

- The English authorities ranged from 7.91% to 28.09% and averaged 17.07%
- ELBs ranged from 29.33% to 37.01% and averaged 33.76%

6.5 TRAINING PROVIDERS

Those training providers offering similar youth related courses in Northern Ireland were requested to supply details of their services. These are shown at *Appendix 14*.

ELBs provide a comprehensive range of training courses to both the controlled and voluntary sectors. In 2002-3 a total of 450 full-time controlled staff and 59 full-time voluntary staff received in service training by the ELB youth service. In addition, 2,264 and 1,973 leadership courses were given to controlled part-time and volunteer leaders respectively. ELBs offer 134 training courses for youth service staff and volunteers.

The youth service compares very favourably to other training organisations and dedicates between 1.0% and 1.5% of recurrent budgets to staff training. The major leadership courses sponsored by OCR and OCN are provided by all ELBs.

6.6 RESIDENTIAL AND OUTDOOR CENTRES

Comparative information regarding residential and outdoor centres is provided at *Appendix 15*.

6.6.1 CHARGING

ELBs have developed individual charging systems and rates for the use of residential and outdoor centres. Preference is normally given to groups from within their own Board area.

Some variations in rates are shown below:

- Mid-week for a single day/night for a student from the ELB area range from £12.50 to £22.85
- Weekend for a single day/night for a student from the ELB area range from £12.50 to £20.62
- Mid-week for a single day/night for an adult from outside the ELB area are £12.50 to £38.10

Limited comparisons were made with residential centres from the voluntary sector and day/night rates varied from £6.50 for self-catering to £13.00 for bed and breakfast.

6.6.2 USAGE

The centres are widely used with 54,930 young people staying overnight in addition to a total day usage of 67,682 during 2002-3. Combined overnight capacity of the centres is 463 with an average usage of 220 per night throughout the whole year. This equates to 48% usage for overnight stays. The centres are usually open 45 weeks and 35 weekends within the year.

The centres provide a large range of facilities and activities and are extensively used, particularly by schools. However, some concerns were raised about duplication of activities and it is important that any replication is kept to a minimum, whilst still delivering sufficient capacity to meet demand.

6.6.3 COSTS

ELBs make provision for 134 controlled youth clubs and 14 residential centres and recurrent expenditure on residential centres equated to approximately 14% of total youth service expenditure in 2002-3.

Although residential centres are funded directly from the youth service budget, they provide an important facility for both schools and youth organisations.

7.0 CONSULTATION

Consultation was carried out through a combination of surveys and in excess of forty focus groups and meetings with a wide range of stakeholders. The process highlighted a number of key findings, which are detailed in the following sections.

7.1 SURVEYS

Issues and returns from each ELB area, from the surveys undertaken, are shown in table 18. The levels of returns were generally low; however, a number of reasons were identified for this, including:

- The total number of members per club was targeted; in retrospect it may have been more appropriate to use the average attendance. This figure is approximately one third of the total membership
- Many clubs within the voluntary sector close at Easter time until September
- Lack of a formal structure to influence young people to complete and return forms. Unlike the more structured classroom environment
- The process may have been perceived as additional bureaucracy

(Table 18: Breakdown of survey questionnaires issued and returned)

Questionnaire Type	BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB	TOTALS PER TYPE
QUESTIONNAIRES ISSUED						
User attending a residential/outdoor centre	102	180	155	88	48	573
User attending a voluntary youth club	306	298	267	270	308	1449
Parent of user attending a voluntary youth club	306	298	267	270	308	1449
User attending a controlled youth club	281	211	230	264	230	1216
Parent of user attending a controlled youth club	281	211 13	230	264	230	1216
Non-user	1174	1018	994	1068	1076	5330
Total questionnaires per ELB	2450	2216	2143	2224	2200	11233
Total number of centres/clubs surveyed	12	16	13	11	7	59
QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED						
Total number of responses as at 31.05.04	116	264	227	553	467	1675
Percentage of responses received in total	4.7	11.9	10.5	24.8	21.2	14.4
Percentage of residential centre user responses received	24.5	51.1	62.5	61.3	87.5	54.1
Percentage of youth club user responses received	12.7	20.8	5.6	34.8	39.0	22.7
Percentage of parents responses received	2.8	9.2	5.8	13.2	23.9	10.9
Percentage of non-user responses received	0.5	3.1	7.3	21.7	8.0	8.0

7.1.1 SURVEY OF USERS:

- 34.2% of respondents have been members of a youth club in excess of five years
- Friends and teachers are the main sources of information on youth clubs at 38.6% and 22.9% respectively
- 63.1% of young people attend a club 1 to 2 days per week
- 87.8% attend to have fun and 59.3% go because their friends also attend
- 38.6% go to learn new skills and 38.3% like to meet new acquaintances
- The vast majority of young people are happy or very happy with most aspects of the youth club: 90.4% with the range of activities, 90.9% with the organised trips and 91.1% with the opening hours
- Aspects with which respondents are unhappy or very unhappy include 22.4% with the amount of equipment available, 23.6% with the outside appearance of the building and 28.5% with the toilet facilities

- The young people are generally very favourable towards staff within the clubs: 79.3% consider staff to be helpful, 84.6 think they are friendly, 80.7% see them as approachable and 64.1% think the staff give advice and guidance
- 95.9% of respondents are either happy or very happy with their clubs

A full analysis of user responses is at *Appendix 16*.

7.1.2 SURVEY OF NON-USERS:

- 65.6% of non-users have previously been members of a youth club or organisation
- 32.6% left the club because they considered themselves to be too old
- 79.4% have a youth club near their home
- 60.1% have friends that currently attend a club near their home
- 58.2% do not attend the club close to home because they either do not have time or have too much homework
- Changes that would encourage non-users to attend include:
 - 46.2% - if my friends went
 - 38.4% - more trips away
 - 28.0% - different range of activities
 - 21.4% - if the building was nicer
- However, 13.5% report that nothing would encourage them to attend

A full analysis of non-user responses is at *Appendix 17*.

7.1.3 SURVEY OF PARENTS:

- Parents are generally happy or very happy with most aspects of the youth club that their child attends. However there are some areas with which they are **not** happy:
 - 32.1% - the outside appearance of the building
 - 31.2% - amount of equipment available
 - 29.4% - toilet facilities
 - 28.9% - the inside of the building
 - 22.5% - type of equipment available
- A range of benefits of young people attending youth clubs was identified with which parents are happy:
 - 90.7% - mixing with others
 - 75.6% - social activities
 - 73.9% - personal and social development
 - 67.4% - health/physical activity
 - 55.7% - educational development
- Suggestions for improvements include:
 - 39.9% - more sports activities
 - 30.2% - trips away
 - 21.3% - more staff
 - Better co-ordination of activities with other elements of ELBs e.g. Curriculum Advisory Support Service (CASS) to address areas of concern such as obesity

A full analysis of parent responses is at *Appendix 18*.

7.1.4 SURVEY OF RESIDENTIAL CENTRES:

- Views were taken of young people attending a controlled residential centre during the census week in March 2004

- 65.3% of young people had never previously attended that particular residential centre
- 71.2% were members of a controlled or voluntary youth club
- Respondents were happy or very happy with most aspects of the centre
- Areas of highest satisfaction were:
 - 96.9% - range of activities
 - 92.2% - location
 - 92.2% - type of equipment
 - 90.5% - amount of equipment
 - 89.8% - outside appearance of the building
 - 88.7% - inside of the building(s)
- Areas where respondents were unhappy or very unhappy included:
 - 22.1% - sleeping facilities
 - 13.9% - toilet facilities
- Members of staff were considered:
 - 85.6% - provide advice and guidance
 - 85.0% - helpful
 - 85.0% – friendly
 - 83.1% - approachable
- Overall, 96.6% were either happy or very happy with the centre

A full analysis of residential centre user responses is at *Appendix 19*.

7.1.5 SURVEY OF YOUTH CLUBS:

- The survey was carried out in controlled and voluntary clubs and residential centres
- The number of staff is related to the number of young people attending the club, however, most clubs have between 1 and 10 full-time and part-time staff working directly with young people
- Most clubs have at least one member of staff qualified in youth work
- 10.7% of clubs have no qualified staff
- A range of activities is offered, the most common being organised trips, educational work and personal and social development work

A full analysis of club responses is at *Appendix 20*.

7.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In addition to the surveys, further consultation took place through more than forty meetings and focus groups in order to obtain qualitative information and feedback on the youth service. A list of consultees is at *Appendix 10*. The information acquired relates to the views and perceptions of individuals and groups and, in some instances, is contradictory. Key trends and findings have been categorised under a number of headings.

- Needs of Young People
- Resources
- Service Delivery
- Leadership and Administration
- Partnerships
- Community and Environment
- Equality
- Service Profile

7.2.1 NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

This section looks at the wide range of needs of young people, from confidence building and development of social skills to simply seeking enjoyment. Through highlighting these needs, it enables the youth service to target scarce resources more accurately. Important needs, as identified by the consultees, include:

- Challenging the assumptions and values of young people
- Address differing development needs
- Development of future leaders
- Encourage young people to 'have a voice'
- Issues such as exclusion and marginalisation
- Too much emphasis on academic qualifications

7.2.2 RESOURCES

Resources include financial, staffing, buildings and equipment. An assessment of the resources helps to identify any gaps between what is needed to deliver a quality service and what is actually available.

7.2.2.1 Financial Issues:

Discussions took place around the following key areas:

- Level of funding and meeting expectations of young people
- Proposed changes to the current funding formula
- Implications of a ring-fenced budget
- Budget provision in relation to the target age range
- Short term funding and associated bureaucracy
- Funding of the Curriculum Development Unit
- Compliance with statutory obligations e.g. DDA
- Wide age range results in resources being sparsely distributed

7.2.2.2 Staffing Issues:

Staffing matters included:

- Recruitment and turnover of staff
- Temporary employment
- Work/life balance
- Absenteeism cover
- Ratio of youth workers to young people
- Job evaluation
- Changes in working environment and society in general
- Personal safety and security
- Age profile of youth workers
- Pay levels

7.2.2.3 Building Issues:

Issues were raised in relation to:

- Maintenance
- Minor works and capital budgets
- Statutory requirements i.e.: DDA
- Public Private Partnerships
- Optimum use of resources

7.2.2.4 Equipment Issues:

Equipment issues related to:

- The range of facilities and equipment
- School-based facilities
- ICT

7.2.3 SERVICE DELIVERY

This aspect is concerned with why the service exists i.e. statutory obligations and what the service provides with regard to the range of activities, procedures and standards.

7.2.3.1 Statutory Obligations

Consultations on statutory obligations incorporated:

- Provision of youth service to young people aged from 4 to 25 years
- Levels of bureaucracy and accountability
- Relationship with the voluntary sector
- Impact of review of public administration

7.2.3.2 Range of Activities

The service covers a wide range of activities, including:

- Relationship with formal education e.g. EOTAS
- Addressing challenges of marginalised young people
- Demands on staff e.g. increased administration
- Specific programmes e.g. XI for school years 11 and 12
- Outreach facilities
- Support to the voluntary sector
- Cross-community work

7.2.3.3 Procedures

Procedures are an essential element in effective service delivery with regard to:

- Interdependence with formal education
- Use of community schools and school-based staff
- Incorporation into mainstream activities
- Communications
- Training
- Need to raise profile of the service

7.2.3.4 Standards

Standards are specified and adhered to in order to maintain and develop a high quality of service. These standards relate to:

- Development of youth service curriculum and core principles
- Implementation of service curriculum and links to the formal education curriculum
- Encouragement of young people in decision-making
- Measuring performance and quality
- Service level agreements
- Monitoring of procedures within controlled and voluntary youth clubs
- Need to quantify impact of service over the medium to long-term
- Demonstration of accountability e.g. ELB Committees

7.2.4 LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

Leadership and administration is concerned with how the service is managed and directed. This incorporates planning, communications and organisational culture.

7.2.4.1 Planning

Effective planning is crucial to ensuring delivery of a successful service. Issues discussed include:

- Service planning linked to the strategic aims and priorities of the individual ELBs
- Planning process cascaded down the organisation
- All staff contributing to planning process
- Clear vision and key objectives for the service
- Incorporation of partnership objectives
- Youth service strategy for NI
- Leadership
- Meeting challenges e.g. improving rural accessibility

7.2.4.2 Communications

Feedback on communications referred to staff being knowledgeable about the direction of the service, clarity of roles and the need to identify and address any gaps in the passage of information to people at all levels.

7.2.4.3 Organisational Culture

The service has developed a distinct culture over a period of time. Comments were made in respect of:

- Need to manage the culture
- Levels of bureaucracy
- Need for increased flexibility and responsiveness
- Job satisfaction
- Diverse aspects of the job

7.2.5 PARTNERSHIPS

This element addresses the reasons why partnerships are formed and with whom. A range of partnerships exists at different levels. These comprise working with schools, voluntary organisations and other statutory bodies e.g. health promotion. Points were made regarding:

- Wide range of expertise and resources addressing specific challenges
- Youth service well placed to engage young people
- Importance of monitoring and evaluation partnerships
- Potential for conflict e.g. organisational priorities
- Extensive lobbying powers of voluntary sector
- Potential for increased use of school resources
- Effectiveness over the longer term
- Relationship between controlled and voluntary youth sectors
- Links with external organisations to benchmark performance i.e.: NYA
- Need for 'joined-up' approach by government

7.2.6 COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

The youth service has the potential to impact positively across the whole community through the development and involvement of young people. Furthermore, well-

structured and mature communities tend to enhance the local environment. Consultees put forward the following points:

- Helps develop the society of today and tomorrow
- Value measured through greater social achievement in the community
- Assists in establishing community infrastructures
- Relations built up through outreach
- Local presence of youth service within the community
- Contribution of club based and outreach provision – a balanced approach

7.2.7 EQUALITY

ELBs are obliged, through Section 75(1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, to promote equality of opportunity across the nine dimensions and the promotion of good relations across the areas of religion, race and political opinion. The youth service, through the promotion of the curriculum, has the opportunity to help develop understanding and harmony between people of all communities and backgrounds. In this area, the link between formal and informal education is crucial.

Issues were raised in relation to general equality matters, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

7.2.7.1 Generic Equality Issues

- Participation by minority groups
- Reaching out to all sections of the community
- Involvement in equality matters by individual services
- Development of good practice e.g. bullying policy
- Role models from minority groups and staff recruitment
- Relations with representative umbrella groups
- Cost and practicalities of complying with equality legislation
- Establishment of current baselines of participation

7.2.7.2 Disability

- Levels of uptake
- Access
- Partnerships
- Awareness
- Representation
- Personal care and health and safety
- Resources
- Project working

7.2.7.3 Ethnicity

- Cultural differences
- Provision of a safe environment
- Awareness and training
- Language barriers
- Promotion of harmony

7.2.7.4 Sexual Orientation

- Equality-proofed funding
- Proactive approach

- Staff awareness and training
- Partnership approach
- Youth club policies

7.2.8 SERVICE PROFILE

Through the course of the review, it became apparent that the service has a broad remit in terms of the number of people involved, the age range of those people and the sheer scope of activities in which it is involved. The general public's view of the service is that of young people gathering on a regular basis to play table tennis etc. However, nothing could be further from the truth and it is important that this widely held perception is changed. Issues discussed include:

- Service profile within ELBs
- Recognition of youth work
- Marketing the service
- Demonstration of achievements
- Public relations
- NI youth service strategy
- Professional career
- Register of youth workers

8.0 COMPETE

The process of identifying and agreeing competition for the youth service proved to be elusive. Competition, in the normal manner, is conspicuous by its absence in that there are no providers of comparative youth services within the private sector. This may be because the private sector does not consider these areas of activity to be profitable. Certainly, in the historic sense, private sector organisations have not operated in this particular field. No previous market testing of the service has been carried to ascertain expressions of interest.

The lack of private sector competition makes it difficult to establish if there is indeed a market or a capability to deliver a viable youth service outside of the statutory or voluntary sectors. However, it is possible to undertake voluntary competitive tendering (VCT) of the service in the future to determine the level of interest from the private sector.

8.1 The London Borough of Lambeth, as part of its Best Value Review of Youth and Play Services in 2001, investigated methods of assessing competitiveness. A 'soft marketing exercise' was identified that could include an independent benchmarking exercise, dummy tendering and market research. Further details of the methodology and findings are at www.lambeth.gov.uk/education

Furthermore, North Lincolnshire Council undertook a Best Value Review of its Youth Service in 2000. The council acknowledged that there was a lack of commercial providers of youth services and carried out research into the viability of establishing a trust to operate the service. The review document can be accessed at www.northlincs.gov.uk

The services delivered by voluntary organisations, such as church, community and uniformed units, are considered to be complementary to the statutory provision of the ELBs. In effect, in locations where the voluntary sector operates, the ELBs tend not to promote a presence. It is deemed that scarce resources should be employed in areas of most need.

8.2 The Central Steering Team, after much debate, agreed to define competition as 'alternative activities that draw on the same core population as the youth service'. As part of the surveys of users and non-users of the service, information was obtained on the range of activities that young people participate in outside of youth clubs.

Spare time activities, carried out by percentage of service users within statutory and voluntary clubs, are shown in table 19. The responses were similar, however. It is notable that many more young people who attended youth clubs within the voluntary sector took part in church-based activities, played music and read.

(Table 19: Other activities of youth service users)

Spare Time Activity	Controlled Clubs (%)	Voluntary Clubs (%)	All (%)
Hang out with friends	78.8	80.9	80.6
Watch television	68.7	79.8	78.2
Take part in sport	51.4	63.2	61.5
Cinema	54.7	56.4	56.2
Home computer	40.8	50.1	48.8
Watch sport	40.8	46.4	45.6
Read	24.0	42.7	40.0
Attend after school clubs	29.1	40.2	38.6
Bowling	36.9	33.0	33.6
Play music e.g. band/orchestra	14.5	32.5	29.9
Church-based activities	6.7	31.6	28.0
Ice skating	14.5	18.2	17.7
Working part-time	11.7	16.5	15.8
Extra study	13.4	12.8	12.9
Other *	2.8	11.7	10.4

* Other responses included:

- Swimming
- Dancing
- Speech and drama
- Horse riding

Spare time activities by non-users of the service are detailed in table 20.

(Table 20: Activities by non-users of the youth service)

Spare Time Activity	Percentage
Watch television	67.0
Hang out with friends	58.6
Home computer	47.4
Cinema	43.9
Take part in sport	41.2
Watch sport	38.7
Read	29.3
Work part-time	27.0
Attend after school clubs	25.6
Play music	21.1
Bowling	20.3
Ice skating	20.3
Church-based activities	16.9
Extra study	11.9
Other *	5.2

* Other responses included:

- Football
- Swimming
- Speech and drama

- Skateboard
- Pony riding
- Hang around streets

In addition to the surveys, young people were asked about their spare time activities through focus groups. A similar range of answers was forthcoming, including:

- Listening to music
- Playing sports
- Swimming
- Cinema
- Computer games
- Watch television
- Play with friends

8.3 It is evident that, although the youth service does not face competition directly from the private sector in relation to similar service provision, there is a strong element of competition from a large number of sources on a daily basis. This competition includes a mix of private sector (cinema, bowling), public sector (leisure centres), voluntary sector (church-based) and home entertainment (television and computers). It is essential that the service continue to attract young people through providing a combination of recreation, education and fun. Furthermore, it is important that this competition is acknowledged and responded to through innovation and continuous improvement of services.

9.0 CONCLUSION

‘The youth service does so much with so little.’ This comment by a consultee neatly summarises the findings of the fundamental review. It is apparent that the service is much admired within the ‘industry’ and achieves superb results with limited resources. Members of staff are to be commended for their professional approach, commitment, flexibility and enthusiasm in the face of a difficult job.

The fundamental review has looked at all key aspects of service delivery and it has become clear that the youth service has many elements of strength and good practice. Inevitably, in a service of such wide scope, a few areas have been identified which require to be developed.

There are many developments currently taking place that have the potential to impact on the youth service in a major way e.g. Review of Public Administration, EQIA and the NI Youth Work Strategy. It is important that, as a result of any change, the service retains its strengths and does not lose focus of its main aims. The youth service must maintain a local presence, meeting local needs, to develop the young people of today as the responsible citizens of tomorrow.

This chapter outlines the major areas of strength within the service, using examples of good practice to emphasise the point, and those elements where further progress is needed.

9.1 STRENGTHS

- 9.1.1 The service exhibits a clear sense of purpose with a corporate vision, mission, aims and objectives established through DE in conjunction with ELBs and YCNI. This is emphasised in the youth service policy review and the document ‘A Youth Service for the New Millennium’.
- 9.1.2 The establishment of a model curriculum and the Curriculum Development Unit give greater purpose and focus to the service in general and to youth organisations in particular.
- 9.1.3 The Inter Board Youth Panel, comprising the Heads of Service from the five ELBs is an ideal mechanism to improve planning, co-ordination and communications.
- 9.1.4 The complementary arrangement between ELBs and the voluntary sector, whereby they are not in competition with each other, reduces duplication of effort and facilities and also ensures that limited resources are expended more efficiently.
- 9.1.5 The service has developed ways of obtaining the maximum use from limited resources. A prime example is the use of community schools and youth tutors such as Ballee Community School and Limavady High School. This practice shares costs, expertise and facilities for the benefit of young people throughout the area.
- 9.1.6 A wide range of services is provided, incorporating youth clubs, outreach provision, leadership development, outdoor activities and complementing the

formal education curriculum in relation to marginalised and excluded young people. Examples of good practice include the EOTAS and XI programmes.

- 9.1.7 The service has achieved a high uptake and usage from young people in NI, with an overall percentage attending youth clubs and units in 2002 in excess of 33%. This figure compares favourably to the remainder of UK, which has an average attendance of approximately 17%. The relatively high involvement of young people is firm evidence of the quality of service delivered.
- 9.1.8 The service gives a voice to young people and enables them to contribute to the future and to their communities. Good practice is demonstrated by the 'Visions 4 2 Moro' annual conference held by SELB, which is attended by more than 100 young people. This conference offers an opportunity for feedback and representation of views.
- 9.1.9 Partnerships have been developed at all levels with organisations from the public and voluntary sectors as a means of delivering a comprehensive service that meets the needs of young people. Many of these partnerships are very successful and impact positively on the lives of young people. Examples of good practice include Extern West, addressing the issue of youth intervention, Drug and Alcohol Co-ordinating Teams, both Homefirst Community Trust and Westcare Business Services, which relate to health promotion and JEDI promoting the equality agenda.
- 9.1.10 The service and its staff are highly valued by those organisations and individuals with which it operates. This is demonstrated through promotion of an informal education system, initiatives to enhance inclusivity and developmental work with young people and their communities.
- 9.1.11 Staff expertise is highly valued, particularly within partnerships, where youth workers are seen as the gateway to accessing young people. A prime example of this expertise being effectively employed is through the Children's Services Planning Groups.
- 9.1.12 There are currently in excess of 19,000 volunteers who, through giving up their free time, contribute enormously and add great value to the service. The volunteers are highly regarded and it is widely acknowledged that the service could not function without their involvement. In order to encourage young people to assist in running the service, NEELB has developed a scheme for volunteer apprenticeships.
- 9.1.13 Community development, over the long term, is a key achievement of the service, through encouraging local people to take responsibility for young people and their neighbourhoods. Examples of this would be work in interface areas, establishment of community youth groups and summer activity programmes.
- 9.1.14 Inclusion is strongly promoted within the service as a means of increasing participation from minority groups and disenfranchised young people. This is demonstrated by encouraging LGBT young people to attend residential courses in order that they may identify challenges and how they might be overcome. Furthermore, staff awareness training in relation to addressing and

working with LGBT young people has been carried out and DE has funded two posts to increase the capacity of LGBT. Another example of attempting to increase levels of mainstreaming is the setting up of pilot schemes between ELBs and groups representing people with disabilities such as SEELB and Phab (NI) Inclusion Matters. The aim being to promote youth clubs for all.

9.1.15 Innovation is a key aspect of delivering an effective and efficient service. It is important to develop as the needs and aspirations of young people change. Managers encourage such an approach, which is demonstrated by the range of projects and initiatives currently ongoing. These include outreach programmes (NEELB), regeneration initiatives (BELB) and working in schools (WELB).

9.2 AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

9.2.1 YOUNG PEOPLE

9.2.1.1 The service has made many advances with regard to improving levels of inclusion by young people. This includes minority groups and those young people that are marginalised or disadvantaged. Those with a religious belief other than Protestant or Roman Catholic and people with disabilities and from the LGBT communities appear to be well represented within the youth service. Also greater numbers of excluded young people are being contacted through outreach programmes and special initiatives. However, there are areas that need to be addressed. There is low participation by ethnic minority groups and, it must be recognised, many LGBT young people do not necessarily feel that they can be open and frank about their sexual orientation. As such, efforts must be made to make the youth service even more inclusive and welcoming to people of all backgrounds. This may be achieved through special forums to address specific issues and through encouraging more leaders and role models from minority groups and communities.

9.2.1.2 Insufficient, systematic and planned consultation is held with the service's key stakeholders i.e. voluntary youth organisations, young people and parents. Such consultation should be undertaken on an ongoing basis e.g. annually, to obtain up-to-date information on changing needs and feedback on performance and to measure satisfaction levels. It is important that the process is carried out with an appropriate sized sample and consultation overload is avoided. Consultation will also provide data towards the Performance Indicators that have been established.

9.2.1.3 The youth service operates within an educational framework and this should facilitate the transfer of information between services. Within the youth service this relates to the passage of information on special needs and behavioural problems to and from education psychology, education welfare etc. If a young person attending the youth service has specific needs then it is important that members of staff are suitably informed within the context of freedom of information and data protection legislation.

9.2.2 PROFILE

9.2.2.1 The service is highly regarded within education and by its users. It provides a valuable function with regard to formal and informal education, the development of young people and through its contribution to partnerships. Nevertheless, it does have a relatively low profile outside of ELBs and across the wider community. This low profile impacts upon recruitment, professional standing of staff and effectively publicising its good work and achievements. In effect, there is no marketing strategy for the service.

9.2.3 PARTNERSHIPS

9.2.3.1 The service contributes to a plethora of partnerships with community, voluntary and statutory bodies. Many of these partnerships achieve excellent results in the areas of community development, reducing exclusion and promoting key aspects of health. Concern was raised that too much emphasis is placed on partnership work to the detriment of core youth service operations and organisational objectives. It is important that the service only enters into partnerships that are geared to meeting the service's objectives in accordance with local needs, which the service benefits from and to which all parties fully contribute.

9.2.4 RESOURCES

9.2.4.1 Greater resources for the youth service should be regarded as an investment in the development of young people, which has the potential to reduce future costs in relation to anti-social behaviour and promote a positive approach to the community and environment.

9.2.4.2 Revision of the current funding formula for the service is causing concern that the levels of support to some ELBs may be reduced although there has been no concurrent decrease in the needs of young people in those areas. Such a development is likely to result in the withdrawal of facilities contrary to local requirements. However, other ELBs may receive additional funding and would welcome the introduction of a new formula.

9.2.4.3 Much of the funding for the service is only available on a short term basis, i.e. two to three years, from a number of Government Departments. This approach creates challenges of sustainability and credibility, whereby support can be withdrawn from a particular project or initiative just as it is becoming established and starting to make a difference. It would be beneficial for strategic planning purposes, if the vast majority of money was distributed through DE, with a part of that money dedicated to meeting local priorities.

- 9.2.4.4 The age range, catered for by the youth service, has been gradually expanded to accommodate larger numbers of young people. In addition, developments in relation to equality legislation and greater inclusiveness have placed an increasing burden on a limited capability. The concern of many within the service is that spreading resources too thinly reduces effectiveness and the limits of responsibility are close to or have already been reached, based on current capacity. This point further reinforces the need to fund levels of service according to organisational priorities and responsibilities.
- 9.2.4.5 It is important to balance the levels of bureaucracy within the service. Perceptions from some parts of the wider youth service are that there is too much bureaucracy and too many statutory organisations allocating money to the voluntary sector. Counter to this argument is the need to be accountable for the use of large overall sums of public money and the requirement to demonstrate value for money. This is only achievable through a detailed audit process. This dilemma only emphasises the importance of the statutory and voluntary sectors working closely together and being complementary to each other.
- 9.2.4.6 The relationship between ELBs and voluntary organisations is key to ensuring value for money and that resources are directed towards the areas of highest priority. This is dependent on effective communications and feedback, which according to consultations, are not consistently applied.
- 9.2.4.7 Well-motivated, trained and professional people are paramount to delivering a high quality service. Staff have recognised the need to be more flexible, responsive and progressive. However, this has not necessarily been reflected by changes in the service, such as revised working conditions.
- 9.2.4.8 Problems of recruiting full time staff have been experienced in many locations and one major reason for this is the nature of the unsocial hours. The normal requirement to work four evenings per week is viewed as too rigid and deters some people from applying for youth work positions requiring evening work.
- 9.2.4.9 Employers owe a duty of care to their staff and some people within the service are concerned about issues of personal security and safety, particularly when operating as outreach facilitators. Much of this work is undertaken alone, whereas it may be beneficial to operate in pairs or as teams. Such a move would not only improve aspects of safety, but would also limit problems associated with a member of staff being absent i.e. lack of continuity. Concerns in this area have been recognised and are being addressed by service management.
- 9.2.4.10 There is, at present, no professional register within NI for youth service staff. The introduction of a centrally maintained register

would enhance the professional standing of youth workers and accord them an appropriate place within the educational establishment.

- 9.2.4.11 The provision and maintenance of estate for the service is a considerable burden and requires greater interaction and co-operation between publicly funded organisations. An example of efficient usage of estate and reduction in the associated costs is through the use of community schools. In this scenario the costs of caretaking, cleaning, maintenance etc. can be shared between the host school and, for example, the youth service. Further benefits may include an increased usage of public facilities, a decline in vandalism and a reduced need for security. Schools remaining open outside of formal education hours, in conjunction with youth service support, would help to provide a more holistic and continuous approach to learning.

Innovative means of reaching out to people have been devised by some youth services. These include the use of buses as mobile centres where young people may gather in different locations each evening. In Liverpool they are used to target social deprivation and to cover rural areas in the Isle of Man.

Outside of the education system, the Station Centre in Omagh, used by community, voluntary and statutory organisations, is an excellent example of the advantages that can be obtained through site sharing.

- 9.2.4.12 The use of Outdoor Education Centres accounts for a large proportion of the service's overall expenditure. It is important that ELBs ensure they are obtaining maximum value for money from these resources and duplication, where possible, is removed. Furthermore, the extensive use of centres by both formal and informal education services is not reflected in the current funding arrangements.

9.2.5 PROCESSES

- 9.2.5.1 Although the service has an ICT strategy, this has not to date been funded by DE. Such a development would enable the service to take advantage of developments in technology, as is happening in schools (C2K) and libraries (Electronic Libraries For Northern Ireland [ELFNI] Project). Development and funding for such a strategy would deliver a number of benefits including support to the youth service curriculum, EOTAS, on-line learning and provision of email and web services.

- 9.2.5.2 Some consultees expressed unease at the inconsistency of approach by ELBs in relation to registration criteria and levels of grant aid to the voluntary sector. Organisations operating throughout NI experienced difficulties when working across ELB boundaries. It is likely that this issue will be resolved as the Inter Board Youth

Panel is developing a standard set of registration criteria and is examining the levels of grant aid. It should be recognised that each of the youth services operates in a different environment and must adhere to ELB corporate plans and strategic objectives.

- 9.2.5.3 The absence of a co-ordinated approach to curriculum development across formal and informal education services, prohibits the adoption of a continuous and holistic approach to learning.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations arising from this review address key themes of the youth service in respect of:

- Strategy
- Business Processes
- Resources

It is envisaged that implementation of the following recommendations will be achieved more effectively by adopting an integrated approach involving the five ELBs in liaison with DE and partners from the statutory and voluntary sectors, as appropriate.

10.1 STRATEGY

10.1.1 INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

To promote and support increased levels of inclusion and participation within NI through the efficient and effective use of resources. This could be achieved through:

- Increased representation and feedback to decision-makers, including ELB committees, through forums suitable to young people
- Increased outreach provision and targeting marginalised young people
- Expansion of the principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence to include all sections of the youth service
- Development of a plan to achieve the DE target of a 10% increase in participation by under-represented groups
- Increased networking with minority communities
- Review of current target age range to identify more appropriate parameters for controlled youth service provision
- Encouraging staff and volunteer role models from the minority communities
- Promoting awareness, understanding and tolerance by staff, volunteers and young people
- Developing a support framework for young people, volunteers and staff in conjunction with representative umbrella groups to provide advice and assistance

10.1.2 NI YOUTH SERVICE STRATEGY

DE has already identified the need for a NI Youth Service Strategy. It is now necessary to identify and agree roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders of the service, from both statutory and voluntary sectors, taking cognisance of existing statutory duties. Also to identify and agree the resources necessary to effectively carry out respective roles and to allocate those resources accordingly. This process to take account of:

- Needs of young people
- Inclusion of young people from all communities
- Range and definition of young people
- Facilities required
- Legislation

The strategy to incorporate a lobbying partnership between the voluntary sector and ELBs to raise awareness that the service must be properly resourced and be seen as a long-term investment in young people.

10.1.3 MARKETING STRATEGY

To develop a NI-wide marketing and PR strategy, in conjunction with partners from the statutory and voluntary sectors. Making effective use of the media and raising the profile of the service within the community in general and young people in particular. The objectives of the strategy being to:

- Increase uptake of the service by young people, particularly among those most marginalised
- Publicise the positive impact of the service on young people and communities
- Promote the service as a worthwhile and rewarding career. A professional vocation with a well-defined career path
- Attract the attention of potential volunteers
- Attract positive role models and peers from within society

A NI-wide approach, combining the statutory and voluntary sectors, would make effective use of respective strengths and influencing powers at local and regional levels.

10.1.4 RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMAL EDUCATION

It is essential that the outcomes of the Review of Public Administration in NI recognise the need for the youth service to retain a close relationship with the formal education sector. This would enable the delivery of a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to the development of young people through formal and non-formal educational facilities. The benefits of retaining formal links are demonstrated by the use of school-based youth work and youth work with under achieving pupils.

10.2 BUSINESS PROCESSES

10.2.1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

To further develop effective performance management processes to accommodate business planning in accordance with service objectives and local needs, service monitoring, long-term evaluation of performance and dissemination of good practice. Processes to incorporate:

- Outcome based performance targets linked to individual appraisal
- Establishment of Service Level Agreements/Key Result Areas across the five ELBs, detailing minimum performance standards for controlled and voluntary units and ensuring quality
- Maintenance of agreed Performance Indicators, relating to core areas of activity and continuation of annual reporting to DE
- Systematic and planned consultation with stakeholders
- Establishment of comparison and benchmarking processes to identify and share examples of good practice, such as with the National Youth Agency e.g. comparison of NI uptake (33%) with England (17%)

10.2.2 PARTNERSHIPS

To review all inter-agency and youth service partnerships in accordance with organisational objectives, assessing the contributions by all parties and the mutual benefits over the longer-term. To incorporate an evaluation of the long-term impact of strategic partnerships.

10.2.3 LEVELS OF BUREAUCRACY

The Inter-Board Youth Panel to continue its work in reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and duplication and increasing levels of consistency across ELBs in areas such as:

- Registration criteria for voluntary youth groups
- Levels of assistance for the voluntary sector
- Rates of charging at residential and outdoor centres
- Standardising accounting procedures e.g. expenditure codes

10.2.4 COMMUNICATIONS

To establish a communications plan to improve the two-way flow of information to and within the service. The plan to incorporate:

- Voluntary organisations
- Staff and volunteers
- Stakeholder consultation including young people and parents
- Lobbying
- Access and sharing of information across ELBs within boundaries of the Data Protection Act
- Publicising achievements, awards, qualifications and initiatives

10.3 RESOURCES

10.3.1 FUNDING

To address widespread concerns about present funding levels relating to recurrent and capital budgets. DE to secure sufficient baseline funding to enable the youth service to fulfil its range of statutory responsibilities.

DE, in conjunction with ELBs, to identify and prioritise service objectives and activities taking account of available resources. This process to include a review of the resourcing and charging policies relating to residential and outdoor centres.

To channel all statutory sources of funding, including short-term, through DE in order to co-ordinate activities, increase consistency and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy. Benefits would include:

- Linking long-term funding to service objectives and local needs
- Reducing the detrimental impact of short-term resourcing
- Enabling a higher level of strategic planning within the service

10.3.2 STAFFING

To establish a workforce plan for the service to identify actions required to ensure the continued recruitment, development and retention of leaders and staff over the medium to long-term. This should closely link with the proposed marketing strategy in promoting the service as a valued and professional career. This plan to take account of:

- Service responsibilities, objectives and local needs
- Recruitment and retention of suitable people
- Development of current staff through on and off the job training
- Access to professional qualifications through further and higher education establishments
- Team building and developing a sense of belonging
- Training in health and safety and security of staff as a priority
- Job satisfaction linked to levels of responsibility, challenges and achievements
- Introduction of flexible working patterns and addressing the work/life balance
- Consistency in relation to job evaluation
- Establishment of a youth worker register with appropriate levels of membership (e.g. corporate, specialist, associate and graduate) and requiring specific experience and qualifications
- Community links, especially for outreach provision

Reduction in turnover results in savings with regard to recruitment, staff efficiency and training costs.

10.3.3 ESTATE

To undertake a capacity audit of estate used by the service, including youth clubs and residential centres. Examining present and future requirements to ensure needs are met in an effective and efficient manner. Rationalisation and optimum use of publicly funded estate can wield large efficiency savings. The audit to take cognisance of:

- Assessment of needs
- Location of estate
- Condition of estate
- Costs of estate (recurrent and capital)
- Capacity and usage
- Alternatives e.g. PPP, community schools, publicly-funded shared resources and mobile facilities (not simply to replace like with like)
- Appropriate resourcing arrangements for residential and outdoor centres

10.3.4 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

To further develop and seek resources for an effective ICT strategy, in conjunction with DE and other partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors. To make optimum use of technology in relation to young people in their communities, education, communications, training and administration.