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## Section One - Introduction

1. The UK has a proud heritage of providing young people with enriching and varied leisure time activities. In addition to paid leisure, cultural service and youth work professionals, many 1000s of individuals across the nation also provide their services for free to ensure that young people are able to access things to do, places to go, and people to talk to in their spare time.
2. However young people's participation in positive leisure-time activities ('positive activities') is highly variable. Too many disadvantaged young people are unable to overcome barriers to participation such as cost and a lack of transport, and too much provision is of poor quality and is unappealing to young people. The resulting lack of engagement constitutes a failure to reap health, learning and personal and social development opportunities.
3. Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 - introduced through section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006<sup>1</sup> - ensures for the first time that a single body – working within the context of the children's trust - holds lead responsibility for securing young people's access to positive activities. The legislation also creates new legal requirements that place young people at the heart of decision making regarding the positive activity provision available to them, and which require local authorities to build in contestability when securing provision. In keeping with the legislation, local authorities should not assume the role of default provider of positive activities and should instead use planning and commissioning processes to identify the most appropriate provider; utilising the strengths of organisations within the voluntary and private sectors alongside those of the local authority itself (see paragraphs 64-75).
4. The legislation applies to unitary and county authorities and primary responsibility for fulfilling the legislation will fall within the remit of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services<sup>2</sup>. This guidance, which has statutory status, sets out the responsibilities of local authorities under Section 507B. In exercising their functions under this section, local authorities are required to have regard to this guidance. If they decide to depart from it, they must have clear reasons for doing so.
5. The new legislation forms part of a body of reforms that were proposed in the Green Paper *Youth Matters* and which contribute towards the delivery of integrated youth support as set out in the Annex to *Youth Matters: Next Steps*. The coherence of this support will depend on the local authority utilising positive activities as part of its arrangements for delivering effective packages of targeted support as well as ensuring that information, advice and guidance (IAG) supports young people's participation in positive activities. This will be important in meeting children's trust targets for reducing the

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<sup>1</sup> The Education and Inspections Act received Royal Assent on 8 November 2006. Section 6 will be commenced in January 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Further guidance on their roles can be found in *Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services* available to download on <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/dcsandlm/>

proportion of 16-18s not in education, employment and training – in particular ensuring young people have had the right personal development opportunities to enable them to take full advantage of developing 14-19 pathways for learning.

6. The provision and promotion of constructive positive activities for young people forms a key part of the Government's Respect drive which aims to build a modern culture of respect, by bearing down uncompromisingly on bad behaviour and nurturing good. While a lack of activities cannot be considered a justification for bad behaviour, it is clear that positive activities can provide a means of engaging young people at risk of anti-social behaviour in constructive activities and of addressing risky behaviour.

7. Young people's involvement in positive activities can also make an important contribution to other objectives such as improving democratic engagement, economic, social and environmental renewal, community cohesion and preventing extremism, safer and stronger neighbourhoods, better health, improved skills and increased employment. Local authorities will therefore want to consider the place of activities for young people within the wider strategic context of priorities for the area and in the development and implementation of Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements (see paragraphs 51-52).

## **Section Two – The duty to secure access to positive activities**

8. New section 507B inserted into the Education Act 1996 by virtue of section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 will be commenced in January 2007 and applies to England only. This section provides a summary of the primary duty set out in section 507B. Sections three and four provide more detailed comment on the fulfilment of the duty and other related requirements under the legislation.

### *The new duty*

9. Newly inserted section 507B of the Education Act 1996 requires that a local authority in England must, 'so far as reasonably practicable, secure for qualifying young persons in the authority's area access to –

- a) sufficient educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities; and
- b) sufficient recreational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities.

10. The definition of 'well-being' in the legislation reflects the five 'Every Child Matters' Outcomes<sup>3</sup>. Activities which do not result in an improvement in well-being and which do not help meet these outcomes are not within the

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<sup>3</sup> Available from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims/outcomes/>

scope of the new duty.

11. The duty therefore requires that so far as reasonably practicable, access is secured to the two forms of positive activity (and to sufficient facilities for them) set out above. The two forms of activity are not mutually exclusive, as some activities will fall into both categories; however the local authority must ensure that it secures access for young people to sufficient forms of, and facilities for, both types of positive activity.

12. 'Educational leisure-time activities' include provision such as homework or special interest clubs, out of school hours coaching in artistic, sporting or other physical activities and learning opportunities available through facilities such as field centres and outdoors activity centres that provide residential, weekend and holiday-time learning opportunities<sup>4</sup>. Volunteering activity will also fall within this category of activity, where young people gain valuable non-formal educational benefits from the experience.

13. The legislation also requires that the educational leisure-time activities and associated facilities to which access is to be secured, must also include sufficient educational leisure-time activities (and facilities for such activities) which are for the improvement of young people's personal and social development. This sub-set of 'educational leisure-time activity' relates to activities which are delivered using youth work methods and approaches.

14. 'Recreational leisure-time activities' include sports and informal physical activities, as well as a wide range of cultural activities including music, performing and visual arts.

15. The positive activities to which access is to be secured need not always be in the local authority's area<sup>5</sup> and the duty allows local authorities to enter into cross-border co-operative arrangements in order to meet the needs of young people who must travel to specific provision, or who live on, or near the borders of different local authority areas.

16. The duty is qualified by the term 'reasonably practicable' which means that the determination of whether the local authority is acting reasonably in its actions to secure access to positive activities and associated facilities for young people in its area will depend on the particular circumstances of the local authority and the particular requirement for access to such activities and facilities.

17. In judging what is reasonably practicable an authority may take into account its resources, capabilities and other priorities, as well as that of its children's trust partners in the private and third sector. However, what is practicable or impracticable in one time and place may not be in another and it will be important for the local authority to document - and publish within the CYPF framework - its consideration of need, and any decisions made on the

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<sup>4</sup> See Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/learningoutsidetheclassroom](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/learningoutsidetheclassroom)

<sup>5</sup> And therefore includes within its scope outdoor pursuits and field study centres.

grounds of what is judged to be 'reasonably practicable'. By doing so, the authority will be able to provide a rationale for its decision-making, if challenged.

18. A local authority must secure access to sufficient positive leisure-time activities and facilities and it will be for the authority to decide what constitutes "sufficient" taking into account the needs of young people in its area (see Section 3). A local authority may not be failing to fulfil the duty simply because an individual young person's particular need is not being met at a particular time, as it may be judged not to be reasonably practicable to do so. If challenged, it would however be for a court to decide what constitutes "sufficient" and "reasonably practicable" on a case by case basis.

### *Qualifying young persons*

19. The duty applies to the 13 – 19 age range which is commonly understood to represent for most young people a transition period in which participation in positive activities can offer significant benefits. However, some young people begin that transition before 13 and end it after 19, requiring ongoing engagement and support from services that provide activities falling under section 507B. One specific body of young people within this category are those with learning difficulties to which the application of the duty is extended up to 24.

20. To accommodate other individuals with early or delayed transitions, local authorities should be clear that they are able to secure access to positive activities for both older and younger age categories under other related legislative provisions.

### **Section Three - Establishing the local offer**

21. In order to assist young people to engage in positive activities, the local authority will need to provide a comprehensive, accurate and accessible information service for young people regarding existing local positive activity provision (see paragraphs 102-108) - including a directory of provision which should be updated regularly to maintain accuracy - at least annually - and publicised to all young people through a wide variety of media. This new legal requirement will be crucial to aiding participation.

22. However the new legislation also requires the local authority to look beyond the existing under-planned and uncoordinated local offer of provision and to determine, with its partners within the children's trust and with young people themselves, what provision should be available to all young people; certain groups of young people with particular needs; and what support young people should receive to access this provision. This determination should be developed and set out within the context of the local children and young people's plan and where appropriate, feature within the sustainable community strategy. It should also link to the local Youth Justice Plan.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The planning of the local offer should also reflect work already undertaken by the local

23. In making this determination, the Government expects that local authorities will share its ambition that all young people should be able to access the opportunities set out in the National Standards for Positive Activities (shown below) and will work over time with partner agencies to secure them.

24. To deliver these opportunities, local authorities and their children's trust partners should recognise that while many young people already have access to a wide range of positive activities, securing access for all entails identifying and meeting the needs of those less likely to engage in existing positive activities, either because current provision does not meet their needs, or because they require support in accessing provision (see section 4). The Government therefore expects local authorities to work under the new legislation to secure an increase in participation amongst these groups.

### National Standards for Positive Activities

Access to two hours per week of sporting activity including formal and informal team and individual sports, outdoor and adventurous sports, and other physical activities such as aerobics and dance - provided through national curriculum and leisure-time activities.

Access to two hours per week of other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes. This includes activities in which young people pursue their interests and hobbies; activities contributing to their personal, social and spiritual development; activities encouraging creativity; innovation and enterprise; study support; and residential opportunities.

Opportunities to make a positive contribution to their community through volunteering, including leading action, campaigning and fundraising.

A wide range of other recreational, cultural, sporting and enriching experiences.

A range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time. This could simply be somewhere to socialise with friends.

25. To provide young people and the wider community with an understanding of the children's trust's plans for developing the local offer, and to demonstrate how the opportunities proposed in the National Standards will translate into actual provision, local authorities – operating within the auspices of the children's trust arrangements - should identify and **set out their ambition for the local offer of positive activities**. This ambition should detail the provision the local authority and its partners will, over time, seek to

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authority in response to Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG 17) which sets out the steps local authorities should take in understanding the needs of communities and opportunities for open space, sport and recreation. *Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17* is available from [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk). The Government also funds CABE to provide support to local authorities in developing strategic approaches to open spaces.

secure young people's access to and add local detail to the broad activity categories represented by the National Standards. It should also set out any local standards of accessibility (e.g. maximum travel times) required in response to accessibility issues raised by young people and should be rural-proofed. The ambition should be updated as appropriate, in keeping with on-going consultation with young people.

**26. Young people's views of provision should be central to this ambition.** Section 507B places a specific requirement on the local authority to ascertain from young people in its area their views on existing provision of positive activities and facilities, the need for any additional provision and their access to this provision. The local authority must then secure that the views of the young people in its area are taken into account.

27. The local authority's understanding of young people's views should be comprehensive and detailed enough to understand the barriers they face to engaging in provision. In some circumstances this may also entail an understanding of the perceptions of parents and carers, as these will influence some young people's choices. It will also be important to ensure that the views of young people from minority groups (including young people with disabilities) who face significant barriers to participation are heard and considered. Views should be sought not just in regard to positive activities dedicated to young people, but also in regard to provision that is used by all ages including young people e.g. leisure centres, and libraries.

28. Local authorities have considerable flexibility about how they ascertain the views of young people under section 507B. They will need to consider cost-effectiveness and make effective use of existing local knowledge and engagement and might want to adopt a mix of approaches which could include:

- consultation. Any approach to consulting young people should ensure that the views of minority groups and those currently least likely to engage in positive activities are well represented. To facilitate meaningful consultation<sup>7</sup>, local authorities will need to provide young people with good quality information about the consultation process and the support available to young people to participate in consultation – especially for young people who might otherwise face difficulties in engaging.<sup>8 9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Hear by Right*, provides a framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. Available from <http://www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright/>

<sup>8</sup> (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RW69.pdf>) has been produced by the DfES to assist local authorities and others to consult young people with learning disabilities about the services they receive.

<sup>9</sup> The National Children's Bureau and Big Lottery Fund have published guidance on 'Planning for Play' which provides further guidance on the development and implementation of a play strategy for young people under 18, including consultation and engagement processes. [www.playengland.org.uk](http://www.playengland.org.uk)

Local authorities may also wish to utilise the expertise of organisations that are skilled in carrying out consultation with young people, and use targeted programmes like Youth Inclusion Projects to engage groups of young people who would not normally be involved in the consultation process. Local authorities can benefit from drawing on the good practice established by authorities with Beacon status in engaging with young people<sup>10</sup> and should note that young people themselves can also play a valuable role in guiding and shaping consultation.

Whatever the approach to consultation, local authorities should ensure an on-going dialogue with young people is established rather than a one-off exercise and that it feeds back consultation findings and its planned response to young people (see paragraph 108);

- surveys and qualitative research - particularly exploring the views, needs and preferences of less engaged young people from all sections of the community. This should include any views expressed in previous surveys and engagement exercises by the local authority, partners and others, but could also include new surveys involving the use of innovative techniques which engage the views of marginalised groups.
- provider information and attendance figures - the experience of the authority and its partners of what activities young people use and wish to use, the levels of demand for services, and what has succeeded in increasing involvement of less engaged young people;
- using existing and new neighbourhood renewal interventions, such as neighbourhood managers and wardens, as part of a strategy to engage young people living in the most disadvantaged communities.

29. Through improving its understanding of young people's preferences, motivations and experiences of positive activities the local authority will be well placed to ensure provision is popular, as well as building an understanding of what young people gain from various activities.

30. The Government also expects local authorities to identify opportunities to involve young people directly in designing, delivering or assessing the local offer of provision and encourages them to consider devolving responsibility for aspects of the delivery of a service. Successful approaches could include:

- training and supporting young people to act as young advisors who can help shape services and strategies, and act as advocates, linking with wider groups of young people<sup>11</sup>;

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<sup>10</sup> Information on the beacon scheme can be found at [www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk](http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk)

<sup>11</sup> The Department for Communities and Local Government has supported the development of young advisors on regeneration. Details of the scheme are available from [www.neighbourhood.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk). The local authority may wish to utilise the expertise of

- training to enable young people to support and engage in local authority inspection arrangements;
- young people acting as ‘mystery shoppers’ to observe, experience and assess the appropriateness of provision;
- recruiting, training and supporting a group of young people to help manage a service or facility with their equal involvement in management decisions;
- young people directly managing funds. The Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds are also helping to build expertise in this area, including involving young people directly in the commissioning process.

31. It will also be important to ensure that the decisions local authorities make about positive activities are open to scrutiny and challenge and that young people’s views figure strongly within the processes employed. Overview and scrutiny committees may decide to review delivery. Ward councillors may also challenge the provision of activities in their neighbourhoods in response to feedback from young people and residents. In addition, the Lead Member for children’s services<sup>12</sup> should ensure that young people’s voices are heard through seeking their feedback on the effectiveness of services and many local authorities have or are developing a local children’s and young people’s champion<sup>13</sup> who might also be able to act as an advocate for young people in regard to accessing positive activities.

#### *Needs analysis*

32. In determining its ambitions for an accessible local offer, it will be vital that the local authority and its children’s trust partners address the needs of groups of young people at greatest risk of negative outcomes and whose engagement in positive activities is often limited. e.g. young people in care, young people with disabilities, and young people from the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In doing so, local authorities should aim to increase their participation in positive activities and monitor their engagement to ensure progress is being made.

33. The children’s trust partners (including the Primary Care Trust and Youth Offending Team) should identify these groups in relation to the local area and undertake an assessment of their need for engagement in positive activity provision and support in accessing provision.

34. The analysis of need could include the use of consultation (such as that conducted as part of the local authority’s preparation for its disability equality scheme), statistical data,<sup>14</sup> neighbourhood data, and feedback from

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organisations that have experience in training young people to carry out this role.

<sup>12</sup> It is worth noting that some local authorities have adopted arrangements by which a member holds specific responsibilities regarding young people.

<sup>13</sup> Examples might include a Local Children’s Commissioner, Young Advocate or Young Mayor.

<sup>14</sup> See *Data Sources for Commissioners of Services for Children, Young People and Maternity*

service providers and information on individuals – for example through sources such as the Common Assessment Framework and for children in care, their Personal Education Plans.<sup>15</sup> Lead professionals attached to young people with complex needs will also be able to feed into the needs assessment process.

35. This work should build on, and be incorporated into the wider needs assessment undertaken as part of the planning processes of the children's trust.<sup>16</sup> Local authorities will wish to recognise those target groups already identified as being at risk of negative outcomes through existing needs assessment and planning processes undertaken by the children's trust and take into account additional difficulties in accessing provision encountered by rural young people.

#### *Different kinds of benefits*

36. Finally, local authorities and their children's trust partners should clearly distinguish between the benefits of different positive activities when planning the local offer; a consideration that should include gender biased or dedicated activities and facilities which meet the needs of different faith groups.

37. While recreational provision is essential to well-being and extremely important to young people (including having somewhere safe to socialise), such provision offers different benefits to structured activities which aim to enhance young people's personal and social development.

38. Service managers and commissioners should be aware that sustained, planned group activities which are led by practitioners or peers and have clear, planned non-formal educational outcomes have been evidenced to have a significant impact on well-being and will be important in securing positive outcomes for many. Especially those which result in recorded and accredited outcomes which young people can use to access further opportunities and demonstrate competencies.

39. This provision may be based around various forms of activity that prove attractive to young people (e.g. sports and music), but local authorities should recognise the unique contribution of youth work methods in securing positive outcomes while working within these contexts. For this reason, subsection 3 of section 507B requires that local authorities 'secure access for young people to 'sufficient educational leisure-time activities [and facilities] which are for the improvement of their personal and social development', thereby necessitating a specific consideration of whether the youth work provision available in the area, through all providers, is sufficient to meet needs.<sup>17</sup>

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Services at <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/planningandcommissioning/>

<sup>15</sup> See *Statutory guidance on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children's Act 2005*

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/lookedafterchildren/educationalachievement/>

<sup>16</sup> See <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/planningandcommissioning/cypp/>

<sup>17</sup> The National Youth Agency provides information by which local authorities can compare their current levels of expenditure on youth work with that of other authorities and the national

40. The local authority's own contribution of direct and/or commissioned youth work will make a vital contribution to this provision. Local authorities should therefore continue to improve the quality and standing of the youth work contribution to integrated youth support, as initiated under previous service arrangements through the Transforming Youth Work reforms and taking in to account the requirements to build in contestability to service design – as set out in paragraphs 64-75.

41. Local authorities should also take into account the need to secure access to provision that is capable of contributing to community cohesion, especially in areas where young people are at risk from challenges to cohesion such as pre-existing community tensions or extremist activities; or where young people's background, ethnic or faith identity limits or otherwise affects their ability to access activities and services provided for them.<sup>18</sup>

### *Measuring the gaps*

42. In order to determine gaps in provision, the local authority will need to work closely with partners to undertake a detailed analysis of the provision of the positive activities currently available to young people and the extent to which it is accessible.

43. This mapping requirement is also central to local authorities meeting the requirement in section 507B(10) to publicise information on positive activities and associated facilities in their area and to keep this information up to date (see paragraphs 102-108 and *Publicising Positive Activities* available from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo) ).

44. Local authorities should ensure that the scope of the mapping does not simply concentrate on in-house or commissioned provision, but also addresses:

- all local government provision of positive activities – including that provided by district, town and parish councils;
- private, voluntary and community sector provision;
- extended school services;
- targeted positive activities such as Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) and regeneration-led youth programmes that link youth activities with wider neighbourhood renewal.

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average. Further information on delivering high quality youth work is provided in *Resourcing Excellent Youth Services* (DfES) and through updated guidance to be made available during 2007/08.

<sup>18</sup> Guidance on engaging with children and young people in building cohesion is available in *Community cohesion: An Action Guide* (LGA, 2004; available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1502608>

## **Section Four – Addressing barriers to access**

45. Research<sup>19</sup> has shown that different young people experience a number of barriers to participation in positive activities resulting from a combination of their personal circumstances and the inadequacy or inappropriateness of local provision. Providing access under the new legislation entails removing these barriers.

46. This section provides guidance on six factors that are likely to influence the accessibility of provision. These factors are:

- a. the availability of attractive provision;
- b. transport arrangements;
- c. charging and subsidy;
- d. addressing barriers to equal access;
- e. personal support;
- f. information provision.

### **a) *The availability of attractive provision***

47. The ability of the local authority to work with partners to co-ordinate (and in some cases, target) provision and effectively manage available resources will be critical in meeting the new legal requirements and in securing the existence of diverse and efficient delivery arrangements. As a sufficient local offer will include provision across a range of providers, the local authority role involves both contributing provision and ensuring that the collective offer meets the needs of young people and improves well-being.

48. Effective partnership working under the new duty will need to go beyond mapping provision. It should involve joint consideration within the children's trust of the sufficiency of existing provision and a shared vision for the local offer. The planning of positive activity provision should therefore not be undertaken in isolation by individual services, but should reflect the contribution and potential contribution of a wide range of activities and facilities – many of which are able to add value through joint working (including youth services supporting the extended schools offer).

49. The local authority and its children's trust partners are also encouraged to investigate the advantages of including positive activity provision within joint commissioning arrangements, while service managers and commissioners will also wish to explore the opportunities and benefits of

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<sup>19</sup> including *Citizenship Survey, Children and Young People*, Home Office (2003), *Southwark Youth Survey MORI* (2003),

front line integration through such measures as multi-agency team working or co-location (e.g. youth workers operating in leisure contexts). Local authorities should also consider how facilities and accommodation currently supporting different strands of youth support could be used in a more integrated fashion.

50. The local authority's own contribution to the local offer will be vital in ensuring young people can access sufficient provision - especially for disadvantaged young people. This contribution will not only involve youth work provision, but also that provided within the cultural services - including the 3,200 public libraries in England which already provide safe spaces for young people – and the support it provides to youth crime prevention programmes such as Youth Inclusion Programmes.

**51. Local authorities should use a range of Government and non-Government funding sources to secure positive activities and will increasingly wish to use Local Area Agreements (LAAs) for this purpose, recognising that through the LAA the Government has brought together a range of funding schemes that previously provided for positive activities.**

52. The outcomes focus of the LAA - which is aligned with the emphasis on well-being within the legislation – enables the development of flexible and responsive services that are capable of supporting a range of positive activities. Local authorities are likely to wish to use the theme of access to positive activities within the Children and Young People's block, although indicators which reflect young peoples' engagement in positive activities could be applied in other LAA blocks, for example participation in sport within Healthier Communities and volunteering amongst young people within Safer and Stronger Communities. The provision of positive activities can also go a long way towards addressing the mandatory indicator 'to build respect in communities and reduce anti-social behaviour'.

#### *Key partners*

53. Key partners in shaping the local offer include district councils, who operate leisure facilities, museums, manage open space, undertake cultural work with young people and provide holiday activities.<sup>20</sup> It will therefore be essential that district councils are engaged in associated planning and service development arrangements. Parish councils will also be important partners in many areas, especially where they manage facilities such as rural village halls that provide a base for positive activity provision.

54. Private sector companies are also major providers of positive activities both in terms of recreational activities popular with young people and in some cases youth work and other structured educational positive activities. Local authorities should not assume that private sector companies are unwilling to co-ordinate activity or work collectively to provide an improved local offer to

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<sup>20</sup> Guidance on Local Government cross-tier working in support of section 507B is available from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo) [ from April 2007]

young people and should seek to engage relevant companies in partnership working.

55. Local authorities should also seek to secure a strong contribution to the local offer from voluntary and community sector agencies, faith groups and interfaith groups. These partners can make a distinctive contribution to the local offer of provision based in part on their ability to be flexible and responsive to need, engage with young people and communities, and access resources (including volunteers and premises) that complement those accessible to public sector bodies. Voluntary and community sector agencies should be represented on local strategic bodies such as the children's trust and should be seen as an important partner in setting the vision and strategy for the local offer as well as facilitating access to activities or providing them.

### *Working with schools*

56. Local authorities will also be aware that the Government is investing significant sums under the extended school programme and has set out a core offer of extended services that it wants all children to be able to access through schools by 2010<sup>21</sup>. This includes positive activities including homework clubs, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs.

57. The contribution of extended school services to the local offer of positive activities will be vital and as a principal partner in helping and supporting schools to provide these services and facilities, local authorities will wish to articulate a clear vision for positive activities within the overall extended school planning. This should be informed by the views of young people and the analysis of needs undertaken under section 507B.

58. The local authority will wish to support its vision for school-based positive activity through coordinating, commissioning and brokering services as appropriate. Local authorities will also wish to help schools to identify resources needed to develop extended services and assist service development through making links between schools and potential partners or providing schools with details of relevant local services and facilities.

59. Schools are also vital in securing access to sporting opportunities through the Government's PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy. This was launched in 2002 and holds the ambition of ensuring that all children under 16 are able to access at least 4 hours of sport and PE each week by 2010 within and beyond the curriculum.<sup>22</sup> This includes providing links to community sports clubs for young people who wish to participate in club sport outside of school time. Local authorities will wish to be aware that leisure providers and sport clubs are also able to provide extended services beyond the school gates and County Sports Partnerships or Community Sports Networks can act as facilitators in making these links, thereby increasing access to positive activities.

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<sup>21</sup> see [www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools)

<sup>22</sup> Further information on PESSCL strategy is available from [www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe)

*Working with partners to support volunteering*

60. The Government is committed to expanding opportunities for young people to contribute to their communities through volunteering and other forms of action that foster a sense of citizenship. As volunteering is classed as a positive activity under the new legislation and forms part of the National Standards for Positive Activities, the local authority will need to include volunteering opportunities within its plans for the local offer and should consider what opportunities exist for young people to volunteer within the local authority itself and in activities that it grant aids and commissions.

61. The establishment of the new youth volunteering charity, **v** will significantly boost youth volunteering and is a step change aimed at inspiring 1 million young people to volunteer. To help ensure coherence in delivering against its plans for the local offer, local authorities will wish to collaborate with **v** in framing the local offer of volunteering opportunities and encourage national, regional and local organisations that are considering bidding to **v** to target provision in line with the planned local offer, set out by the local authority, and take steps to encourage voluntary sector partners to strengthen bids by demonstrating how these connections have been made.

*Working with partners to support the youth cultural offer*

62. Local authorities should ensure that in developing the local offer of positive activities they are engaging with the appropriate local and regional cultural bodies. Arts Council England funds over a thousand arts organisations, most of which run specific programmes for young people. It also runs a number of strategic national initiatives that young people can benefit from<sup>23</sup>. Local authorities should work with Arts Council regional offices to consider how best to fill gaps in provision and meet the needs of those who have difficulty engaging with provision. Arts Council regional office colleagues will wish to be informed of local needs, young people's expectations of provision, and the local authority's plans for the local offer and should support children's trust partners in developing this local offer.

63. Local authorities should also be creating an effective relationship with the County Sports Partnerships (County authorities) and Community Sports Networks (Unitary) to create and deliver the local sporting offer for young people. This relationship could be maximised by an appropriate representative from a youth support service being a member of a County Sports Partnership or an emerging Community Sports Network.

*Building in contestability*

64. Where the local authority seeks to provide or commission positive activities, it should seek to manage its resources as effectively as possible by using the service provider that offers the best possible combination of skills

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<sup>23</sup> The Arts Council has produced guidance, *Providing the Best* (2006) which will help Local Authorities assess the quality of activities they provide for children and young people. A copy of this publication can be accessed from:  
[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/providingthebesttrf\\_phpXFqRwA.rtf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/providingthebesttrf_phpXFqRwA.rtf)

and experience to deliver services of the highest possible quality to meet individual needs at the most efficient cost.

65. In many areas of positive activity provision a market for providers of services exists and is utilised by local authorities. However in other areas such as youth work, the market is underdeveloped and local authorities need to look beyond their own service delivery and consider a wider range of partners.

66. In order to ensure that local youth work provision (and any other form of positive activity) benefits from an element of contestability sub-section (6) and (7) of the newly introduced section 507B of the Education Act 1996 places specific requirements on local authorities regarding the consideration of alternative providers.

**67. Local authorities are required under section 507B to consider whether positive activity provision can be improved by delivering the service, or elements of it through an alternative provider.** Where the commissioning of alternative provision is considered to be expedient - the local authority is required to take steps to secure this provision. To assist local authorities with this consideration and to ensure that service planning is not undertaken in ignorance of alternative delivery options and their potential benefits, section 507B(8) also requires that local authorities consult other 'persons' it considers appropriate. It is anticipated that these will normally be alternative providers, but could also include partner agencies, or independent bodies and individuals operating in an advisory capacity.

68. Meeting the requirements of the legislation will involve the authority establishing the willingness and ability of alternative agencies to provide positive activities and satisfying itself that it has properly considered the delivery options through a method that is proportionate and appropriate to the value and nature of the proposal in question.

69. Competitive tendering processes would provide the comparison of options and consultation required by the legislation and the management of the tendering and contracting stage of commissioning should be separated from the structures managing the in-house provision. Where tendering processes are not employed, local authorities will need to ensure that they otherwise consult other parties, including alternative providers, as to whether or how provision could be improved through alternative provision.

70. This process of consideration should be transparent with documents and decisions made publicly available to allow scrutiny by stakeholders, thereby ensuring that the local authority is able to evidence that it is in keeping with the new legislation (as it could face legal challenge). Local authorities will also wish to demonstrate compliance with the legislation to the inspectorate - which will make judgements regarding good service management, including a consideration of the use of alternative providers.

71. Depending upon the nature of the contract, likely criteria for consideration are cost to service user and to the authority, quality, timing,

delivery location, inclusion of target groups and individuals, sustainability and whether an alternative provider would improve the range of positive activities available, thereby helping to meet young people's expectations of choice.

72. Commissioners will also need to ensure that approaches are compatible with EU and UK law, regulations and guidance and may also want to consider environmental and social outcomes when comparing tenders and in awarding contracts.<sup>24</sup> They should also have regard to good practice in commissioning, as set out in existing Government guidance<sup>25</sup>.

73. In considering the expedience of securing alternative providers, the local authority should recognise the factors within its control that influence the feasibility of alternative provision. Factors such as the nature, size and length of the contract offered for tender can effectively include or rule-out local contestability, as can overly restrictive service specifications and requirements. Seed corn and start-up funding can support new providers to tender for, and provide services, while providing information on activities will also help young people to make informed choices which will in turn stimulate in-market contestability and greater choice of provision. **Local authorities should therefore seek to use the levers available to it to create a market that enables high quality providers to deliver; and permits an exit for the poorly performing.** Annex B provides a checklist of actions that local authorities may wish to consider in undertaking this task.

74. Local authorities may identify that elements of the positive activities programme should be retained in-house with other areas of work commissioned from alternative providers – although no model is proposed. Where a number of providers are employed, the local authority will need to ensure that the overall programme retains its focus, co-ordination and quality. Local authorities should clearly identify the outcomes sought before commissioning the work and also recognise that service level agreements can provide a helpful way to record expectations of quality and performance, and review and co-ordination arrangements.

75. When considering alternative providers, local authorities should ensure that they do not exclude private sector providers and that they are prepared to commission provision on a commercial basis where a private provider is best placed to provide the service, or part of the service in question.

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<sup>24</sup> General guidance on procurement, including social and environmental issues is available from [www.ogc.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1004561](http://www.ogc.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1004561)

<sup>25</sup> The DfES has set out a framework for children's trust partners to use in planning and commissioning young people's services. The *Joint planning and commissioning framework for children, young people and maternity services* framework identifies that local market development strategies should seek to secure sustainable and efficient children's services markets by increasing provider diversity, encouraging innovation, and improving the quality of provision. The document is available from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/planningandcommissioning>

Improving financial relationships with the third sector, Guidance to funders and purchasers, HMT (2006) <http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/485/B9/guidncefunders1505061v1.pdf>

## **b) Transport arrangements**

76. Young people often identify accessible, safe, reliable and affordable transport as key to their participation in positive activities. While the absence of transport is commonly associated with rural communities, in cities concerns about safety or costs can easily dissuade young people from using buses and trains even where services are available.

77. Recent trends also show a decline in the numbers of young people owning bicycles and becoming licensed drivers; this means that young people are increasingly likely to depend on public transport or family vehicles<sup>26</sup> to access leisure time activities. This can be a particular issue for young people in care, who may need help and encouragement to access transport.

78. Over the longer term, effective local authorities will use the gap analysis detailed in section 3 and needs analysis surrounding positive activities in the consideration of the siting of leisure facilities, so as to focus investment on areas where a need for additional facilities or a better fit with local transport and cycling routes has been identified. More immediately, local authority transport planners are encouraged to ensure that information on young people's need for transport to positive activities is taken into account as part of their ongoing accessibility planning.<sup>27</sup>

79. In regard to school-based positive activities, local authorities should be aware that through section 75 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (which inserts new section 508A into the Education Act 1996) they will be required to produce and publish an annual sustainable school transport strategy and will be under a duty to promote sustainable modes of transport. In preparing the strategy they must conduct both an assessment of children and young people's travel needs to their place of education and an audit of the infrastructure supporting sustainable travel to schools.

80. The strategy should take into account children and young people's travel requirements to both core and extended school activities at the school or college they attend. In developing the strategy transport planners will wish to take into account the children's trust's plans for the local offer and consider the need to address gaps in access to positive activities through ensuring access to school based positive activities.

81. There are also a number of direct actions that authorities can take to address transport issues, including the authority providing, commissioning or

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<sup>26</sup> Figures from the Department of Transport National Travel Survey show bicycle ownership decreasing over time within the 13-19 cohort; in addition driving licence holding has decreased amongst young adults, with only a quarter of young men and women holding a full driving licence in 2002-2004.

<sup>27</sup> The aim of the accessibility strategy is to ensure that there is a clearer and more systematic approach to identifying and tackling the barriers that people, particularly those from disadvantaged groups and areas, face in accessing jobs and key services. A link to the DfES guidance on DfT Accessibility Strategies can be found at [http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft\\_localtrans/documents/page/dft\\_localtrans\\_031727.hcsp](http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/page/dft_localtrans_031727.hcsp)

subsidising young people's transport. It is worth noting that in the first six months (up to March 2006) since the Mayor's introduction of free travel on buses/trams by Transport for London for under 16s across London, parents reported that 59% of 14 and 15 year olds used the bus/tram more and that 83% of young people using buses and trams more did so to access leisure activities.<sup>28</sup>

82. Local authorities and their children's trust partners could also consider acting to:

- support other providers of positive activities by allowing them to use local authority-owned buses/mini-buses or allocating funds to such organisations specifically for transport costs;
- provide mobile provision of positive activities, recognising that many young people may be reluctant to participate in structured activity programmes outside of their own neighbourhoods. Equally mobile provision may prove an effective means of addressing rural isolation, where it is not cost effective to provide more permanent provision;
- facilitate discussion between young people and local transport providers about potential improvements/changes to services, fares or concerns about safety. Such action may also offer an empowering learning opportunity for the young people involved in discussion;
- review the resource they dedicate to cycle training and supporting cycling where they feel this will help increase participation in positive activities,<sup>29</sup>
- ensure that young people can access information on transport (see paragraphs 102-108);
- consider promoting the implementation of travel plans by positive activity providers which address how young people can access the site without car transport.

83. Local authorities will also be aware that people with disabilities are entitled to free off-peak local bus travel within their local authority area. Local authorities also have the discretion to offer enhancements and alternatives to the statutory minimum such as travel into a neighbouring authority, peak travel, use on other modes and travel tokens.

### ***c) Charging and subsidy***

84. Affordability of provision is often a genuine concern for young people. Most are not in full time employment and the cost of travel, membership or equipment can severely restrict a young person's ability to take part in positive

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<sup>28</sup> Transport for London data supplied by GLA (unpublished).

<sup>29</sup> DfT has established a new National Standard for cycle training with more than 20 road safety bodies which replaces the Cycling Proficiency Test previously administered by Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). It was launched on 10th March 2005.

activities. Financial support from parents and carers enables many young people to engage in hobbies, sports and recreation and this contributes to an estimated national spend<sup>30</sup> by young people on leisure-time activities of between £700m and £1.4 billion each year. However for some families with limited income, subsidising young people's participation is not an option.

85. Section 507B (11) provides local authorities with the power to levy charges.<sup>31</sup> This power exists to enable local authorities to access income that will enable it to make additional provision of positive activities or to otherwise assist young people to access provision. Where charges are levied, the authority should consider the impact on groups of young people such as young people from low income families and take care to avoid creating new or greater barriers to participation through unsympathetic use of the charging power. Where significant new charges are imposed, we would expect local authorities to review the impact of these charges on young people's participation.

86. The new legislation will also enable the provision of financial assistance to facilitate access for young people. There have been notable examples<sup>32</sup> of participation rising sharply when local authorities reduce or eliminate costs of participation in positive activities. Subsidy is likely to be an extremely effective means of increasing participation in activities that currently make a charge, and local authorities are encouraged to consider how resource can be targeted through subsidy to assist young people from low income families and care leavers to engage in positive activities that have a significant impact on well-being. Local authorities are specifically encouraged to provide young people in care with free access to the positive activities and related facilities they own, deliver or commission, and to contribute to the costs of participation in positive activities provided by others.

#### ***d) Addressing barriers to equal access***

87. The Government expects local authorities to address inequality in access to positive activities wherever possible – including that created by social and economic disadvantage. This will entail identifying the particular barriers to participation faced by disadvantaged groups, and acting to address these barriers – including through the various measures outlined in section 4 of this document.

88. For some young people, a disability will result in additional barriers to participation and local authorities will be aware of the requirements of the

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<sup>30</sup> *The Market for the Provision of Positive Activities for Young People*, Price Waterhouse Coopers (2006) <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/RRP/u014974/index.shtml>

<sup>31</sup> For guidance on charging in relation to extended schools see *Planning and funding extended schools – A guide for schools, local authorities and their partner organisations* from <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk>

<sup>32</sup> A 'Kids Swim Free' pilot initiative was run in 5 London Boroughs six times between 2004-05, with young people taking advantage of more than 350,000 free swims in the participating Boroughs. The number of swims taken by children more than doubled in 2004 over the previous year. Similarly, in Glasgow, swimming increased by 123% in the first year of a similar scheme.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which require service providers to make 'reasonable' adjustments in relation to the physical features of their premises.<sup>33</sup> Service providers also have a responsibility to ensure that their employees are aware of the duties and responsibilities imposed on services providers under the Act.

89. Local authorities can also assist young people with disabilities to access provision by:

- ensuring that the information on positive activities provided to young people (see paragraphs 102-108) meets the needs of young people with disabilities; for example by offering a Braille or spoken version of a publicity leaflet or providing information about the accessibility of facilities;
- acting wherever possible on young people with disabilities' concerns regarding accessibility (e.g. with training, coaching staff can adapt their teaching to help young people with disabilities to take part in enjoyable, fulfilling activities, in many cases alongside able bodied young people);
- challenging providers operating under contract to the local authority where young people with disabilities report concerns;
- considering what training they might offer partner organisations to help their staff develop appropriate skills and behaviours.

90. Inclusive provision should also meet the needs of young people from different backgrounds, cultures and both genders. Local authorities should ensure that provision is available that does not offend young people's personal beliefs or cause them embarrassment (e.g. by offering single sex swimming times required by some Muslim girls and women) and should provide a safe and appropriate environment (e.g. leisure and recreation facilities) in which young people can build relationships with others from different backgrounds wherever appropriate – especially where gaps between communities (whether in terms of geography, faith, culture, economics or other factors) are a barrier to accessing activities and services. To ensure local positive activities offer a welcoming and supportive environment to young people, local authorities will also need to consider how to tackle assumptions and stereotypes which cause exclusion.

### **e) Personal support**

91. Unfortunately, not all young people will be predisposed to take up opportunities to participate in positive activities. Confidence issues, a failure to associate with positive activities, negative peer influences and an inability to navigate the choice of activity will result in some young people failing to

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<sup>33</sup> Examples of reasonable adjustments in leisure sites might include installing an induction loop for people who are hearing impaired; giving the option to book tickets via email as well as telephone; providing disability awareness training for staff who have contact with the public; providing larger, well-defined signs for people with impaired vision; putting in a ramp at the entrance to a building where steps exist.

benefit.

92. Local authorities and their partner agencies can however counter these barriers both by empowering parents and carers to support young people's engagement, and by directly supporting young people through an alternative trusted adult.

#### *Supporting parents and carers*

93. Section 12 of the Childcare Act 2006 has created a requirement that local authorities provide parents with information on services, facilities or publications which may be of benefit to young people in their area.<sup>34</sup> The local authority will therefore need to provide parents and carers with information on positive activity provision, drawing on that provided to young people under the information requirements of section 507B (see paragraphs 102-108).

94. Sub-section 5 of section 12 also requires that the service is established and maintained so as to provide information to people 'who might otherwise have difficulty in taking advantage of the service'. Local Authorities currently provide information through Children's Information Services (CIS). As currently resourced, CISs primarily provide services for parents seeking specific information and would not be well placed to offering a pro-active universal service for all parents in the local authority area. Local authorities will therefore need to consider how they can promote the positive activities available to young people to parents and carers who might otherwise not be aware of the provision or its benefits.

95. One approach available is to cascade information on appropriate positive activities to professionals already working with parents. Connexions personnel, youth workers, social workers, youth offending team staff, librarians, housing officers, choice advisers and staff delivering parenting classes will all interface with parents and could provide them with information on positive activities and their benefits. This should include acting on the proposal in the green paper *Care Matters* to provide a pack to carers setting out the activities available in their area.

96. Schools can also play a role in helping parents to support young people's engagement in positive activities and local authorities should encourage schools to provide adequate information to parents regarding the positive activities available under the school's extended offer and within the wider local offer. Providing information to parents is in keeping with the duty on governing bodies to consult when offering extended services<sup>35</sup>, which guidance<sup>36</sup> identifies as involving an ongoing process of dialogue with parents and carers regarding the provision available. This will help to both inform and improve services and their delivery.

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<sup>34</sup> See *Statutory guidance on section 12 of the Childcare Act 2006 – The duty to provide information, advice and assistance* at [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

<sup>35</sup> Section 28(4) of the Education Act 2002

<sup>36</sup> See <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/9352/Consultation.pdf>

97. The prospectus for extended schools<sup>37</sup> published in June 2005, sets out expectations regarding access to parenting support through extended schools, including transition information sessions for all parents and carers of children starting secondary school. These sessions will also provide an opportunity to pass on information to parents on positive activities.

*Supporting young people directly*

98. Local authorities and partner organisations can directly support young people's engagement in positive activities through the actions of key professionals. Local authorities will be aware that under IAG quality standards<sup>38</sup> they are required to support young people to take up positive leisure time activities. Local authorities will also wish to act on the *Care Matters* proposal that they help young people in care to access information on positive activities provided under section 507B (see paragraphs 102-108). A range of staff including youth workers and sports development staff are also well placed to promote, advertise and support young people to take up local opportunities.

99. Local authorities will therefore wish to consider how key professionals can support young people to engage in positive activities and whether they can access adequate, appropriate and usable information on local provision when working with young people.

100. In some cases staff will also be acting in the role of lead professional under reformed targeted support arrangement signalled in the green paper *Youth Matters*, and as such will need to consider what other roles might be appropriate to support engagement in positive activities, for example:

- encouraging the inclusion of positive activities as part of a tailored package of support;
- helping to ensure that the young person is able to access the information on positive activities being developed by the local authority, for example, by liaising with others to make web-access available, or by ensuring the young person is registered to receive text alerts of positive activity opportunities;
- being a source of advice and support in helping the young person to think through their options and the benefits of engagement;
- putting processes in place for brokering provision or negotiating changes to provision required to enable the young person's access, e.g. by arranging for the provider to establish initial contact with the young person, by providing the young person with a peer supporter or mentor, or by enabling the young person to be accompanied by peers;
- helping the young person to establish the necessary transport arrangements.

101. School based professionals also have a vital role to play in supporting young people's engagement in positive activities, both through providing

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<sup>37</sup> <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ete/extendedschools>

<sup>38</sup> available from April 2007

young people with information on positive activities and actively supporting them in taking up opportunities. This support is consistent with the new duty on the governing body of a maintained school to promote the well-being of pupils at the school (section 38 Education and Inspections Act 2006). Schools will also recognise that they can provide evidence in their self-evaluation form (which is an important source of evidence for school inspectors) of positive activities which the school promotes and the impact of these activities on pupils' achievement, personal development and well-being. Local authorities are encouraged to explore with schools how they can work together to promote young people's involvement in positive activities.

**f) Information provision**

102. Section 507B requires that local authorities publicise information on positive activities and facilities in their area and that they keep this information up to date<sup>39</sup>. Local authorities should meet this legislative requirement by expanding the content of an existing website<sup>40</sup> so that it provides a one stop shop for young people seeking information on positive activities and related facilities, and by promoting positive activities through a combination of other media such as leaflets, text-message alerts and e-mail updates.

103. The information provision should be **comprehensive, accurate and accessible** and provide the details young people need to enable them to access positive activities and related facilities. It should provide a directory of existing provision combined with travel information, details regarding disabled access and confirmation of whether providers of activities or transport accept young people's leisure cards or similar, when in operation.

104. Involving young people in the production and design of the information provision will also help identify appropriate content and ensure the relevance, appeal and accessibility of the information provided. Local authorities should also take into account the importance of creating media which young people perceive as attractive and engaging. This may require local authorities to showing flexibility in the use of design criteria falling under corporate identity requirements.

105. The scope of the activities and facilities covered by the information should match that of the mapping exercise detailed in section x and should stretch beyond the local authority's own provision to embrace all relevant public, private and voluntary and community sector activities and facilities. Authorities will also wish to consider the potential benefits of including or creating links to information on a broader range of services for young people, thereby helping to deliver integrated support to young people.

106. While no model is proposed, local authorities may consider it more appropriate or useful to provide information on positive activities provided across more than one local authority area – for example across a metropolitan

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<sup>39</sup> More detailed guidance on providing information on positive activities under section 507B is available at [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo) (see *Publicising Positive Activities*)

<sup>40</sup> Such as the local 14-19 Area Prospectus, Connexions, local youth services etc

area. Local authorities are free to explore whether a regional or sub-regional approach to information provision<sup>41</sup> would result in greater overall participation and/or result in economies of scale.

107. Authorities will also want to consider whether they are able to provide information on the quality of activities and facilities. Young people will be encouraged to participate in activities (and parents and carers will be reassured) where providers have reached high standards recognised through quality assurance accreditation. Advertising this accreditation will also help to drive up standards by raising expectations that providers will meet quality standards.<sup>42</sup>

108. Local authorities should ensure that the information on existing local positive activities and facilities is presented alongside the local authority's plan for the local offer described in section 3 and that details are provided about:

- progress towards reaching the plan for the local offer. This information should be regularly updated for the benefit of local young people and communities;
- live and forthcoming consultation processes regarding positive activity provision, and the support available to young people to participate in this consultation;
- the results of previous consultation with young people, together with the local authority's response to the consultation findings;
- any other opportunities for involvement in decision making processes, including those generated through the activity surrounding the Youth Opportunity and Capital Funds;
- the processes and channels young people can use to hold local authority to account for its response under the new duty. This information should also reflect any existing feedback mechanisms and cycles. For example, where Hear by Right standards have been used to establish Children's Charters, these are annually reviewed with children and young people, and would be a natural point at which children and young people could be enabled to pursue complaints.

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<sup>41</sup> Or indeed, consultation, mapping of provision etc

<sup>42</sup> Local authorities should also be aware of the reforms contained in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which will introduce a centralised vetting and barring scheme for those working with children (and vulnerable adults). The scheme will be implemented from 2008. Individuals engaged in specific activities giving them close contact with children – eg supervising or training children - will be required to be centrally vetted. Those judged by the scheme to be unsuitable to work with children will be included on the children's barred list, which replaces the current Protection of Children Act list and List 99. Further details are available from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

## Section 5 – Measuring progress

109. Local authorities will wish to assess whether their actions and those of their partners are improving outcomes and increasing young people's access to positive activities. Young people, communities and the Government will also be concerned to establish that progress is being made.

110. The white paper '*Strong and prosperous communities*' has signalled a requirement for local authorities to strengthen local accountability by providing citizens with improved information and reporting. Recognising the importance of positive activities to young people and the leadership role of the local authority under the new duty, **the local authority should provide young people and communities with information on progress towards its plans for the local offer (see paragraph 35), ideally through the web-based information outlined in paragraphs 102-108.** Local authorities may also wish to incorporate standards and targets relating to its plans for the local offer within any local charters for neighbourhoods outlined in the white paper.

111. **Local authorities are also strongly encouraged to develop local measures based around young peoples' engagement in positive activities.** It will be especially important to monitor the participation of those groups identified by the local authority as being at greatest risk of negative outcomes and who could benefit from additional engagement in positive activities (see paragraphs 32-35). Such measures could support reporting and local performance management and could form the basis for a local target or indicator within the LAA.

112. '*Strong and prosperous communities*' has also set out proposals for radical changes to the local government performance framework, which include the development of a single set of performance measures relating to outcomes (including the Every Child Matters outcomes). These measures will feed into a system of risk-based and proportionate external assessment and inspection which will replace Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Joint Area Reviews and Annual Performance Assessments from 2009. The Government will consider how engagement in positive activities, possibly including young people's perception of the activities available, should be reflected within this framework.

113. Under current performance management arrangements there is no single national measure that is capable of recording progress against the new duty however a number of different performance indicators do exist that contribute towards the overall picture of provision and which are capable of supporting performance assessment. Ofsted and the Audit Commission use performance information regarding the adequacy of different kinds of positive activity provision to inform the local authority's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), Children's Services Annual Performance Assessment (APA) and Joint Area Review (JAR).

## CPA

114. The culture service assessment, which forms part of the overall 2006 CPA framework for single tier and county councils, contains performance indicators relating to positive activities where local authority performance will be compared to upper and lower thresholds.<sup>43</sup> These include a performance indicator for single tier councils recording the percentage of the population within 20 minutes travel time to three different sport facility types; and for both single tier and county councils, a performance indicator on the percentage of 5 – 16 year olds in school sports partnerships engaged in two hours a week minimum on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum.

115. For single tier local authorities 16 – 19 year old activity will also be recorded against performance indicators measuring the percentage of adults participating in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation on three of more days a week, and on the percentage of the population volunteering in sport and active recreation for at least one hour per week.

116. The Audit Commission has also developed a set of key lines of enquiry (KLoE) for the culture service inspections it carries out. These KLoE contain criteria for a culture service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users, is cost effective and makes contributions to wider outcomes for the community. Local authorities may want to consider using the KLoE at Annex C when assessing the contribution its cultural services make to the pool of positive activities available for young people.

117. For youth work activity directly funded by the local authority, services are benchmarked against 4 performance indicators. These measures cover the level of reach into the 13-19 population (against a benchmark of 25%), the level of participation of the 13-19 population in youth work (against a benchmark of 15%), the proportion of participants in youth work who gain recorded outcomes (against a benchmark of 60%) and the proportion of participants in youth work who gain accredited outcomes (against a benchmark of 30%). These indicators also form the basis of a Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 221a/b which gathers both the percentage of recorded, and the percentage of accredited outcomes from those young people aged 13-19 participating in youth work. Local authorities should continue to work to these measures.

## JAR and APA

118. Both APA and JAR involve key judgements that either directly address young people's participation in positive activities and their role in decision

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<sup>43</sup> Further information on the relevant thresholds and the basis on which they have been set can be found in 'CPA the Harder Test – guide to service assessments for 2006' which can be found at <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/cpa/stcc/stccsaf.asp>.

making, or address positive activities as part of a wider body of related factors. Relevant key judgements include whether:

- all children and young people can access a range of recreational activities, including play and voluntary learning provision;
- children and young people are encouraged to participate in decision making and in supporting the community;
- children and young people in care are helped to enjoy and achieve;
- children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to enjoy and achieve.

119. APA and JARs may therefore consider the adequacy of consultation and the access to provision secured under this duty, while comment on young people's access to leisure time activities could appear within Government Offices' briefings for APA and JARs or within local authorities' self assessments (to Ofsted).

120. Ofsted are also currently conducting a programme of youth service inspections<sup>44</sup> which will be completed in 2008. Youth work inspections contribute to and inform the wider Joint Area Review (JAR).

## **Section Six – Conclusion**

121. Young people's engagement in positive leisure time activities makes a valuable contribution to their well-being; providing personal and social development, health benefits, and social skills that help equip young people for adult life. For some young people, engagement in positive activities can also help them avoid circumstances in which they might adopt risky or anti-social behaviour and help build a modern culture of respect across generations and with authority. Yet despite the significance of positive activities to young people and communities no one body has previously had clear lead responsibility for securing young people's access to the provision they require.

122. Newly inserted section 507B of the Education Act 1996 seeks to address this shortcoming by requiring local authorities to secure access for young people to a sufficient local offer of positive activities. In responding to the legislation local authorities will need to:

- put young people at the heart of decision making by establishing their views regarding the current provision of positive activities, the need for further provision and the accessibility of existing provision; and take

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<sup>44</sup> Detail on the inspection framework available from [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

these views into account. Local authorities should also ensure that: their dialogue with young people regarding positive activities is ongoing and involves disadvantaged young people and those from minority groups; young people are involved in decision making processes regarding the provision of positive activities; and young people have a means of contesting decisions made regarding provision;

- address the needs of young people at greatest risk of negative outcomes and whose engagement in positive activities is often limited, and by doing so, increase their participation through securing access to appropriate provision;
- work with partners to create and set out a planned ambition for the local offer of positive activity provision that builds on the National Standards for Positive Activities and combines a consideration of young people's views, the results of needs analysis, and the known impact on well-being of different forms of provision;
- map existing provision and identify gaps in provision and accessibility;
- work with partners to realise the local ambition for positive activities through effective use of resources, strong partnership working, market development, and by addressing the barriers which reduce young people's participation;
- introduce measures that will enhance contestability when securing provision for young people; thereby ensuring that the local authority does not assume the default position of automatic provider and instead seeks to utilise the strengths of organisations within the voluntary and private sectors alongside those of the local authority itself;
- provide comprehensive, accurate and accessible information on local positive activities – including a web-based directory of information - that informs young people about the activities and facilities available. This information service should also provide young people with information on the local authority's plans for the local offer, progress towards reaching these plans, the opportunities to engage in consultation and decision making processes, and information on how young people can hold the local authority to account for its actions under the duty;
- monitor progress – including through developing local measures based on young people's engagement in positive activities;
- ensure that the provision of positive activities is integrated with other support functions such as information, advice and guidance and for those who require it, more targeted support.

## Annex A Useful documents and websites

### Documents

1. **Publicising Positive Activities**, DfES (October 2006)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo/>

Detailed guidance on the duty to publicise information on positive activities and keep it up to date introduced by section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Good practice information on publicising positive activities is also available from:

- a) National Youth Agency,

<http://www.nya.org.uk/Templates/internal.asp?NodeID=93853&ParentNodeID=89407>

- b) IDeA, <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/aio/5471136>

2. **Positive activities in two-tier areas** DfES (March 2006)  
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/thingstodo>

Guidance for both shire and district authorities on working together to provide young people with opportunities to participate in positive activities.

3. **Youth Matters**, DfES (July 2005)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/>

The Government's green paper setting out proposals to improve outcomes for young people.

4. **Youth Matters: Next Steps**, DfES (March 2006)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/whatisyouthmatters/>

The Government's response to public consultation on *Youth Matters*.

5. **Care Matters**, DfES (2006).

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

This green paper sets out policies to ensure earlier interventions and support for families where children are on the edge of care. It goes on to include proposals to strengthen the corporate parenting role of local authorities; high quality placements which meet their needs; a first class education; positive life outside school; and support for transition into adulthood.

6. **Targeted youth support prospectus**, DfES (from February 2007)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

The targeted youth support prospectus will offer a detailed vision and practical help for local areas in reforming their targeted youth support services, based on the experience of fourteen pathfinder areas.

7. **Quality standards for young people's information advice and guidance**, DfES (2007)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

The draft quality standards will cover all young people aged 11-19, and will apply to IAG commissioned or delivered by children's trusts, schools and colleges. IAG comprises the full range of issues on which young people require advice, including careers, personal, social and health issues, and provision of curriculum development support.

8. **Every Child Matters: Joint planning and commissioning framework**, HM Government (2006)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/files/312A353A9CB391262BAF14CC7C1592F8.pdf>

This document sets out a framework for children's trusts to use in planning and commissioning children's services, young people's services and maternity services.

9. **Hear by Right**, National Youth Agency (2005)

[www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright/](http://www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright/)

A framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people.

10. **Engaging the voluntary and community sectors in children's trusts**, DfES (2005)

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/files/9BC0394D20F3A2FA425FAFE5C099E02.pdf>

Advice and guidance to support local authorities, other public sector agencies and voluntary and community organisations in developing effective arrangements for involving the voluntary and community sectors in children's trusts.

11. ***Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto***, DfES (2007)

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/resourcematerials/outsideclassroom/>

The Manifesto acts as a shared statement of intent for all who see the benefits to young people and want to help bring about this vision of high quality, meaningful learning experiences for all.

12. ***Strong and prosperous local communities***, DCLG (2006)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1503999>

This white paper sets out proposals which will provide freedom and space for local authorities to respond with flexibility to local needs and demands. It radically reduces national targets, tailors others to local circumstance and introduces lighter touch inspection system.

13. ***Creativity Review***, DfES/DCMS (2006)

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/DD8DB446-7D59-4FCA-93C8-93A546570EF8/0/Nurturingcreativityinyoungpeople.pdf>

A clear framework for the further development of creativity for children and young people.

14. ***The Study Support Code of Practice***, DfES (2004)

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport>

The Code of Practice provides guidance for schools, local authorities and others in the planning of study support activities and the quality assurance of existing provision.

15. ***Study Support: a national framework for extending learning opportunities***, DfES (2006)

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport>

The Study Support Framework document restates the Government's commitment to study support; reinforces its position in the current policy context; and highlights the close linkages between study support, personalised learning, raising standards, and extended schools.

16. ***Framework for the future***, DCMS (2003)

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference\\_library/Publications/archive\\_2003/framework\\_future.htm](http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Publications/archive_2003/framework_future.htm)

This document outlines the Government's long-term strategic vision for the role of public libraries. This document makes clear the contribution that libraries can make to children and young people's development and

attainment.

17. ***Children, Young People and the Arts***, ACE (2005)

[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publications/publication\\_detail.php?sid=9&id=478](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publications/publication_detail.php?sid=9&id=478)

and

- Children, Young People and the Arts. East Midlands regional strategy***, ACE (2006)

[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publications/publication\\_detail.php?sid=9&id=520](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publications/publication_detail.php?sid=9&id=520)

These national and regional strategy documents explain how Arts Council England (ACE) will put young people at the centre of its work, and commits the organisation to ensuring that it will consult and listen to them in developing ACE's policies and programmes.

18. ***Effective youth services: good practice***, DfES, (2005)

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>

In January 2004, Ofsted began a four-year programme to inspect all local authority youth services. The main aim of the report is to provide case studies of the good practice seen during the first year of the programme and to contribute to the further improvement of provision. The report also provides a commentary on the characteristics of successful youth services and reflects on weaknesses which persist across the sector.

19. ***Knowing the Score Positive Futures Case Study Research: Final Report For the Home Office***, (2006)

[http://www.drugs.gov.uk/publication-search/young-people/0607\\_YPSMPG11](http://www.drugs.gov.uk/publication-search/young-people/0607_YPSMPG11)

This final report is designed to draw out the key themes that have informed the research team's conclusions about both the contribution of Positive Futures and the lessons which will help to establish a benchmark for sport and activity based social inclusion programmes in the future.

### **Useful websites**

1. The National Youth Agency website contains case studies, publications and research on youth policy and practice, as well as the active involvement of young people in their communities.

<http://www.nya.org.uk>

2. Idea Knowledge demonstrates examples of good practice from Beacon

councils under the themes of 'positive youth engagement in community and democratic processes' and 'culture and sport for hard to reach groups'.

<http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=5096139>

3. Guidance and information on the PE, School Sport and Club Links strategy is available from:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/pe/>

4. Publications and resources for setting up and maintaining study support programmes, including practical guidance on health and safety issues are available from: [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport/](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport/)

5. Information on providing positive activities in extended schools is available from:

[http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/extendedschools/teachernetgovukcoreoffer/Varied\\_menu\\_of\\_activities/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/extendedschools/teachernetgovukcoreoffer/Varied_menu_of_activities/)

and from:

<http://www.continyou.org.uk/content.php?CategoryID=757>

6. Advice and support for those involved in strategic development of children's play is available from:

[www.playengland.org.uk](http://www.playengland.org.uk)

7. Information on work of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council across England is at:

[www.mla.gov.uk](http://www.mla.gov.uk)

8. **V** champions youth volunteering in England and aims to inspire a million more 16–25 year olds to volunteer and enable a lasting change in the quality, quantity and diversity of youth volunteering.

<http://www.wearev.com>

9. The Music Manifesto was set up by DfES and DCMS in collaboration with music organisations to develop opportunities for young people to play and experience music at all levels.

<http://www.musicmanifesto.co.uk>

10. The Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England and priorities children and young people in its work.

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk>

## Annex B

Possible action by the local authority	How will this help develop the market for positive activities?	Considerations
Join-up commissioning processes across different parts of the authority and with partners	Increase coherence for potential providers when assessing/entering the market.	Children's trust arrangements will assist with co-ordination
Establish longer term funding arrangements	<p>Providers will be less likely to seek to provide services and less able to ensure quality where funding timescales are short term and do not: justify the necessary investment; allow time to establish quality systems; or prove attractive to well training staff.</p> <p>Longer term funding arrangements also provide a greater degree of strategic planning for service delivery.</p>	<p>Longer term contracts should be negotiated to be sufficiently flexible to enable providers to meet changing demands in service provision from young people.</p> <p>The advantages of large scale contracts must be weighed against the need to ensure that smaller providers with specialised programmes or local experience can also compete on a level playing field.</p>
Enable full cost recovery	Provision will only be sustainable over the longer term if full costs (including development and administrative costs) are able to be included in the funding arrangements.	
Consider scaling up the size of contract	Providers are often commissioned to provide discrete, time limited activities. A more significant contribution could be gained through outsourcing much larger packages of activity. Possibly by forming commissioning clusters with other local authorities.	A larger contract is likely to prove more attractive to alternative providers, not least because it offers better prospects of profitability for private providers and funding stability for not for profit providers.
Engage voluntary and community organisations, not for profit agencies and private providers in strategic bodies.	<p>It is important that alternative providers are given the opportunity to align themselves with the delivery agenda. This means not only ensuring that alternative providers are aware of forthcoming service requirements, but the local authority also being open to suggestion and negotiation as to how alternative providers could contribute to the delivery of services.</p> <p>The engagement of umbrella bodies and key partner agencies in strategic arrangement will help facilitate this.</p>	By engaging alternative providers in strategic planning processes, the potential contribution of alternative providers can be built into the design of the overall delivery framework, thereby ensuring the commissioning opportunities match the capacity of these providers.
Build the capacity of alternative providers.	It will ensure that realistic alternative delivery options to the authority's in-	A strengthening of voluntary and community sector

	house provision exist.	providers will have the added benefit of harnessing the resources available to the sector through alternative funding sources
Establish pragmatic, proportionate and effective local performance management processes	Local authorities will be concerned to enhance performance management processes and improve provider accountability without creating disproportionate administrative burdens which can act as a barrier to market entry.	Where possible, requirements should be harmonised with those from other sources of funding (beyond the local authority) to minimise the potential for multiple requests for similar, yet separate information.
Be clear what constitutes good outcomes, and how the quality and consistency of service provision can be monitored	Introduce clear Service Level Agreements that enable providers to establish quality assurance mechanisms that meet the local authority's requirements and thereby provide the degree of confidence and accountability to meet local authority requirements.  Introduce clear sanctions and rewards to support good performance and to challenge failure.	Outcomes should relate to the Every Child Matters: Change for Children Outcomes Framework <sup>45</sup>
Make a range of non-financial resources available to providers	In some cases there will be scope to facilitate others to make provision by permitting free or reduced cost use of human and physical resources available to the authority. This might include use of buildings or transport, and could also mean access to training and other support functions.	Providing centrally owned facilities for use by multiple providers often allows for more efficient use of resources.  Many funding bodies would consider such support as a 'gift in kind' and recognise it as match funding.
Support schools to make choices regarding external provision	Many schools have a low level of awareness of the range of alternative provision for extended services available to them.	Co-ordinating school-based commissioning with local authority commissioning will bring greater coherence to market development and reduce barriers to market entry.



**Annex C**

<p><b>Key Line of Enquiry</b></p>	<p><b>A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users, is cost effective and makes contributions to wider outcomes for the community.</b></p>	<p><b>A service that delivers only minimum requirements, and is not especially cost effective nor contributes significantly to wider outcomes for the community.</b></p>
<p>Are the needs of citizens and users at the heart of the design and delivery of the service now and in the future?</p>	<p><b>A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users, is cost effective and makes contributions to wider outcomes for the community.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people, older people and target communities are regularly and widely consulted in a planned and systematic way and as a result have opportunities to express their interests and aspirations in relation to cultural sector opportunities and experiences.</li> <li>• Services work well together across the range of service areas to ensure that children and young people have access to affordable cultural activities and that they are able to access opportunities for physical activity.</li> <li>• Services use a wide and contemporary range of information on the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users to ensure services are planned, prioritised and delivered in a non-discriminatory way.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people, older people and target communities have opportunities to express their interests and aspirations with regard to the cultural sector, but consultation is sometimes irregular or lacks co-ordination.</li> <li>• Services work reasonably well together in a number of areas in trying to ensure that children and young people have access to affordable cultural activities, but there are some gaps which results in lack of opportunities for some.</li> <li>• Services use a reasonable range of information including the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users, and services are planned, prioritised and delivered in a non-discriminatory way.</li> </ul>
<p>Is the service accessible, responsive and based on a robust understanding of local need?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people have access to a wide range of varied safe, affordable, formal and informal play opportunities in their neighbourhood within easy reach of home.</li> <li>• The full range of services provided complies with requirements for physical, remote, and intellectual access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people have access and opportunities to a number of varied safe, affordable formal and informal play opportunities within easy reach of home.</li> <li>• Many but not all services comply with requirements for access for</li> </ul>

	<p>for local people and in particular meet the access needs of children, young people, older people and target communities.</p>	<p>local people and the access needs for children, young people, older people and target communities are not effectively addressed across these categories of potential users.</p>
<p>Are service standards clear and comprehensive and have users been involved in setting them where appropriate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a broad range of current clear evidence to show that users and local people have been widely involved in setting standards where they apply in different aspects of services, and the views of children and young people, older people, and target communities in particular have been actively sought out and acted on.</li> <li>• Appropriate and specific arrangements are made so that children and young people, older people, and target communities can be involved in consultation and communication processes as a matter of course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is evidence to show that users and local people have been involved in setting standards in most, but not all, areas of service where they apply, and the views of children and young people, older people, and target communities have been acted on.</li> <li>• There is evidence of arrangements to involve children and young people, older people, and target communities in consultation processes, but their views are not proactively sought out and as a result the potential in their involvement is not maximised.</li> </ul>
<p>Is the service effective in meeting local, regional and national objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services provide comprehensive support across all services to parents and carers in supporting children and young people's learning and education. Looked after Children and their carers are targeted by the service and are able to participate in cultural sector opportunities and they consider them easy to access.</li> <li>• There is felt to be safe access to all facilities and they are not limited by location or surroundings; this is particularly true for children, young people, older people, and target communities.</li> <li>• Children and young people feel positive about safety and accessibility issues; this encourages usage and promotes a positive perception of safety in the area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services provide basic support to parents and carers in supporting children and young people's learning and education. Looked After Children and their carers are able to access services but they are not targeted and services are more reactive than proactive.</li> <li>• There is felt to be safe access to the majority of facilities and only a small number are limited by location or surroundings; this is also true of provision for children, young people, older people, and target communities.</li> <li>• Children and young people feel less confident about safety and access. This may deter usage and promote reluctance to use local facilities.</li> <li>• The sector contributes to some basic improvements in the quality</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cultural sector contributes fully and effectively to a range of improvements in the quality of life for many local people, in particular for children, young people, older people, and target communities. This is through a rich and vibrant range of initiatives to improve the built environment, parks and open spaces, opportunities for play and recreation, the arts, sport, and heritage.</li> <li>• Services to children and young people are of a consistently high quality, well promoted, and are well used and close to capacity, such as playschemes, playgrounds and play areas, children's activities in libraries, museums and leisure centres, holiday activities, homework support, youth shelters and books for babies.</li> <li>• The outdoor environment is comprehensively well maintained by the council and public open spaces for events, recreational, sporting, and casual use are well used and consistently well regarded by local people. Parks achieve Green Flag awards.</li> </ul>	<p>of life for a number of local people, including children, young people, older people, and target communities. This is through a more limited or narrower range of initiatives to improve the built environment, parks and open spaces, opportunities for play and recreation, the arts, sport, or heritage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a range of services to children and young people but they may be varied and medium in quality and the range of provision may not be comprehensive. Provision is under-utilised by local young people.</li> <li>• Some aspects of the outdoor environment are reasonably well maintained but there are inconsistencies in standards; public open spaces for events, recreational, sporting, and casual use are under utilised, and local people's opinions about public open spaces are varied.</li> </ul>
<p>What is user experience of, and satisfaction with, the quality of the service?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high proportion of children and young people, older people, and targeted communities are highly satisfied with the range and quality of services available to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people, older people, and targeted communities are reasonably satisfied with the range and quality of services available to them.</li> </ul>