1 PURPOSE

1.1 To agree a framework of principles and practice to underpin the delivery of Youth Work within Community Support Services to ensure consistency and quality across the Stirling Council area.

2 SUMMARY

2.1 The development and implementation of consistent principles and practices involves the following:

- Agreement on the Definition and Principles of the delivery of Youth Work within a Stirling Council context.
- Recruitment and Selection procedures for both part-time and Voluntary Youth Workers.
- Support and Supervision structures for Youth Workers.
- Training programmes including an Induction process through to a Basic Youth Workers course.
- Identification of a contact worker (from within Community Support Area Teams) for every Youth Worker and Youth Organisations.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To agree upon the Definition and Principles of the delivery of Youth Work within Community Support.

3.2 To advise Council on the development of consistent principles and practices for Youth Work within the Stirling Council area.
4 CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Stirling Councils’ Vision and Values and the development of Youth Services and Youth Work within Community Support demonstrate the Council’s commitment to Young People.

4.2 Youth Work within the Stirling Council area is varied and diverse and encompasses a wide range of provisions for young people catered for by a variety of agencies. These include Community Support which employs and trains Sessional Youth Workers to work with young people; supports and trains volunteers with the Voluntary Sector, the traditional uniformed youth organisations and a small number of specialist agencies for example Enable and Off The Record.

4.3 The development of Youth Work is only possible and desirable through a partnership with the Voluntary Sector and individual volunteers, and the resources and staff of Stirling Council.

4.4 A Community Support Youth Work task group was formed to develop guidelines for good practice to ensure consistency and quality across the Stirling Council area, It examined information, materials and ideas from the former Regional Council, other local authorities and outside agencies. The Task Group has included a representative from each of the Community Support area teams and the Youth Policy Manager.

4.5 The Task Group, having progressed and developed the materials and ideas relating to the principles and practices of youth work, held a staff consultation day for Community Support and Youth Services on 15 August 1996. The outcome of the day was a much clearer and more defined set of principles and practices for the Task Group to conclude and refine for Committee approval and implementation.

4.6 Meetings have also been held between voluntary youth organisations and Youth Services and Community Support Services which identified the need to have a point of contact between area teams and voluntary youth organisations.

4.7 The consultation process has produced a definition and a set of principles for the delivery of Youth Work which are detailed as follows:-

DEFINITION

Within Stirling Councils’ Community Support context Youth Work is that element of direct work with young people predominately in the age range of 12-18 years. It is primarily an educational process, delivered in safe settings and based on experiential learning, participation, confidence building and taking of responsibility,

PRINCIPLES

Youth Work should be:-

EMPOWERING

Equipping young people with the necessary skills and support to tackle their own issues.
RESPONSIVE

Young people’s attitudes, values and needs must always be the starting point of acceptable responses in Youth Work.

APPEALING

Promoting the inherent zest and gusto of Youth to enjoy and appreciate living through the development of services in response to expressed needs.

PARTICIPATIVE

Encouraging young people to participate fully as valued members of their communities which includes the social, cultural, political and recreational needs of individuals and groups.

INFORMATIVE

Ensuring that young people have the means to access information to enable them to make informed choices and fully maximise their opportunities.

CHALLENGING

Encouraging young people to understand their legal and social rights, and to exercise them within safe and supported settings.

4.8 Recruitment and Selection procedures are currently in draft form. The emphasis is on a more consistent approach across the Stirling Council area. There would be less distinction between the expectations of and support for part-time youth workers and volunteers recruited by Community Support. The procedures include:-

- Job description for
  - Youth Work Co-ordinator
  - Youth Work Specialist
  - Youth Worker

- Personnel Specifications

- Common methods for application and interview

- Clear written expectations of the Youth Worker

- Clear written expectations of the Community Support Worker in their support role.

These will be finalised when Stirling Councils’ recruitment and selection procedures are agreed.
4.9 With Youth Workers working in a part time or voluntary capacity it is important that adequate support and supervision is put in place. The present draft proposals include:

- Arrangements for regular supervision sessions
- Ensuring that every Youth Worker has a support worker in the community support area teams

4.10 Presently an induction process is being developed which will detail what information and training is required from the first meeting of a potential Youth Worker through to the first six months beyond their start date. The contents of the induction process will include issues such as:

- Vetting procedures
- The role of a Youth Worker
- The Council’s values and visions
- The Definition and Principles of youth work
- Health and Safety matters
- Training Opportunities
- Relevant Council policies

4.11 Lastly, materials and training packages are being investigated so that appropriate staff development and training can be developed to meet the needs of youth workers from initial involvement to the more advanced and experienced level.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The principles of Youth Work, namely empowering and participative will contribute towards the Council’s strategic aim to promote local democracy and participation. Equally so the principles of being informative and challenging will help furnish the strategic aim of encouraging lifelong leaning.

6 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Youth Services have been fully involved in the planning and development of the proposals through their representative on the Youth Work Task Group.

6.2 Consultation has been ongoing with all workers within Community Support.

6.3 A range of Part-time Youth Workers have been consulted.

6.4 Meetings have been held with voluntary youth organisations.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Implementation will be within existing resources.
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Date 15 October 1996

Reference ………………………