



House of Commons
Education Committee

Services for young people

Third Report of Session 2010–12

Volume I

Report, together with formal minutes

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 15 June 2011*

HC 744-I
Published on 23 June 2011
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited
£14.50

The Education Committee

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Summary

Local authorities have a duty to provide sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities for young people aged 13–19, and those aged 20–24 with learning disabilities. Provision has typically taken the form of open-access services, including a range of leisure, cultural and sporting activities often based around youth centres. Local authorities also provide targeted services for vulnerable young people, such as teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, drug and alcohol misuse services and homelessness support. Whilst some authorities provide services directly, many are contracted out to voluntary, community or private organisations. These sectors also provide a range of services funded wholly or largely from external sources: both open-access ones, such as the Scouts or faith-based groups, and targeted ones, such as training programmes run by Fairbridge. The breadth of activities and providers meeting the description of ‘services for young people’ is consequently so broad that it is almost impossible to describe as a single sector.

Around 85% of young people’s waking hours are spent outside formal education, yet each year local authorities spend 55 times more on formal education than they do on providing services for young people outside the school day. We disagree with the Government that public spending of around £350 million a year on youth services in England equates to “large slugs of public money”; rather, we congratulate the sector for its long-standing dexterity in making limited resources go a long way and for continuing to support young people despite reliance on a patchwork of different funds. We acknowledge that there have already been very significant, disproportionate cuts to local authority youth services—a situation which the Minister acknowledged—ranging from 20% to 100%. In this context we comment that the Government’s lack of urgency in articulating a youth policy or strategic vision is regrettable. The Government needs to acknowledge the reality of what is happening to many youth services on the ground and act now. We remind local authorities of their statutory duty to secure young people’s access to sufficient educational and recreational activities, and call on the Government to announce publicly its commitment to retain it. If authorities fail to meet the duty, we recommend that the Secretary of State consider employing his powers to direct them to commission adequate provision.

However, we also believe that, in the current financial climate, youth services cannot hope to be immune from public spending cuts. We conclude that there is scope for greater utilisation of other sources of funding, including philanthropic and charitable funds and private sector investment, although these cannot replace entirely a shortfall in public funds. We support the broad principle that local authorities should primarily become strategic commissioners rather than simply the default providers of youth services. Yet we comment that local authorities will need to consider radical options if savings are to be made by commissioning, given that many services are already delivered by the voluntary sector. We make a number of practical recommendations to improve commissioning. We do not believe that a system whereby local authorities withhold payment until a service demonstrates specific results is suited to the funding of youth services. However, we conclude that there may be scope for a form of social impact bond to be applied at local authority level, in addition to core spending on youth services. Such a model would encourage social investment from external sources in outcomes for young people in an area,

on the basis that savings would provide returns to investors and perhaps the local authority.

There is little doubt that good youth services can have a transformational effect on young people's lives and often play a vital role in supporting both vulnerable young people and those without particular disadvantage. However, we find that many services are unable or unwilling to measure the improvements they make in outcomes for young people. The lack of a common measurement framework across the sector makes it extremely difficult for authorities to decide which services to fund. Although we accept that 'you know good youth work when you see it', we believe it is essential that publicly funded services are able to demonstrate what difference they make to young people. Some robust but sophisticated tools are already in existence which allow services to do this, but agreement is needed on a common set of standards. We therefore welcome the Government's intention to deliver an outcomes framework for application across the sector. We recommend that it should take account of personal and social wellbeing measures, that young people should be closely involved in its design and application and that it should be simple and inexpensive to administer.

On workforce, we conclude that volunteers are highly valued and already much deployed across youth services. Although they already comprise around 87% of the workforce, additional barriers to their participation should not be introduced, and in this context we welcome the scaling back of Criminal Record Bureau checks. The low priority afforded to continuing professional development of the youth workforce is concerning, in particular the fact that latest available data, for 2008, show that 33% of local authorities spent nothing at all on it. We commend as worthy of further investigation a proposal to establish an Institute for Youth Work which could set minimum standards across the sector and promote continuing professional development.

The cost of National Citizen Service—the Government's flagship youth programme for 16-year olds—in 2011 is approximately £1,182 per young person. By contrast, the German federal Government spends £1,228 per young person for a whole year's work-based volunteering programme. We do not see how the Government can justify spending the same for a six-week programme. We calculate that it would cost a total of £355 million each year to provide a universal offer of National Citizen Service assuming, for instance, a 50% take-up. Even allowing for economies of scale, such costs may well outstrip annual local authority spending on youth services. We applaud the Government's aspiration to make a universal offer to all young people and agree that, in a world of less scarce resources, the National Citizen Service would be a positive development. However, given the degree to which year-round youth services are being cut, and in light of our concerns about cost and practical implementation, we cannot support the programme's continued development in its current form. We recommend that the core idea of National Citizen Service be retained, but that it be amended to become a form of accreditation. This would allow programmes which can prove that they meet the Government's aims of social mixing, personal and social development, and the component parts of National Citizen Service—such as a residential experience and a social action task—to attain a Government-accredited quality mark. We acknowledge that this may further reduce the overall resources available to the youth sector, and thus recommend that Government protects those additional funds currently earmarked for National Citizen Service and diverts them into year-round youth services.

The Committee's inquiry

1. On 21 October 2010 we announced our intention to conduct an inquiry into the provision of services beyond the school/college day for young people, primarily those aged 13–25. In particular, we wished to investigate:

- The relationship between universal and targeted services for young people;
- How services for young people can meet the Government's priorities for volunteering, including the role of National Citizen Service;
- Which young people access services, what they want from those services and their role in shaping provision;
- The relative roles of the voluntary, community, statutory and private sectors in providing services for young people;
- The training and workforce development needs of the sector;
- The impact of public sector spending cuts on funding and commissioning of services, including how available resources can best be maximised, and whether payment by results is desirable and achievable;
- How local government structures and statutory frameworks impact on service provision; and
- How the value and effectiveness of services should be assessed.

We excluded from the inquiry formal careers guidance services, including those provided by Connexions.

2. We took oral evidence on five occasions in January, February, March and May 2011, and received 158 written memoranda. All those who gave evidence are listed at the end of this Report.

3. We visited Berlin in February 2011, to investigate the reasons for Germany's strong rates of youth volunteering and engagement. A note of our visit is annexed to this Report. In addition, in partnership with online forum The Student Room, we ran a series of online discussion threads between February and May 2011 to hear the views of young people.¹

4. We thank all those who gave evidence for their assistance in our deliberations, as well as those who hosted our visit to Berlin. We extend particular thanks and apology to young people and staff from youth services in Bolton and Trafford who had set aside time to host a visit which was frustrated at the last moment by changes to parliamentary business. We would also like to thank very much the Specialist Adviser appointed to help us with the

¹ Postings made under the four consultation threads remain available on the forum at: www.thestudentroom.co.uk/youthservices

inquiry, Tom Wylie,² whose expert guidance in navigating a highly complex landscape has been valuable throughout.

² Mr Wylie declared interests as a Trustee of Rathbone, a Trustee of Asdan and a Member of the Development Grants Board for The Scout Association, at the Committee meeting on 9 February 2011.

1 Introduction

Terminology: the 'Youth Service' and youth services

5. Around 85% of young people's waking hours are spent outside formal education.³ Yet each year local authorities spend 55 times more on formal education than they do on providing services for young people outside the school day.⁴ There is a statutory duty on local authorities under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to provide some such activities.⁵ The duty states that, for young people aged 13 to 19 and young people aged 20 to 24 with learning disabilities:

A local education authority in England must, so far as reasonably practical, 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.

It stipulates that local authorities may either provide facilities for such activities, assist others in the provision of such activities, or make arrangements for facilitating access to such facilities.⁶ In exercising their functions, local authorities must ascertain the views of young people about activities and facilities and the need for any additional such activities and facilities; and must also publicise information about positive leisure-time activities and facilities in the area, keeping that information up-to-date.⁷

6. Local authorities have broadly provided two types of service: 'open-access' (or 'universal') services including a range of leisure, cultural, sporting and enrichment activities often based around youth centres; and more targeted provision for vulnerable young people, including teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, drug and alcohol misuse services and homelessness support. Provision is overseen by local authority officers, but service delivery is often contracted out to local voluntary or community groups and, occasionally, private contractors. Somewhat confusingly, perhaps, this local authority provision is often referred to locally as 'the Youth Service' (e.g. 'Devon Youth Service').

7. The beginning of an organised youth service in England is usually traced back to the start of the Second World War in 1939 and the issuing by the then Ministry of Education of a circular (1486) entitled *In the Service of Youth*. The circular called on local authorities to provide resources for a youth service which would promote young people's social and physical development. Greater resources were put into youth services in the wake of a

3 Professor Tim Brighouse, *Education without failure*, The Royal Society of Arts Digital Journal, Autumn 2008

4 See paragraph 53. Mean per pupil spending by local authorities in 2009–10 was £4,290. By comparison, mean spending per young person by local authorities on youth services in the same year was £77.28

5 Part 1 Section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (inserting new Clause 507B into the Education Act 1996). Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/6>

6 Subsection (5)

7 Subsections (9) and (10)

major review of youth provision in the 1960s conducted by the Albemarle Committee. Concerns about teenage ‘delinquency’ and the end of National Service in the 1950s had led the Ministry of Education to appoint a committee, chaired by Countess Albemarle, to review youth services in England and Wales. Albemarle reported that voluntary attendance (by young people) and voluntary help (by adult volunteers) were their great strengths, in contrast to mandatory attendance at school. Weaknesses were the lack of strong relationships between the statutory and voluntary sector, and uncertainty about funding. As a result of the report, substantial additional funding was committed to youth services, the number of workers doubled in the following decade, and a Joint Negotiating Committee was established to set terms and conditions for youth workers at the national level.⁸

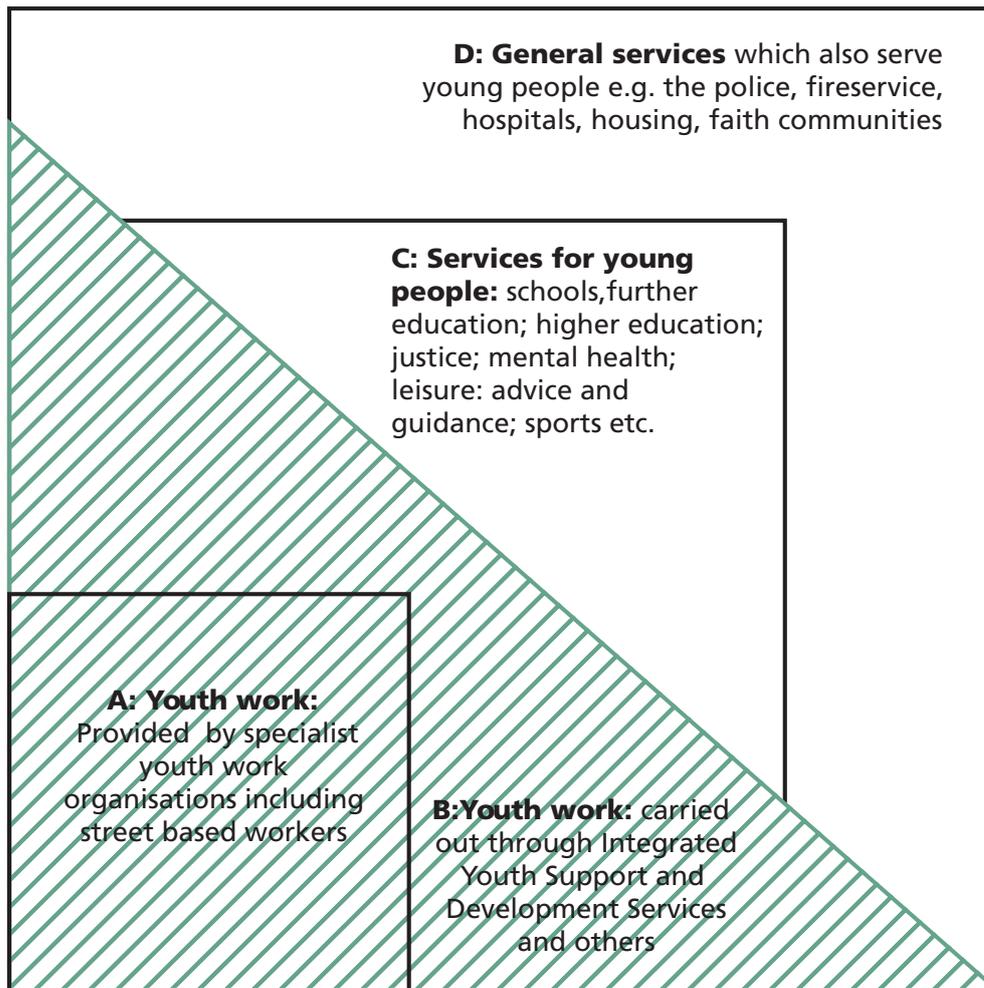
8. In addition to local authority provision many voluntary, community or private organisations choose to provide services for young people. Some may seek contracts from local or national government, while others fund their provision from other sources. These services, too, encompass a range from open-access activities such as the Scouts and Girlguiding, to more targeted programmes such as those run by The Prince’s Trust for disadvantaged young people, and from uniformed and faith-based groups to community and interest focused groups. The range of services and activities provided under the description of ‘services for young people’ is incredibly broad, so much so that even those in the sector struggled to define it: for instance, Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency, said “it is almost difficult to describe us as a sector. We are so different—from the very local to the statutory service to the private deliverer”.⁹ Derek Twine, Chief Executive of The Scout Association added that “the whole of young provision is very diverse. Its strength is its biggest weakness”.¹⁰ A depiction of the relationship between youth work in its various settings and the wider range of services for young people is provided in the following diagram.¹¹

8 Infed, *The Albemarle report and the development of youth work in England and Wales*. Available online at: http://www.infed.org/youthwork/albemarle_report.htm

9 Q 60

10 Q 104

11 Adapted from a diagram produced by Tom Wylie, *Spending Wisely—young people, youth work and youth services: an introductory guide*, National Youth Agency (2006)



as adapted from the original model by Tom Wylie, 2006

9. Our inquiry considered both those services provided as part of the local authority offer and those run by other groups. We took oral evidence from heads of local authority youth services, as well as from a range of non-statutory providers of open-access services, including the YMCA, the Scout Association and the Salmon Youth Centre in Bermondsey, and targeted services, including Fairbridge and The Prince's Trust.

Youth work

10. Youth work is a “deliberative educational approach with its own pedagogy and professional base”,¹² whose aim is to support the personal and social development of young people through non-formal education. The practice has its roots in the clubs and associations set up by voluntary—often faith-based—organisations in the 19th century, and youth work encompasses a range of activities with young people, primarily those aged 13–19, which promote their personal development and social education. A core principle of youth work is that young people involve themselves by choice. As the National Youth Agency describes: “its distinctive characteristics include the voluntary engagement of young people, young people’s active involvement in developing provision, the use of informal education as the primary method of youth engagement, and an approach to

12 Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency, Q 2

provision that is responsive to young people’s preferences”.¹³ Nick Wilkie, Chief Executive of London Youth, explained that youth work involved:

giving young people the opportunity to experience something new, the ability to take responsibility and to come together with a positive peer group to do that—all under the watchful and affirming guise of a supportive, sensible adult ... At some level, most of us, if we were asked to close our eyes and think about what it was in our adolescence that gives us confidence and resilience, and the skills that we are using this morning, would point to opportunities that broadly fulfil a definition of youth work.¹⁴

11. Youth workers are trained in youth work practice and techniques to promote young people’s personal and social development and enable them to have a voice, influence and place in their communities and society as a whole. Ginny Lunn, Director of Policy and Development for The Prince’s Trust, told us that the role of youth workers was “to inspire young people, to give them the inspiration and the hope, which you hear all the time is lacking”,¹⁵ and Janet Batsleer, Head of Youth and Community Work Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University, that “youth work is there to produce opportunities for the personal, social and spiritual development of young people so that they reach their potential outside of the school system through activities that they join in their leisure time”.¹⁶

12. Youth work takes place in a range of settings. In addition to working for local authority youth services, youth workers are employed by health authorities, youth justice teams, sports development programmes, drugs projects, social services, arts venues, schools and a range of voluntary organisations. Youth work is often building-based—for instance in community youth clubs—but can also be street-based, and such ‘detached’ youth work has increased in recent years.

Youth policy under the previous and current administrations

13. Policy initiatives under the previous administration led to the restructuring of some authorities’ youth services and a closer integration of ‘universal’ and ‘targeted’ provision. The *Youth Matters* Green Paper (2005) and subsequent *Youth Matters: Next Steps* White Paper introduced Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS), covering both universal services such as youth centres, Connexions guidance and a range of personal development and social activities for all young people; and Targeted Youth Support (TYS), directed at those at risk of drug or alcohol misuse, crime, homelessness, teenage pregnancy and other high-risk individuals. Targeted Youth Support formed a discrete subset of Integrated Youth Support Services. The rationale given in the White Paper for this structural change was that agencies working with young people had fragmented and were duplicating one another’s efforts, and that integrating their work around the needs of young people would

13 National Youth Agency and Local Government Association (2010), *Valuing Youth Work, getting it right for young people*, p.5

14 Q 128

15 Q 142

16 Q 175

allow improved opportunities for young people to develop social and emotional skills through informal learning and provide better early identification of vulnerable teenagers.¹⁷ *Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for young people* (2007) established a national policy framework, requiring a local authorities to provide an offer for ‘positive activities’ for all young people.

14. The current Government has yet to articulate an overall youth policy, though it has made individual announcements about introducing National Citizen Service, a six-week programme of youth volunteering and residential activities for 16-year-olds being piloted in 2011 and 2012. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, Tim Loughton MP, told us that he was “not going to hurry to come up with artificial timetables” for setting out policy,¹⁸ but outlined his thinking on youth services:

Youth services in this country are one of the most high profile unreformed public services. Many other areas related to children and young people have undergone immense change—much of it for the better—over the past couple of decades. It strikes me that youth services have been left in a bit of a time warp.¹⁹

He told us that a youth action group had been established, consisting of ministers from eight different departments, with responsibility for “youth proofing” all their policies, and that youth democratic engagement was a priority for the Government.²⁰

15. The Department for Education held a policy summit entitled ‘Positive for Youth’ with a range of sector representatives in March 2011, and is currently consulting on the content of a youth strategy, due for publication later this year. The Minister explained that he did not want this to be “another glossy brochure that everyone puts on the shelf, but a living, breathing document. I shall not just produce it to show it to people”.²¹ More broadly, the Government has set out early intervention as a priority across the board, commissioning a review from Graham Allen MP, bringing together funds under the Early Intervention Grant, and calling for evidence-based targeted intervention. In terms of youth services, this is likely to mean a prioritisation of public funds for disadvantaged young people, and of targeted services over open-access ones.

17 Department for Education and Skills (2007), *Targeted Youth Support: A Guide*, Foreword p.1

18 Q 410

19 Q 410

20 Q 411

21 Q 411

2 The purpose and reach of services

'Universal' provision?

16. One of the questions our inquiry set out to understand was the differences in purpose and provision between so-called 'universal' and 'targeted' services, drawing a distinction between those which were available to all young people and those which targeted specific segments of the youth population, often with specific vulnerabilities. Figures for the number of young people using services across the whole sector are not readily available. The most recent audit by the National Youth Agency (in 2006-07) suggested that 28% of all 13–19 year olds were in contact with some form of youth service, narrowly passing the target set by the previous Government, of 25%,²² and 50% higher than the level of a decade earlier.²³ Since youth services are not statutory, it is not perhaps surprising that they do not have a universal reach in the same way as, for instance, "suitable education", which (at least in theory) reaches 100% of all school-age children. However our inquiry sought to determine whether any services could be described as universal in terms of their being equally accessible to all young people across the country.

17. It quickly became clear that the term 'universal services' was misleading, as although services like youth clubs or sports projects might be open to all young people wishing to attend, those funded by the state tended to be located in certain communities or geographical areas and not others. Susanne Rauprich, Chief Executive of the National Council of Voluntary Youth Services, explained that:

the reality is that there are a large number of young people out there who are never touched by young people's services ... youth services have traditionally been focused in particular communities. It would be fair to say that although quite a number of them are universally available, the young people using them have tended to be those from less privileged and less advantaged backgrounds.²⁴

18. Others added that, although there was often an aspiration for local authority youth service provision to be universal, this had never been achieved. For instance, North of England Activities and Training wrote to us that "there is no such thing as a universal youth service out of school hours ... services that should be universal, such as involvement in positive activities, are not: in one inner-city school with a very high proportion of students who were BME, eligible for free schools meals or with special educational needs, researchers found that 66% of students had no out-of-hours activities".²⁵ BBC Children in Need similarly described youth clubs as often being "universal in a targeted setting", with an "open door policy".²⁶ In Germany we found that open-access facilities were similarly

22 Q 5 [Fiona Blacke]

23 Davies (2008), *A History of the Youth Service in England*, Volume 2, p.145, cites a survey of youth participation rates by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys in 1995 which recorded a 20% participation rate. However, it should be noted that this survey covered all forms of youth organisations and not just the local authority system, which was the basis for the National Youth Agency audit

24 Q 5

25 Ev w65

26 Ev w379 –380

often located in deprived areas, including the Meeting Centre we visited in East Berlin, which was located in a poorer district with a high proportion of migrants, and aimed in particular at social mixing of young people from different backgrounds.²⁷

19. Various government initiatives from 1939 onwards have aspired to create a universal offer of youth services to all young people, principally delivered through local authorities. Yet, although the number of young people accessing services has risen over the past decade or so, in reality youth services have never reached anything like 100% of young people. Services often referred to as ‘universal’ tend to be open to all young people but located in particular areas, often of disadvantage, and are arguably targeted in a geographical sense. We do not believe that there are any truly universal youth services and consequently propose to use the term ‘open-access’ rather than ‘universal’ in drawing a distinction with targeted services. We recommend that the Government do the same.

The relationship between open-access and targeted services

A focus on targeted services

20. Various submissions highlighted that, despite differences in implementation across the country with some local authorities moving to Integrated Youth Support Services and others maintaining distinct types of provision, the cumulative effect of policy changes over recent years had been a gradual prioritisation of targeted services over open-access ones. For instance, Howard Williamson, Professor of European Youth Policy at the University of Glamorgan, told us that “in the last 20 years we’ve seen a massive increase in focus on social inclusion, disadvantage, drugs, teenage pregnancy, youth participation and citizenship”.²⁸ Harry Fowler, Head of Birmingham Youth Service, estimated that, whereas ten years previously around 90% of youth services had been open-access, that figure had reduced to about 50% to 60%.²⁹ Janet Batsleer, Head of Youth and Community Work Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University, agreed that there had been “a very strong focus on targeting ... the work that is at risk, as a result ... is the open-access, generic provision”.³⁰ We heard evidence that local authorities were already prioritising targeted services in response to the current spending cuts. Gill Millar, Regional Youth Work Adviser at Learning South West, told us that “in Gloucestershire, for example, where such an enormous reduction is being made, they are saying ‘we’re not going to provide open-access provision. Our provision will be targeted at young people who have already been identified as having a particular need to be addressed’”.³¹ Many written submissions echoed these positions.³²

27 See Annex [note of Berlin visit]

28 Q 170

29 Q 229

30 Q 170

31 Q 277

32 See, for instance, Ev w42 [Bernard Davies]; Ev w136 [Federation for Detached Youth Work]; Ev w148 [Unison]; Ev w175 [Graham Griffith]

21. This trend seems set to continue. Whilst praising the merit of open-access services, the Government's position seems to be that public funds should be refocused on targeted interventions (with the exception of the National Citizen Service). The Department's written submission lists as one of four key principles for youth services "a stronger focus for public funding on evidence-based targeted intervention with greater flexibility and responsibility for local areas to prioritise and allocate funding according to local need".³³ The Minister told us that "we don't have universal services at the moment. I think that is something of a myth".³⁴ When asked whether the Government had an 'aspiration to provide services for all young people', he replied "no".³⁵

The case for open-access services

22. Although it is hard to generalise, since services are extremely diverse and work with young people with different needs and interests, we asked witnesses what the overarching purposes of youth services should be. Most agreed that services should not be only to divert young people from bad or risky behaviour, but also to offer them positive activities and things to do, and the statutory duty on local authorities to provide positive activities and facilities for young people was noted. For instance, Liam Preston, Young Chair of the British Youth Council told us that "young people value services ... it is not just about keeping them off the street",³⁶ and Charlotte Hill, Chief Executive of UK Youth, that "the idea that youth services are just about stopping young people becoming criminals is a really depressing outlook".³⁷ The Minister, Tim Loughton MP, agreed that "we have, absolutely, got to get away from pandering to the negative images of young people. That is why everything that I do in the context of youth policy ... will be about being positive for young people".³⁸

23. The majority of written and oral evidence we received emphasised the need to preserve open-access services. Many witnesses argued that vulnerable or disengaged young people were not the preserve of targeted services—on the contrary, many attended open-access provision such as youth clubs, sports projects or engaged with detached youth workers, and many such services played a vital role in reaching and intervening early with vulnerable young people who might be missed by other services, or whose needs might escalate before they were picked up by targeted services. For instance, Jason Stacey, Head of Policy, Media and Research for YMCA England, told us that his organisation, a network of open-access community centres, worked with 125,000 young people each year, amongst whom were "people who come from the most desperate of backgrounds in terms of family breakdown and potential abuse".³⁹ Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency, agreed about the preventative nature of open-access services: "the difficulty in the universal-versus-targeted debate is that, if you have universal provision there will inevitably

33 Ev 105

34 Q 427

35 Q 431

36 Q 2

37 Q 2

38 Q 416

39 Q 86

be some young people in that provision who, if they aren't part of a youth club or similar activity, probably will end up needing high-cost, high-end services, because they will become involved in risky behaviours",⁴⁰ and Charlotte Hill, Chief Executive of UK Youth, told us that "really good universal services can identify the young people within them who might need some targeted support".⁴¹ Gill Millar, Regional Youth Work Adviser at Learning South West, added that the non-targeted nature of services could be a distinct advantage:

One thing about open-access youth work is that it is not stigmatised. People are not referred to a youth worker; they take part in youth work provision and their needs are identified ... It is not like you are going to the place where the naughty boys go. If we take that out—that provision is largely going—we will lose a big access route for young people to get more specialised services.⁴²

24. Young witnesses described the tremendous impact of open-access services. Meg Hudson, a Beaver Scout Leader, told us that "without the Scouts I wouldn't be here", and Rebecca Salawu, a Salmon Centre Young Leader, said that "I felt that no one cared, but the youth centre, no matter what age you are when you walk in, never turns you back".⁴³ Both young people described how those services had helped them cope with turbulent home lives and difficulties with education. These testimonies were strikingly similar to that given by Amy Kirkman, a Young Ambassador for The Prince's Trust, in describing her involvement with that targeted service: "It got me interested in music again after suffering from my drug addictions ... it was a full-on, life-changing experience for me".⁴⁴ Others gave examples of how open-access youth clubs and similar projects could be as effective as targeted services in reaching at-risk young people. Jason Stacey told us that police in Ashington, Northumberland, had directly ascribed an 11% reduction in crime and social disorder in the town "to the fact that we now have 40 or 50 young people going into the youth club every evening".⁴⁵ We also heard that open-access provision mixed young people from different backgrounds. Fiona Blacke emphasised that this did not only mean economic backgrounds, but also the engagement of young people with different social characteristics: "you'll have community centres that bring together disabled young people and young people who don't have a disability. That's about social mixing. You'll have provision where it's OK for young people of different sexualities to be together".⁴⁶

25. Some, however, argued that, in a time of limited resources, services had to be targeted on the most vulnerable. For instance, Ginny Lunn, Director of Policy and Development for The Prince's Trust, suggested that "in this particular time, when youth unemployment is at a record high, we need to target services where they are needed the most".⁴⁷ Youth Access, the national membership organisation for young people's information, advice, counselling

40 Q 3

41 Q 3

42 Q 278

43 Q 86

44 Q 132 and Q 140

45 Q 86

46 Q 11

47 Q 133

and support services, thought that “universal provision often fails to have impact on disadvantaged young people” and that “it is sensible that scarce resources be focussed more intensively on the most disadvantaged young people, who are growing in numbers, have the most complex needs and for whom the beneficial impacts of support can be greatest”.⁴⁸ This was also the view of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, Tim Loughton MP, who told us that “we are in a climate of having much less money to work with ... it must therefore make sense that we target provision that is publicly funded rather better, to the most disadvantaged”.⁴⁹

26. The majority of witnesses from both open-access and targeted services argued for the need to provide both types, explaining that many young people moved between them. John Loughton, Parliamentary Manager for Fairbridge, explained that, although his organisation provided a targeted service:

we don’t believe that a them-or-us attitude between targeted and universal services is helpful or accurate. We are very complementary. If you don’t have strong universal services, often you can’t identify where young people can be supported. At Fairbridge, we rely on a strong tapestry of referrals into our services. Equally, if we support young people into employment and they can transition, move on and re-engage, where do they then go to? Often that is to re-engage with universal services. They go hand in hand.⁵⁰

Nick Wilkie agreed, saying “you can’t necessarily separate the two. Lots of paid and volunteer youth workers will do some universal work and some targeted work, so you can’t necessarily extract one from the other”.⁵¹ Many written submissions echoed this, arguing that drawing a dividing line between open-access (or ‘universal’) and targeted provision was artificial. For instance, a submission by Karen Morgan on behalf of a team of detached youth workers in London stated: “it would be a mistake to treat these two themes as being exclusive ... The process of youth work often begins with a young person’s entry through a universal service and their developmental journey may enter a targeted phase and return back to a universal one”.⁵² A submission from youth workers in Croydon believed that “targeted strands of youth work run complementary to universal services, for example, work with young people with disabilities whilst targeted for different young people needs contains strong elements of integrated universal work”.⁵³ Buckinghamshire County Council Children and Young People’s Services wrote that “universal services can act as an access route to targeted services by enabling the young person to build a relationship with a youth worker, which can act as a bridge in to more specialised services if required”.⁵⁴ Many others made similar points.⁵⁵

48 Ev w312

49 Q 428

50 Q 133

51 Q 133

52 Ev w288

53 Ev w211

54 Ev w56

55 See, for example, Ev w342 [Linda Jack]; Ev w377–378 [Integrated Youth Support Service, London Borough of Hounslow]; Ev w3 [Hollis Hutchings]; Ev w8 [Rick Bowler]; Ev w15 [Catch 22]; Ev w31 [Mandy Kelly]

27. A huge range of activities fall under the loose umbrella of ‘services for young people’, from local youth clubs to the UK Youth Parliament, the Scouts to employment programmes and midnight football games to teen pregnancy support, such that to describe them as a single sector is almost impossible. **Services for young people have myriad aims and we do not intend to comment on their individual merits. However, we do underline an important point of principle about provision: namely that the purposes of youth services should primarily be to offer positive activities and enriching personal and social experiences and not solely to be seen as a mechanism to divert young people from misbehaviour. This is especially important given that 85% of young people’s time is spent outside formal education. We urge the Government to announce publicly its intention to retain the statutory duty on local authorities to secure young people’s access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities, which requires them to take account of young people’s views and publicise up-to-date information about the activities and facilities available; and we remind local authorities that they must have regard to this duty.**

28. We understand that when public funding is limited priority may be given to services which support the most disadvantaged. However, our evidence showed that open-access services can sometimes be as effective as targeted ones in reaching those young people, that both can perform similarly life-changing roles in young people’s lives, and that young people often move between them. Consequently, in determining which services to commission, local authorities must recognise that an open-access service could be more appropriate than a targeted one for improving certain outcomes for young people, or that both types may be needed.

3 Identifying successful services: measuring value and impact

Services are valued but evidence of their impact is lacking

29. We received a huge amount of persuasive anecdotal and personal evidence about the value that services can have for young people, including passionate advocacy by young people themselves, through our online forum and in person. In addition to oral testimonies from Meg Hudson, Rebecca Salawu and Amy Kirkman (see paragraph 24), many written submissions provided case studies or personal testimonies from young people about the way in which youth services and youth workers had helped them.⁵⁶ We also heard from professionals: for instance, Keith Jones, a community and youth worker with thirty years' experience, wrote that "I have had the privilege of working with so many young people, some briefly, others for extended periods, some quite 'needy', some less so, but thankfully most are now leading stable and happy lives; and when the time is right, they tell us we helped".⁵⁷ Box 1 contains a selection of comments by young people from our online forum about the value of services.

BOX 1: THE VALUE OF SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE

In response to the question "what out-of-school activities do you do and where?" we received 55 posts, describing a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including music, dance, sports, Girlguiding, cadets, Duke of Edinburgh award, UK Youth Parliament or Youth Councils, and community organising.

It was notable that a high proportion—30 out of 55—of postings praised the importance of youth clubs:

When young people come to the youth centre they know they aren't going to be judged and they can be who they want to be, for some of them it gives them a break from stresses outside the centre and i think without this they would feel lost and deeply saddened ...the support and help offered by the youth services is so huge, the young people couldn't ask for any more. Anything they are worried about, could be drugs, pregnancy, abortion, schoolwork, bullying, it really doesn't matter what it is the staff here are willing to help, i don't know what would happen without them - *Lisa*

We all feel safe at the youth centre and its like a second home to some of us ... I've been coming to this youth centre for two years now i'd be lost without it - *Chloe*

The youth club has helped develop not only my life but the life of my friends and family. It has given me the help and support needed to carry on with my post-16 education. Me and many other young people in Skegness would be lost without these workers - *Stephen*

I want the youth services to be safe because if we dint have them all i would be doing is basically hannging around outside the shopping center causing trouble like i did before i knew about the

56 See for instance, case studies provided by detached youth work team in London in Ev w289–290 [Karen Morgan]; Ev w374 [Keith Jones]; Ev w39–44 [Bernard Davies]

57 Ev 374

services – *Denzilaa*

[the youth club] makes me feel safe because I don't have a care in the world because I'm so happy and contented, I feel like i belong there – *Jack*

By the time i was 13 i was already roaming the streets around where i live. We would do anything and everything to keep us entertained such as trespass ... we regularly got into trouble with the police and when I was 14 got an anti-social behaviour contract and nearly got myself an asbo. This was around the time i started going to outside school youth club. It was an ideal place for us all we never coursed any trouble and still could have a good laugh ... i no for sure that if it wasnt for my youth club id proberly end up in a housing hostel or in prison so i have alot to thanks for all theyve done for me – *Georgia*

I have been going to a Detached Youth Team in Oxford for over a year ... These Youth Centres make a lot of young people feel safe and secure. Without my youth workers I would now be in a lot of trouble with education, work and drugs. But with their help I have been able to sort myself out and get onto the right path and stop the bad things I was doing over a year ago – *Stussy*

Personally if it was not for the youth club, being the person i was in my youth i would not hesitate to say i would have had trouble with the police or further anti social behaviour would have taken place ... through the ages of 14 and 15 i knew i could always rely on the staff in my time of need – *Sam*

Young people also told us that they engaged with a wide range of other services and described their value:

The best thing in my experience were the small clubs set up by my school ... like the musicians who would meet twice a week after school and just jam for an hour – *E_Blackadder*

I have been in Girlguiding since I was 4. I have really enjoyed every section and have learnt things that I would never have learnt otherwise. I've met loads of new people and made lifelong friends – *Lizzie*

I'm 17 and have been enrolled in the Duke of Edinburgh award for 3 years now. I've met new people, climbed mountains, volunteered, enjoyed new sports – and every single part of it was brilliant! This award is so amazing I would recommend it to anyone! – *JerseyStudent*

Between the ages of 13 and 19 I was a member of the St Helens Brass Band, playing firstly the cornet, secondly the flugel horn (lead seat) and lastly a brief 3 month spell on the tuba ... the Youth Band has helped me to become who I am today ... it is a really fantastic organisation [which] has helped many, many people to remove themselves from dangerous gangs, unpleasant situations and helped us to get rid of frustration and suffering that we may be experiencing in our home lives – *Angel*

30. Despite the weight of individual testimonies, we experienced great difficulty in finding objective evidence of the impact of services, whether in the guise of thematic research studies by academics and independent bodies, or of evaluations of individual services. This problem plagued our investigations and was recognised by many in the youth sector itself as a historic and continuing problem. For instance, Nick Wilkie, Chief Executive of London Youth, told us that “across the sector we are bad at making our case ... In the short

term all you can do is take people to see, because I don't think we have the dataset to build on".⁵⁸

Research studies

31. We investigated what external evaluations of youth services by academics and research organisations could tell us about their impact. Many evaluative studies seemed to focus on individual programmes or policies, or else on a single locality. Dr Jason Wood, Head of Community and Youth Work at De Montfort University, disputed that there was little evidence, saying "often, what's been said outside is that there's not a lot of evidence of the impact of youth work, when the reverse is true. It is everywhere", but acknowledged that a difficulty was that it was "usually locally collected, because services are locally delivered".⁵⁹ However, Professor Howard Williamson told us that "research studies of youth work per se are pretty few and far between", which he contrasted with other countries such as Finland, whose Youth Research Society was "phenomenally well resourced by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Helsinki".⁶⁰

32. Our academic witnesses did highlight a number of relevant national studies on the impact of youth work and youth services. Overall we found perhaps two major studies with national reach within the last decade which looked across services: a 2004 study by Merton *et al* for the then Department for Education and Skills, *An evaluation of the impact of youth work in England*, and a 2005 analysis, also for the department, by Feinstein *et al* (2005), *Leisure contexts in adolescence and their effects on adult outcomes*. In addition there were a number of studies which evaluated specific forms of service, such as street-based youth work⁶¹ or sports,⁶² several of which evaluated particular government programmes,⁶³ and a range of studies looking at re-engaging disadvantaged young people.⁶⁴ As well as research studies, two major reviews of local authority youth services conducted by Ofsted in 2009 and 2010 offered a critique of the effectiveness and impact of services.⁶⁵

33. Dr Wood summarised the main conclusions of the 2004 study by Merton *et al*, which consisted of an in-depth evaluation of the impact of youth work provided and secured by local authorities:

58 Q 153

59 Q 179

60 Q 182

61 Crimmens *et al* (2004) [for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation], *The role of street-based youth work in linking socially excluded young people into education, training and work*, and Wylie & Smith (2004) [for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation], *The cost of providing street-based youth work in deprived communities*

62 Audit Commission (2009), *Tired of hanging around: using sport and leisure activities to prevent anti-social behaviour by young people*

63 For instance, CRG Research Ltd (2006), *Positive activities for young people: national evaluation*, PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2006), *The market for provision of positive activities for young people*, Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Service (2010), *Positive activities research summary*

64 For instance, Knight (2006), *Back from the Brink: how Fairbridge transforms the lives of disadvantaged young people*, Thomas *et al* (2008), *Effective early interventions for youth at risk of future poor outcomes*, and Audit Commission (2010), *Against the odds: re-engaging young people in education, employment and training*

65 Ofsted (2009), *Engaging young people: local authority youth work 2005-08*, and Ofsted (2010), *Supporting young people: evaluation of recent reforms to youth support services in 11 local areas*

The big findings that come out of that are that youth work has a measurable impact on all sorts of soft skills—things that are perhaps hard to measure, and that may in turn have an impact on school attendance, engagement in the community and so on. The key messages there are that young people value those experiences, in building their confidence and self-esteem, and in being able to gain a voice and influence in the communities in which they live.⁶⁶

Two thirds of the 630 young service users who responded to a survey as part of the study reported that youth work had made a considerable difference to their lives, including increasing confidence and learning new skills, making decisions for themselves, and that the most effective forms of youth work were those which had sustained contact with young people over time.

34. The 2005 study by Feinstein *et al* was a rare longitudinal study, examining which young people participate in leisure time activities and what the impact of participation was on later outcomes, based on data from the mid-1980s. The leisure time activities considered were sports and community centres, youth clubs, uniformed youth groups and church-based activities. Feinstein *et al* found that children who participated in youth clubs tended to have personal and family characteristics associated with adult social exclusion, and that those who attended youth clubs were less likely to achieve educationally and more likely to be criminal offenders. However, the report has been highly controversial and its methodology fiercely criticised on the basis that, rather than showing a causal link between attendance at youth clubs and poor adult outcomes—as it might appear to suggest—what the data actually showed was that open-access youth clubs as a type at that time reached disadvantaged children, but that their lack of structured activity did too little to move them on. For instance, Bernard Davies, in his *A History of the Youth Service in England* wrote:

The research ... by focussing on a large cohort born in 1970, sought to distinguish between leisure contexts perceived as having some form of 'educational' outcomes and ones (such as youth clubs) which, it was said, did not. In particular, starting from a distinction between sports and youth clubs, it correlated participation in these different forms of leisure activity in which interviewees reported, they had been involved twenty years before with, for these individuals, longer-term outcomes. This analysis, Feinstein and his colleagues suggested, provided evidence on 'how the types of club that young people go to are a signal of what they will later achieve'—though not it seems, a cause ... In May 2007 Feinstein published a re-working of his team's original data in which they concluded that unstructured youth clubs were particularly likely to attract at risk young people ... and that success ... depends on the very great skill of the youth workers who have to make day to day judgments about appropriate levels of risk and support, autonomy for challenging and challenged young people.⁶⁷

35. There has not been a major national evaluation of youth services or youth work since the mid-2000s. Dr Wood and others suggested that the time was right for such a study:

66 Q 180

67 Davies (2008), *A History of the Youth Service in England*, Volume 3, p.92

The world has moved on significantly ... even since the 2004 impact study, our approaches to evaluations, and the ways in which we engage young people in the processes of evaluation, have moved on.

I think there is scope to undertake some sort of meta-analysis of the reports that exist out there. I think the literature is vast and varied, and the academic community would welcome an opportunity to look at that. That would then inform the framework for a national impact evaluation of youth services, which in my mind looks something like a national survey of local authority funded provision. That may be 150 local authorities, or it might be a sample thereof.⁶⁸

Asked who should conduct such a review, Dr Wood responded “universities that have youth work research and training units would be the best-placed organisations”.⁶⁹

36. In light of the limited and somewhat outdated research evidence base about youth services, we believe there to be a strong case for relevant university research institutions and other academics in the field, perhaps in partnership with sector research journals, to conduct a meta-analysis of studies relating to the impact and effectiveness of youth services. The Government should commission such an analysis from an appropriate consortium as part of its forthcoming youth strategy, and should publish the results, to contribute to the public debate.

Difficulties in assessing service outcomes

37. Susanne Rauprich, Chief Executive of the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, explained that it was difficult to assess the comparative outcomes of different services because:

It’s very difficult to have a universal picture, because there is no universal metric. You have individual organisations that are very good at demonstrating the impact of their work, and there are lots of organisations that are not so good. Mainly, the larger charities and voluntary organisations would be very good at telling the story ... Anecdotal evidence and young people’s stories are also available. You go round and you can have young people telling you stories about how a certain intervention has changed their life, so that is there. However, what is really difficult, in terms of evidence, is to put that into some sort of national grid or set of statistics for the amounts of investment, whereby we could show the total amount of investment and the total amount of return, and a straight journey from A that will always lead to B. That is the problem that we’re facing.⁷⁰

She added that, where data existed at a service level, it was “never pulled together by anybody. The NYA [National Youth Agency] is probably the best agency in terms of collecting figures by sending a survey to local authorities, but that’s really all we have”.⁷¹ Interestingly, we found a similar situation during our trip to Germany, where

68 Qq 181 and 186

69 Q 187

70 Q 51

71 Q 7

representatives from the Federal Youth Council told us that services counted simple participation measures, such as the number of children involved in leisure activities, but that it was harder to gather detailed data to allow comparison across services.⁷²

38. From an external perspective, Martin Brookes, Chief Executive of New Philanthropy Capital, considered that in his experience of the youth sector, “fewer than we would expect and hope can evidence their work, and those that can really stand out and are exceptional ... There is a dearth of evidence in the sector, which mirrors the whole of the voluntary sector”.⁷³ Rob Bell, Head of the Social Justice Programme at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, believed that youth services often had “a very strong appetite to be very good at understanding the impact they make” but that they “sometimes lack the tools and resources to be able to do that”.⁷⁴ This analysis was borne out by several independent reports: for instance, the 2004 study by Merton *et al* concluded that the sector needed to get better at describing, measuring and making the case for the benefits of youth work, and a review by the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children’s and Young People’s Services in 2010 of studies evaluating young people’s participation in positive activities found that there was “a lack of robust evidence around the cost-benefit analysis of young people’s participation in positive activities and the social return on investment that participation may bring”.⁷⁵ Ofsted, too, concluded in 2009 that “there had been insufficient investment in the systems for gathering information, errors in its interpretation and insufficient use of it to scrutinise the effectiveness of services”.⁷⁶

39. There is little doubt that good youth services can have a transformational effect on young people’s lives and can play a vital role both in supporting vulnerable young people and in enriching the lives of others without particular disadvantage. However, we were frustrated in our efforts to uncover a robust outcome measurement framework, in particular those that would allow services to be compared in order to assess their relative impact. We were alarmed that the Department for Education is expecting local authorities to make spending decisions on the basis of such poor data about what services are being provided, let alone which are effective.

40. We accept that the outcomes of individual youth work relationships can be hard to quantify and the impact of encounters with young people may take time to become clear and be complex. In that context, it is hard to reject the basic tenet expounded by a range of youth service representatives and young people themselves, that ‘you know good youth work when you see it’. However, with a tight spending settlement and an increase in commissioning of youth services at a local level (to which we return in chapter 4), we also believe it is essential that publicly funded services are able to demonstrate what difference they make to young people.

72 See Annex [note of Berlin visit].

73 Q 304

74 Q 303

75 C4EO Research summary 1 (September 2010), *Increasing the engagement of young people in positive activities*, p.1

76 Ofsted (2009), *Engaging young people*, p.23

Designing appropriate outcome measures

41. We encountered a range of fairly strong views in the youth sector about the viability and desirability of measuring service outcomes. Some were resistant on the grounds that assessment against prescribed outcomes went against the principles of youth work. For instance, one community and youth worker wrote to criticise the:

imposition of outcome and purpose-driven approaches to youth work which are clearly at odds with the needs of the majority of young people and their communities. In my opinion, current guidance flies in the face of, what to me, youth work hopes to and can achieve. Indeed current practice is seeing more and more youth workers spending increasing amounts of their time servicing the needs of databases rather than those they are there to support ... tracking of young people's personal development cannot be at all accurately be measured by the current set of expensive, labour intensive tools and monitoring systems foisted upon workers in the field in the name of accountability with the mantra "we have to be demonstrating value for money".⁷⁷

42. Others were not against outcome measurement per se, but considered the task simply impractical. For instance Mark Blundell, Executive Director of the Salmon Youth Centre, told us "people have to make value judgements about what works, but we cannot justify it in the way that we have been trying to do for 20 years. If we could, we would have done so".⁷⁸ Professor Howard Williamson agreed that "it's like looking for the holy grail to be searching for impact measures from what is sometimes a brief encounter with youth work, sometimes a leisure-based encounter over a period of time and sometimes a serious encounter over a longer period".⁷⁹

43. Yet others advocated that it was necessary to prove the difference that services made. Amongst others, Brendan O'Keefe, Head of Kensington and Chelsea Youth Service, concluded that "'Trust me, I'm a youth worker' is not a business case: you have got to be able to show that what you do adds value and creates value for the kids".⁸⁰ Whilst there is little doubt on all sides that "you know a good youth service when you see it"—and many of us have encountered such services, both personally and in our parliamentary constituencies—there is also clearly a need for services to demonstrate the difference they make to young people. This is particularly true in a climate of reduced public funds and greater use of service commissioning. The difficult question to answer is what would constitute effective and appropriate outcome measures which are more sophisticated than, for instance, simply counting the number of young people through the door of a service, but which would also avoid placing undue administrative or cost burdens on services already under pressure.

44. In large part reluctance in the sector to demonstrate the outcomes of services was due to scepticism about what could and would be measured. Several witnesses argued that it

77 Ev w373–374 [Keith Jones]

78 Q 103

79 Q 199

80 Q 248

was impossible to assess a life-changing experience, and inappropriate to count simple measures such as the number of young people attending a service. Meg Hudson, Beaver Scout leader, thought that “you can’t measure something on a piece of paper and you can’t measure how much kids enjoy or get benefit from doing it—you have to be there and see a kid enjoying it”.⁸¹ Dr Jason Wood noted that it was easy to count simple input and output measures, but that the challenge was measuring more nuanced outcomes:

Input data—the data that should drive needs—are very strong. The fact that we can all quote NEETs, the number of teenage pregnancies and the number of young people who are parents shows that we can indicate input data—the numbers going in. We are also good at counting outputs; we can say “This many people have a certificate in this”, or “This many people attended this number of provisions for this length of time.” We need to get stronger at looking at the outcomes and at how we see what an outcome looks like when somebody has been involved in youth work.⁸²

45. We explored with witnesses the possibility of developing more sophisticated so-called ‘soft’ outcomes: things such as young people’s personal and social development, confidence or resilience. A number of witnesses suggested that measurement of ‘soft’ outcomes was possible. John Loughton, Parliamentary Manager for Fairbridge, told us:

I do not believe that there is any such thing as soft outcomes any more. One of the reasons for the word “soft” is that they were very hard to measure ... Fairbridge’s “Back from the Brink” report starts to work out how you understand and measure some of the softer outcomes of emotion and well-being, when some of it is easy by speaking to the young person and asking how they feel at intermittent points.⁸³

Ginny Lunn, Director of Policy and Development at The Prince’s Trust, concurred:

We have invested a lot of time over the past number of years in making sure that we can measure outcomes ... We have a system where we track all young people who go through our programmes. We know who they are, and the target groups they come from. We look at what happens to them when they finish the programme. Although it is difficult and there is a cost, we see it as important to be able to say what impact we are having.

One of our key outcome measures is whether young people would recommend what we provide to others; 97% of young people recommend our programmes to their friends. We also look at how many people we are getting into work ... Of those who go through our employability programme, 50% get a job at the end of it.⁸⁴

It may be that targeted services are more at ease with rigorous evaluation, in part because young people using those services are intrinsically more heavily assessed throughout their engagement, from the referral process onward. Ofsted’s 2010 review of 11 local authorities suggested that it was easier to measure the outcomes of targeted services on deficit

81 Q 104

82 Q 183

83 Q 138

84 Q 138

measures such as ‘reducing the number of NEET young people’ or ‘reducing the number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system’.⁸⁵

46. Witnesses from charities and businesses also told us that it was possible to measure qualitative, ‘soft’ outcomes for young people. For instance, Bill Eyres, Head of Sustainability at O2 UK—which runs a grant scheme for young people wishing to establish community projects—told us that O2 carried out “quantitative measures on the projects and number of young people involved” but also “more qualitative stuff about where the young people were in terms of confidence and skills at the beginning of the project and where they ended up”.⁸⁶ Martin Brookes, Chief Executive of New Philanthropy Capital, told us that his organisation had developed and was currently piloting a ‘wellbeing index’—a “simple tool that charities and schools can use to assess and track different aspects of a child’s wellbeing...it looks at things like resilience, self-esteem and so on in a very rigorous way ... It provides a method that can be used and applied consistently across organisations so you could do comparisons”.⁸⁷ It consisted of a “series of questions that takes a bunch of scales that have been used and developed by psychologists and psychiatrists over the years, and distils them into a 10–15 minute questionnaire for children to answer”. The tool was applicable to children aged 9–14 years old, in groups rather than at an individual level, and cost £295 per survey of 200 young people.⁸⁸

47. Seemingly similarly sophisticated ‘soft’ outcome measures seemed to exist in a range of other organisations, enabling them to demonstrate their impact. For instance, Derek Twine, Chief Executive of The Scout Association, told us “we have measures of levels of fitness, social skills, respect for others, leadership skills, personal competencies and teamwork ability”.⁸⁹ Terry Ryall, Chief Executive of V, the National Young Volunteers’ Service, explained that as part of the evaluation of its ‘v talent year’ programme, the organisation had measured “self esteem, self-confidence, sense of wellbeing, skills development, whether they have qualifications and so on” and “in the longer term, what happens to them next and whether they move into employment, education or further training”.⁹⁰ Ofsted inspects youth services against five key outcome measures: overall effectiveness, the standards of young people’s achievement, the quality of youth work practice, the quality of curriculum and resources, and leadership and management.⁹¹

48. It seems clear that, in addition to more traditional counting measures, a range of more sophisticated qualitative measures now exist which can better assess the impact of services on outcomes like young people’s confidence, resilience and relationship building. The practical challenges to implementing such measures appeared to be two-fold: first, common tools have not been adopted across services, which means that organisations are not collecting and reporting the same data, making comparisons between services difficult; and second, that implementing measurement tools across all services could be costly and

85 Ofsted (2010), *Supporting young people*, p.5

86 Q 330

87 Q 334

88 Ev w396–397 [New Philanthropy Capital]

89 Q 119

90 Q 397

91 Ofsted (2009), *Engaging young people: local authority youth work 2005–08*

time-consuming. Susanne Rauprich urged that “what is most needed is certain standards, which can be agreed against, and then it is up to each organisation to use their own measurement tool to describe their work against those particular standards. What we don’t need is yet another measurement tool, of which there are plenty; what we do need is an agreement on the standards”.⁹²

49. The Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP, told us that he saw “a role for the Government to knock heads together, to see whether we can bring about some consensus and clarity” between services about which methodologies of capturing social return to use. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, Tim Loughton MP, added that the Department for Education had appointed the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services as a strategic partner and had tasked it to “deliver an agreed outcomes framework” to apply to multiple organisations.⁹³

50. Various witnesses made the point that data collection should not place an undue burden on services. Janet Batsleer, Head of Youth and Community Work Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University, highlighted an Audit Commission study which had found that practitioners were tied up for around a third of their time in collecting and reporting data required for different funding streams,⁹⁴ and Susanne Rauprich warned that “heavy investment” of around £2 million would be needed to put in place systems to collect detailed management information.⁹⁵ Similar concerns were echoed by witnesses from the charitable and social investment fields. Martin Brookes said that evaluation of “proper social return on investment is an expensive, time-consuming and resource-intensive process”, but that the “prize is to get to the point where there are off-the-shelf methods that a charity can buy in cheaply”.⁹⁶ Rob Bell, Head of the Social Justice Programme at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, noted that grants from charitable funders typically included a reserve of 5% to 10% set aside for evaluation of a programme, a practice which was replicated in the Civil Service and at O2.⁹⁷

51. Whilst wanting to guard against inappropriate or distorting measures like simple head counting, there is no good reason why robust but sophisticated outcome measures should not be developed to allow services to demonstrate the impact they have on young people’s personal and social development. We accept the evidence we heard from the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) that such tools already exist and that what is needed is agreement on a common set of standards which will allow services to be evaluated and compared. Consequently, we welcome the Government’s decision to commission NCVYS to deliver an outcomes framework for application across the sector. This framework should take account of personal and social wellbeing measures, young people should be closely involved in its design and application and it should be simple and inexpensive to administer. New Philanthropy Capital’s wellbeing index presents a good template for initial consideration.

92 Q 52

93 Q 448

94 Q 184

95 Q 56

96 Q 323

97 Qq 322 and 325

4 Service provision: funding, commissioning and payment by results

Public funding of youth services

52. Although there is a statutory duty on local authorities under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure young people's access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities,⁹⁸ funding of youth services is not mandatory and the localised nature of provision has meant wide variation in spending on youth services across the country. Youth services have for years been funded from a number of different central government and local authority budgets, as well as a range of charitable and private sector sources and individual fundraising. Until April 2011, a key funding source for local authority youth services was the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), the overall grant to local authorities administered by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Central government provided a number of additional grants to local authorities, including the Youth Opportunity Fund (£40.75m in 2010–11), the Youth Crime Action Plan (£11.98m in 2010–11), Challenge and Support (£3.9m in 2010–11), Intensive Intervention Grant (£2.8m in 2010–11), the Children's Fund (£131.80m in 2010–11), the Positive Activities for Young People Programme (£94.5m in 2010–11), Youth Taskforce (£4.34m in 2010–11), Young People Substance Misuse (£7.0m in 2010–11) and Teenage Pregnancy (£27.5m in 2010–11).⁹⁹ These additional targeted funds represent a significant proportion of overall funding of youth services in recent years.

53. Spending by local authorities on youth services in England was £350 million in 2009–10, the last year for which data are available. Comparable spending since 2003–04 is given in the following table:

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Outturn spending (£)</i>
2003–04	336,867,360
2004–05	358,669,462
2005–06	390,718,842

98 Education and Inspections Act 2006, Part 1 Section 6. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/6>. See paragraph 5 of this Report for relevant text

99 Figures provided by the Department for Education and published on its website. The Youth Opportunity Fund, Youth Crime Action Plan, Challenge and Support, and Intensive Intervention Grant were ring-fenced, meaning that local authorities were required to spend the money on that purpose alone or lose the funding. The Children's Fund, Positive Activities for Young People, Youth Taskforce, Young People Substance Misuse, and Teenage Pregnancy grants were unring-fenced, but took the form of additional area-based grants which central Government directed should be spent on these priorities

2006–07	397,624,671
2007–08	397,945,081
2008–09	374,529,442
2009–10	350,281,435

Local authority outturn spending on youth services in England 2003–04 to 2009–10¹⁰⁰

Based on these figures, mean spending by local authority youth services per head of 13–19 population in 2009–10 was £77.28.¹⁰¹ By comparison, local authority mean spending per school pupil in 2009–10 was £4,290.¹⁰² This means that per school pupil spending in that year was approximately 55 times more than per head spending on youth services.

54. As a result of the 2010 Spending Review, all ring-fenced grants from the Department for Education were abolished, with the exception of the schools budget. This meant that, from April 2011, all central funding for youth services (including both core funding and specific grants from central government) was merged into a new Early Intervention Grant, worth £2212m in 2011–12 and £2297m in 2012–13. In addition, the overall funding settlement for local authorities through the Revenue Support Grant has been reduced, causing authorities to cut discretionary spending across the board. The Government has acknowledged that “in 2011–12 the amount to be allocated through the Early Intervention Grant is 10.9% lower than the aggregated 2010–11 funding through the predecessor grants”. The Early Intervention Grant is not ring-fenced and, in addition to youth services, is intended to fund Sure Start Children’s Centres, build capacity for local authorities to extend free early education to disadvantaged two-year olds, provide short breaks for disabled children, support vulnerable young people to engage in education and training, prevent young people from taking part in risky behaviour like crime, substance misuse or teenage pregnancy, support young people at risk of mental health problems, and help young people who have a learning difficulty or disability.¹⁰³ On top of the Early Intervention Grant, an additional £13m for 2011 and £37m for 2012 has been pledged to fund the National Citizen Service pilots.

100 Data are taken from section 52 (now section 251) outturn statements submitted to the Department for Education by all 150 local education authorities, and are LEA Net Revenue Expenditure. Prior to 2003–04 outturn data was only reported against Net current expenditure (not LEA Net Revenue Expenditure). In 2008–09 and 2009–10 there was an additional funding stream for Positive Activities for Young People, totalling in each year £93,736,528 and £95,382,802 respectively. Financial year 2009–10 are the latest available outturn data: data for 2010–11 are expected in late autumn 2011.

101 Total local authority spend in England in 2009–10 divided by the total number of 13–19 year olds in England based on latest ONS estimates (4,532,500 in 2009) taken from Office for National Statistics, *Mid Year Population Estimates 2009*, Table 4

102 Department for Education, *Benchmarking tables of LA planned expenditure, 2009–10*. The figure excludes LEA central services spending on schools which is not delegated to individual schools or providers (e.g. special education, school transport, school improvement, asset management, Connexions)

103 Written Ministerial Statement on *Education Spending*, 13 December 2010

Non-public sources of funding

55. We found that the range of youth services we took evidence from received funding from a patchwork of different sources, of which public funds formed only part. By way of illustration, the Salmon Youth Centre received around 60% of its funding from central and local government,¹⁰⁴ YMCA England 40%,¹⁰⁵ The Prince's Trust 36%,¹⁰⁶ London Youth 15%,¹⁰⁷ and Fairbridge about 50%.¹⁰⁸ The Scout Association told us that 100% of its funding came from non-governmental sources.¹⁰⁹

56. The Minister for Children and Families, Tim Loughton MP, expressed a clear view that youth services were overly dependent on public money:

Too many are still under the monopoly of local authority youth services departments ... generally, youth services are heavily reliant on large slugs of public money, be it at a national level, through nationally financed schemes through the now Department for Education, or through local authority grants. In this age, that is unsustainable. That is why, in economically straitened times, the area of youth services is feeling the squeeze more than many other areas are.¹¹⁰

He added that “the days of relying on large, public funding cheques are no longer there” and that he wanted youth services to “rely on a greater diversity of funding”.¹¹¹

57. Susanne Rauprich told us that “if you take a large chunk of public sector funding out of the system, you will have to replace that somehow if you are committed to services to young people”. She explained that there were:

Two sources from which that funding might come. One is from the young person or the user themselves. That might be difficult, particularly if you are looking at disadvantaged young people, because they are also hit by cuts in income and so on ... You then have the private sector. Such funding is in its infancy ... At this moment in time I find it difficult to get a sense of the appetite of private sector companies. There have been some real success stories, one of which is O2. The Co-operative has spent a lot of money on young people and has launched a huge programme. But we haven't seen a universal understanding among corporates that they should be considering investment in any kind of programme. Corporate social responsibility programmes need to be developed. There are too many companies that think that they can send their work force out to paint a wall in a youth club and that it is done with.¹¹²

104 Q 111–112

105 Q 113

106 Q 149–150

107 Q 150

108 Q 155

109 Q 110

110 Q 410

111 Q 446 and Q 418

112 Q 42

58. One alternative funding source is the new Big Society Bank, an independent institution, established by Government, which will use funds from dormant bank accounts to fund social investment projects. The Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP, told us that the Bank would “have a high level remit from us to give some priority to investing in opportunities for young people”. However, he acknowledged that it was “an independent organisation so it must be free to respond to what the market brings to it and must be free to make decisions based on the quality of investment proposals that are put to it”.¹¹³ It is not entirely clear, therefore, what degree of funding youth services might expect from the Bank.

59. We took evidence from a range of alternative funding providers including charitable and philanthropic trusts, private business and social investment experts. They considered that there was scope for greater use of such alternative sources, but that many youth services were not sufficiently aware of the options available to them, particularly in terms of social investment. For instance, Martin Brookes told us that “to get access to that money, you need the contacts and a lot of organisations simply don’t have the right contacts or the right fundraising capacity ... if you want to access wealthy donors and you are a small youth charity, it’s very hard to do that”.¹¹⁴ This was borne out in discussions at the Government’s ‘Positive for Youth’ summit, which found that “charities can find it difficult to access private sector businesses” and suggested that the Government could act as broker between services and the private sector.¹¹⁵

60. Despite the scope for greater use of alternative funds, witnesses concluded that none of these sources could replace public funding. Martin Brookes, Chief Executive of New Philanthropy Capital, told us that:

whoever other funders are, they can’t provide enough protection because the scale of the cuts that a lot of organisations are facing is just too acute. The other funders might be foundations or trusts, or they might be private donors. Neither of those sources of funding is big enough. They could also be social investors, but that is too nascent a market to be able to step in and plug the gap.¹¹⁶

The Department for Education’s summary of discussions at the ‘Positive for Youth’ summit similarly states that “private sector organisations are generally reluctant to provide money to ‘top up’ statutory funding”,¹¹⁷ and social investment organisation Social Finance wrote to us that “social investment in any form is not a replacement for the revenue that the youth sector is currently losing”.¹¹⁸ These conclusions were rather at odds with what the Minister, Tim Loughton MP, told us: that, if social investment models were developed properly, the amount of money levered in from non-Government sources would “turn out

113 Q 441

114 Q 306. See also Q 303 [Louise Savell]

115 <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/p/f%20how%20do%20we%20make%20best%20use%20of%20available%20funding.pdf>

116 Q 305

117 <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/p/f%20how%20do%20we%20make%20best%20use%20of%20available%20funding.pdf>

118 Ev 184

to be substantially more than the sum of the parts of public money that have been invested in the past”.¹¹⁹

61. We disagree with the Minister that spending of £350 million per year—equating to around £77 per young person aged 13 to 19—on youth services in England equates to “large slugs of public money”. On the contrary, we congratulate the sector for its long-standing dexterity in making limited resources go a long way and for continuing to support young people despite reliance on a patchwork of different funds. However, in the tight financial settlement, services will need to redouble their efforts to leverage in other sources of funding, including making better use of philanthropic and charitable funds and private sector investment. Our evidence suggested that many smaller services found it hard to access such sources: we recommend that the Government and local authorities take positive action to support them by brokering partnerships with alternative funders.

Cuts to youth services

62. It seems that the removal of ring-fencing for youth provision, coupled with the 10.9% cut to the value of funds going into the Early Intervention Grant, is leading some local authorities to prioritise statutory and higher-risk services, such as children’s services, above youth services. The nature and scale of cuts to youth services funding started to emerge during the course of our inquiry. In some areas at least the picture is one of stark reductions in local authority funding for youth services. Susanne Rauprich, Chief Executive of the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, told us that “right across the board, all we are seeing is significant reductions to services for young people”,¹²⁰ and Doug Nicholls, National Secretary of the Community and Youth Workers Union, warned that “many youth services will have disappeared or be so depleted by the time of the Education Select Committee Report that only bold proposals from the Committee will help to lay a foundation for a future”.¹²¹ Written submissions from a range of sources expressed similarly grave concerns.¹²² This analysis was supported by two recent surveys. A survey of local authorities by the Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services in February 2011 showed that budget cuts averaged 28%, but that some authorities were cutting 70%, 80% or even 100% of services. It found a total of more than £100 million being cut from local authority youth budgets in England by March 2012 and that the services most affected would be open-access youth clubs and centres, which 96% of the 41 heads of youth services who responded said would either be reduced or stopped altogether by April 2012.¹²³ A separate survey by Children and Young People Now magazine and the Unite the

119 Q 444

120 Q 34

121 Ev 199

122 For instance, Unison states that Norfolk County Council is proposing a complete withdrawal of its youth services [Ev w148]. The Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services (CHYPS) stated that cuts of 50% and 100% were occurring across the country [Ev 149] and the National Youth Agency that more than a third of charities expected reductions of 10-20% and one in five were closing completely [Ev 103]. See also Brendan O’Keefe, Head of Youth Service at Kensington and Chelsea who said that 28% cuts “would result in a very, very significant reduction in our ability to run youth services. Because most of our services are discretionary, I anticipate that it will be higher, but there is not yet a council position on that; it is purely my estimate”. Q 238

123 Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services (CHYPS), 7 February 2011. Available online at: <http://www.chyps.org.uk/news.asp?page=3#listing>

union found very similar results, indicating that in areas such as Warwickshire and Tameside the youth service was being scrapped altogether.¹²⁴

63. The existence of hefty budget reductions at local level was confirmed by local authority heads of youth services. For instance, Harry Fowler, Head of Birmingham Youth Service, said that his service was facing 50% cuts over the following two to three years: £3 million from a total budget of £5.8 million.¹²⁵ Brendan O’Keefe, Head of Kensington and Chelsea Youth Service, thought reductions would be higher than his council’s average of 28% by 2015.¹²⁶ David Wright, Chief Executive of the Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services (CHYPS), spoke of a “double whammy” for youth services of cuts to central ring-fenced grants and to overall local authority budgets. Contributions from young people in Haringey through our online forum stated that “8 of the 13 youth centres have closed in our borough” and that the council was cutting the youth service budget by a further 75%.¹²⁷ The Department for Education itself recognised that youth services were being hit particularly hard. A discussion document prepared for its ‘Positive for Youth’ policy summit in March stated:

It is becoming apparent that in many areas services for young people are not being prioritised by local authorities and are experiencing disproportionate budget reductions, for example in favour of early years services and safeguarding. The Government has encouraged local authorities to focus limited funding on targeted interventions with the most vulnerable young people, and universal provision does indeed appear to be experiencing the deepest cuts. However, the scale of budget reductions and the pace at which decisions are being made is limiting the scope for full strategic needs and options assessments and for investing in innovation and fundamental reform, increasing the risk that services are simply ‘salami sliced’.¹²⁸

64. The Government did not appear to have a detailed view of where local authorities were making disproportionate cuts, with the Minister, Tim Loughton MP, telling us that the Government “did not know the extent of it at the moment”,¹²⁹ and the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP, that “we are working with our strategic partners to gather information about what is happening on the ground”.¹³⁰ Whilst acknowledging that the sector had been “disproportionately affected”,¹³¹ Mr Loughton told us that there was little he could do about levels of funding, emphasising that “the funding decisions are not made by us, they are made by local authorities”.¹³²

124 *True scale of council youth service cuts revealed*, Children and Young People Now, 8 February 2011

125 Qq 230–231

126 Qq 237–238

127 See posting at <http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/showthread.php?t=1562235>

128 Department for Education, *Positive for Youth* discussion document. Available online at: <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/p/f%20how%20do%20we%20make%20best%20use%20of%20available%20funding.pdf>

129 Q 483

130 Q 458

131 Q 451

132 Q 453

65. The Minister pointed out that if local authorities were challenged for failing to consult young people on the provision of positive activities, “they would not be fulfilling their [statutory] duties”,¹³³ although noted that there was “no enforceable statutory guidance on the level of provision of youth services”.¹³⁴ Doug Nicholls emphasised this, warning that if local authorities did not meet their statutory duties, the Community and Youth Workers Union would be “forced to take a sequence of judicial reviews”.¹³⁵ In a speech to the National Council for Voluntary Organisations in March 2011 the Communities Secretary, Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, said that he would consider giving statutory force to the expectation that local authorities should not pass on “disproportionate” cuts to charities.¹³⁶ The Government subsequently issued draft statutory guidance to councils to this effect, defining “disproportionate” as meaning that cuts to the voluntary sector should not be greater than the level of cuts faced by the council itself.¹³⁷ Under the provisions of the 1996 and 2002 Education Acts, the Secretary of State for Education has powers of intervention to secure the proper performance by local authorities of their functions. These include the power to direct local authorities to provide specified facilities, or to direct that the youth service in a particular area be operated by a body other than the local authority.¹³⁸

66. Mr Loughton believed that there was a large degree of duplication and overlap in service provision, with multiple organisations running services for young people. He told us that “we have a patchwork of public service providers, with odd youth clubs, outreach workers and so on, some of which are very good and some of which are not”.¹³⁹ He also expressed dismay that many services did not know what was going on nearby:

what is so frustrating for me is that I go and visit a youth project in a certain area and say it is fantastic, but then you go next door and they have never heard of it, nothing like that is happening, yet the same sort of problems are being dealt with elsewhere. For some reason, we are bad at disseminating best practice ... I want organisations to come forward with a really good project and for me to put them on a platform, to take them around the country and ask why this is not happening in your area.¹⁴⁰

He thought that the Centre for Excellence [and Outcomes in Children’s and Young People’s Services] could disseminate more best practice, and also was in favour of ‘roadshows’ to publicise good practice, led by the Department for Education.¹⁴¹

133 Q 454 and 455

134 Q 456

135 Ev 200

136 Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, *Speech to National Council of Voluntary Organisations*, 1 March 2011. Available at: <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/networking-discussions/blogs/20591/11/03/01/eric-pickles-mp-secretary-state-communities-local-govern>

137 Department for Communities and Local Government, *Best Value Guidance Consultation*, April 2011, available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/bestvalueconsultand> accompanying press notice, available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/1885484> See also Local Government Chronicle, *Ministers unveil statutory guidance for councils dealing with third sector*, 14 April 2011, pp.2–3

138 Set out in Department for Education (2003), *Resourcing Excellent Youth Services* (2003), Annex 2

139 Q 428

140 Q 447

141 Q 470

67. A number of witnesses agreed with the Minister’s analysis about the level of duplication. Susanne Rauprich, Chief Executive of the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, said that “there are still a number of services that are not necessarily what young people want. Bad practice does exist”.¹⁴² Tony Gallagher, HMI National Adviser (Youth Support) for Ofsted, believed that “there are lots of weaknesses in the delivery of youth services ... they are inconsistent across the country and within services”,¹⁴³ and Nick Wilkie that “commissioning should get tough about quality”, arguing that London Youth intended to become firmer about its member organisations needing to meet quality standards to retain membership.¹⁴⁴ Howard Williamson, Professor of European Youth Policy at the University of Glamorgan, agreed that:

far too much energy and resources are spent on competing with each other to provide the same kinds of services in the same locality. That was not the case 15 years ago: there were big gaps, but then, suddenly, under a former Prime Minister’s social inclusion agenda, lots of youth organisations turned their face to ‘we are going to be the ones to re-engage the young people who are NEET [Not in Education, Employment or Training]’. Suddenly you found five organisations trying to do exactly the same thing in the same locality with the same kids.¹⁴⁵

68. **It appears that provision of youth services is currently “patchwork”, as the Minister suggested to us, with a degree of duplication and overlap between activities and providers in some areas. We did not, however, hear evidence that decisions about current cuts to services were being made on the basis of assessment of what was needed locally and in order to weed out overlapping provision. On the contrary, the Government’s assessment seems to be that cuts are being applied across the board to ‘salami slice’ youth services, where they are continuing at all.**

69. Youth services cannot hope to be immune to necessary public spending cuts. However, there have already been very significant and, in the Minister’s own words, “disproportionate” cuts to local authority youth services, ranging from 20% to 100% in some areas, and further cuts are planned over the Spending Review period. For many wholly or partially publicly funded youth services, changes to Government spending and funding structures—including the reduction to the value of previous funds redirected into the Early Intervention Grant and the reduction in overall Revenue Support Grant to local authorities—may be both dramatic and long-lasting. The Government’s lack of urgency in articulating a youth policy or strategic vision is regrettable, is compounding an already difficult situation and should not be allowed to continue. In setting out its strategic vision the Government should indicate its expectations of the range and standards of youth services which should be available across the country including, for example, access to information and advice, to varied opportunities for personal and social development and to volunteering. Such opportunities need to reflect the different requirements of those beginning adolescence and those entering adulthood, as well as other socio-economic factors.

142 Q 24

143 Q 209

144 Q 145

145 Q 213

70. We welcome the Government's issuing of draft statutory guidance to local authorities not to pass on "disproportionate" cuts to the voluntary sector. We urge it to finalise this guidance and ensure that local authorities are made aware of its application to youth services. However, if local authorities fail to meet their statutory duty to provide sufficient services for young people, the Secretary of State for Education should consider employing his powers to direct them to commission adequate provision.

71. We agree with the Minister's concern about a lack of awareness and information-sharing between services and geographical areas. The Department should take a lead in sharing best practice. We recommend that it establish a dedicated area on the 'Youth' section of its website for youth services and young people to post examples of innovative practice to encourage services to learn from one another. Local authorities should establish similar area-wide repositories.

Commissioning youth services

The Government's intentions and local authority practice

72. The Government has called for a more contestable market for public services and greater use of commissioning and mutualisation by local authorities, including more payment by results. The *Spending Review 2010* set out that "the Government believes that while it should continue to fund important services, it does not have to be the default provider. This stifles competition and innovation and crowds out civil society". It stipulated that the Government intended to set proportions of public services that should be provided by independent providers in certain policy areas, including youth services: "the Government will look at setting proportions of appropriate services across the public sector that should be delivered by independent providers, such as the voluntary and community sectors and social and private enterprises".¹⁴⁶ It also announced that "the Government will pay and tender for more services by results, rather than be the default provider of services".¹⁴⁷

73. In terms of youth services, the Department's submission to our inquiry said:

we want to stimulate a fundamental shift in the role of local authorities in services for young people to enable a radical re-engineering of provision so more is delivered by voluntary and community organisations, greater private sector involvement leads to greater leverage for public funding, and local authorities themselves become strategic commissioners rather than default providers of services with a greater emphasis on value for money and the effectiveness and impact of funded services.¹⁴⁸

The Minister, Tim Loughton MP, urged local authorities to be "quite radical" in delivering youth services, commenting that "the sky's the limit" and questioning "why shouldn't a whole youth services department be run by a voluntary provider, or a federation of voluntary providers ... so it's down to the political leadership of the council to set its

146 HM Government, *Spending Review 2010*, Cm 7942 (October 2010), p.34

147 *Ibid.*, p.34

148 Ev 113

priorities—‘this is what we want to see for the young people in our area’—and then it’s down to a voluntary provider to run that whole department to achieve those objectives”.¹⁴⁹

74. We heard that several local authorities were indeed already embracing such changes. For instance, Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency, told us that:

the reality is that far-sighted local authorities ... are beginning to develop strong approaches to strategic commissioning ... This is not based on a conversation with themselves about whether that is an in-house or a voluntary sector provider. It is about saying we can actually model the specifications of what we need for our young people, and then put that out to whoever is able to deliver it. In some places, local authority youth services are forming themselves into social enterprises and co-operatives to try to deliver that. In other places, there are quite sophisticated models of third sector supply chain management emerging, with one overarching organisation being able to manage a host of services.¹⁵⁰

Garath Symonds, Head of Surrey Youth Service, told us that he was implementing a commissioning model which he believed could save money without “reduc[ing] services, outputs, or the hours of youth work that are delivered on the ground”.¹⁵¹ Surrey is proposing to retain ownership of its 35 youth centres but to second youth workers to voluntary organisations which will become the centres’ ‘managing agents’. The authority will give each centre resources to deliver 15 hours of youth work per week and ask its voluntary sector partners to match that. Mr Symonds explained that this was possible because “the voluntary sector can do things at less cost ... the amount we are spending on management is going to be massively reduced, because the voluntary sector can manage services at less cost. It can attract funding from outside, and it can attract community assets in a way that we cannot”.¹⁵²

Difficulties with commissioning

75. There was some concern over who local authorities would choose to commission and whether they would favour bigger providers. For instance Nick Wilkie, Chief Executive of London Youth, thought that “there is a real risk that five or ten years down the line we will have very big £100 million organisations churning out services on a one-size-fits-all basis, because that is what contractors demand, and we will lose the local youth club”.¹⁵³ Mark Blundell, Executive Director of the Salmon Youth Centre, also worried that “there is a real danger that we could get national organisations who come in and pick up a contract ... it should really be about local provision, rooted in communities”.¹⁵⁴

76. Responding to the Government’s call for greater provision by the voluntary sector, several witnesses emphasised that the voluntary sector was already heavily involved in the

149 Q 464

150 Q 34

151 Q 236

152 Q 243

153 Q 161

154 Q 124

delivery of youth services and urged commissioners to build on those partnerships. Harry Fowler, Head of Birmingham Youth Service, said that “to dispel perhaps not a myth but the misunderstanding sometimes, the partnership between statutory and voluntary youth services is already extremely close. It is very hard to draw a line between some of them. We have statutory youth workers based in voluntary organisations”.¹⁵⁵ Susanne Rauprich warned that her particular fear was that “partnership mechanisms, which really ought to be strengthened at a time like this, are also at risk in certain areas”.¹⁵⁶ Nick Wilkie thought that the best partnerships would be “between large charities that have national brand and can invest in quality assurance, impact assessments and good financial controls alongside the inevitably slightly chaotic, rough around the edges local provision”.¹⁵⁷ The Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services (CHYPS) wrote in evidence that “a mixed economy of voluntary and local authority direct delivered services secures best outcomes for young people”.¹⁵⁸ Although there is no national figure available, small-scale comparisons suggest that services provided by the voluntary sector significantly outnumber those provided directly by local authorities.¹⁵⁹

77. We also heard that commissioning against specific outcomes could be to the detriment of young people’s overall development. Nick Wilkie outlined that:

Commissioners will typically commission in their line of sight to reduce reoffending or teen pregnancy, or promote retention in education ... the risk is that somebody might work with you on Monday night, Neil, because you are about to be kicked out of school; somebody might work with you on Tuesday lunch time because you are about to have an unwanted teen pregnancy; and somebody might work with you on Wednesday because of something else. No one is saying, “Neil, you’re a great bloke, but you’re screwing up. Why?” ... The point is that we need to commission for developing character, which is not a nebulous or romantic thing to say. If we develop characters, we will increase resilience and abilities, which will lead to a range of outcomes.¹⁶⁰

Witnesses from targeted services also warned that “simply providing an intervention that addresses a single behaviour often doesn’t address the entire set of issues for a young person”.¹⁶¹ Some emphasised that the outcomes on which services are commissioned should include positive contributions by young people, as well as deficit indicators. Nick Wilkie noted that “we now have a database where we can all understand what crime was committed in our neighbourhood. Surely it is not beyond the wit of us all to have the

155 Q 245

156 Q 19

157 Q 161

158 Ev 146

159 For instance Ev w20 [Tom Wylie]. Currently around 11,000 registered charities in the UK include ‘young people’ in their mission or activities, of which some 6,000 define themselves as ‘youth clubs or Scout groups’ [Charity Commission 2011]. This significantly outstrips the number of local authority statutory providers

160 Q 138

161 Q 316

positive mirror image of that; to say how many young people contributed positively in my neighbourhood?”¹⁶²

Young people's role in designing services

78. One model being championed by the Government is mutualisation, whereby young people themselves lead services, with the local authority and professional youth workers providing support. The Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services has been piloting the model with a number of local authorities, and David Wright, its Chief Executive, told us that 17 other authorities were already interested in mutualisation.¹⁶³ Brendan O'Keefe, Head of Kensington and Chelsea Youth Service, one of the pilot local authorities, explained his intention to “opt out of the local authority in order to run our own business, contracted back with the local authority at less cost. The improvement for us is that we will be able to attract funding from a variety of different sources, which we currently cannot access”.¹⁶⁴

79. We were told that involving young people in designing and commissioning services was important, and several ways of doing so were proposed. Liam Preston, Young Chair of the British Youth Council, noted that an Ofsted report in 2007 had concluded that involving young people in reviewing services was a key to achieving success. He thought that “if you tailor a service to what young people need and let them review it, rather than getting other people to come in, it will end up saving money”.¹⁶⁵ The British Youth Council told us that “just over half (57%) of youth councils manage a budget and seven out of ten either participate in or run the Youth Opportunity Fund”.¹⁶⁶ A 2008 review of the Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) and Youth Capital Fund (YCF) by the National Foundation for Educational Research for the then Department for Children, Schools and Families, concluded that the “approach whereby a panel of young people decide whether applications for the YOF/YCF from other young people should be funded has been a success. Nearly all local authorities considered that the young people had done a good job in administering the Funds”.¹⁶⁷

80. The Minister, Tim Loughton MP, agreed, saying “if we are producing youth services that are effective, needed and producing results, the best test is that they are being appreciated by the young people who are there to use them”.¹⁶⁸ A couple of written submissions questioned how it would be possible to assess the effectiveness of youth work without asking the young people who engaged with the youth worker, with one drawing an analogy with measuring the impact of a vicar, and another of an MP.¹⁶⁹

162 Q 163

163 Q 246

164 Q 242

165 Q 26

166 Ev 118

167 National Foundation for Educational Research (2008), *Outcomes of the Youth Opportunity Fund/Youth Capital Fund*, Research Report DCSF-RR046, p.iv

168 Q 419

169 Graeme Tiffany wrote “sometimes I think of youth workers as being a bit like vicars; how could you judge if a vicar was doing a good job without asking their parishioners?” [Ev w373]; Keith Jones wrote that “what evidence do your

81. Susanne Rauprich told us that a whole range of methods could be employed to engage young people in the commissioning cycle, such as the appointment of a young commissioner in Devon, which the Department for Communities and Local Government had “considered to be an effective model”.¹⁷⁰ Fiona Blacke suggested recommending that Government include, as part of its commissioning support advice to local authorities, guidance on how to engage young people effectively in the process.¹⁷¹ Similar arguments were made by The Scout Association—one of whose key tenets was an emphasis on young people leading and designing services—the Prince’s Trust and Salmon Youth Centre.¹⁷²

82. One of the discussion threads on our online forum with young people asked young people “if you were in charge of spending for young people in your area, what would you spend the money on?” Respondents suggested a range of priorities, of which the most commonly occurring were libraries, sports facilities and youth centres. Others mentioned training for jobs, careers advice, music, cadets, Scouts, subsidised travel, and (particularly sexual) health clinics.¹⁷³ Our panel of witnesses from national youth organisations all thought that allocating funding to services led by young people “would be a great recommendation”,¹⁷⁴ and Fiona Blacke commented that “under the previous administration one of the great successes was the youth opportunity fund and the youth capital fund, which were distinct, ring-fenced elements of the budget that local authorities gave young people to control. There was huge scepticism among elected members about whether young people would make sensible decisions, but the evidence is that they did it extremely well”.¹⁷⁵ Bill Eyres, Head of Sustainability at O2, also thought that “social action is about getting money and support into the hands of young people”.¹⁷⁶

83. We support the broad principle that local authorities should primarily become strategic commissioners rather than simply the default providers of youth services. However, given that a significant proportion of youth services are already provided by the voluntary sector, to make significant savings local authorities will need to consider radical options—for instance, converting entire youth services departments into social enterprises, as in Kensington and Chelsea, or handing management of youth centres to the voluntary sector, as in Surrey.

84. We believe there are a number of practical recommendations which will make commissioning of youth services more effective. The Government should draw these to the attention of local authorities, either through its forthcoming Public Service Reform White Paper, or by issuing guidance on commissioning practice. First, rather than simply continuing to commission those services currently being provided, local authorities should undertake a thorough review of what their young people want and need, avoiding duplication and waste and taking into account what is already being

constituents, as tax payers, have that YOU provide value for money? What would your `robust evidence look like?’ [Ev w375]

170 Q 47

171 Q 48

172 Qq 88–90 and 134

173 See posting at: <http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/showthread.php?t=1562232>

174 Q 26

175 Q 27

176 Q 311

provided by other agencies. Second, the outcomes against which services are commissioned must include positive as well as deficit indicators. Third, local authorities should encourage partnerships bids, particularly those which mix large bodies which are well-known and have the capacity to invest in collecting management information, with smaller, community-based providers. Finally, Government should require local authorities to set out how they will involve young people in commissioning decisions, whether in representative roles, such as young mayors, or through processes such as participatory budgeting. The evidence we received suggested that such involvement can not only empower young people, but also enhance the effectiveness of spending decisions.

Payment by results

85. Payment by results is a model whereby a proportion of funding from central or local government to providers is dependent on achieving specified results—for example, a reduction in reconvictions among young offenders. Payment by results has already been employed in other areas of public policy, most notably by the Department of Health to pay Primary Care Trusts for improving patient outcomes against a range of measures. The Department for Education’s written submission stated that:

The Department is committed to introducing an element of Payment by Results to the Early Intervention Grant. The Department is considering approaches for a consistent PBR mechanism which can be applied across the whole to encourage Local Authorities to focus on what works best in their area ... [and] is considering carefully what kind of financial incentive model might be appropriate to increase the focus on desired outcomes.¹⁷⁷

The Minister for Civil Society told us that “the payment-by-results principle is attractive in the sense that it focuses the commissioner’s mind more keenly on what he or she is trying to achieve”. However, he recognised that “the underlying reality is that such a principle is not applicable everywhere, and it tends really to work only when the outcomes can be clearly measured and the metrics are clear”.¹⁷⁸

86. The Government is advocating the development of social impact bonds in funding public services. Social impact bonds are a form of outcomes-based contract in which public sector commissioners commit to pay for significant improvement in social outcomes (such as a reduction in offending rates, or in the number of people being admitted to hospital) for a defined population. Through a bond, private investment is used to pay for interventions, which are delivered by service providers with a proven track record. Financial returns to investors are made by the public sector on the basis of improved social outcomes. The best known example of Social Impact Bonds to date is a pilot by the Ministry of Justice with young offenders at HMP Peterborough, designed to tackle the high rates of reoffending associated with offenders released from short-term prison sentences. Under the scheme, voluntary and community services are being financed through social investment to deliver intensive support to 3,000 short-term prisoners over a six year

177 Ev 113

178 Q 470

period, both inside prison and after release. If the initiative reduces re-offending by 7.5% or more, investors will receive a dividend payment of up to 13% of their original investment, funded by the savings generated in the criminal justice system.¹⁷⁹ Louise Savell, Associate Director at Social Finance, the organisation developing the bonds, told us that:

In many ways youth services offer good potential for social impact bonds. There are a range of experienced, high quality service providers in the sector. It is fairly well documented that, when youth services do not work or youth services are not provided and youth unemployment, teen pregnancy and antisocial behaviour are high, there is a significant social consequence and public cost. All that stands in favour of outcome-based financing. The matter is potentially tricky in terms of who pays for success. When we look at where the outcomes and benefits to the public sector accrue from improved youth outcomes, there are potential benefits to the Department for Work and Pensions of reduced benefit usage, increased tax take and to the health sector of reducing teen pregnancy and mental health issues, as well as the Department for Education. The benefits are spread around the Government. The is a real question around who would pay for outcomes.¹⁸⁰

87. The potential for both payment by results and social impact bonds for youth services seems problematic in terms of the difficulties we found in measuring outcomes, as discussed in chapter 3, which are particularly acute in terms of preventative and open-access services. The following summary of difficulties with payment by results was put to charitable, private and social finance experts:

The first is the difficulty in defining the audience, especially when people may drift in and out of it. The second is isolating the impact of any particular intervention that a service might do when lots of things are happening in these people's lives. The third is identifying a control group to compare that impact against. The fourth is having measures of success, particularly in the interim—we may be able to project that over a person's lifetime, although there are all sorts of effects, but what is the measure in a definable, realistic time frame? Those first four, I suggest, apply to any payment-by-results scheme and a further two seem to me to be added when you introduce social impact bonds. The first of those is the fact that savings come from many different budgets and there is a danger with that of double counting. The sixth, or second, depending on which list we are counting on—is that savings are a cash flow over a very long time horizon, so even if savings are made, they may be made in 15 or 20 years' time, when there has been two or three changes of Government.¹⁸¹

Witnesses responded that some of those difficulties were surmountable, although others were more entrenched. Louise Savell thought that cohorts of young people and comparator areas could be used instead of a control group, and that interim measures of success could be used to counteract the long time frame over which results might materialise, but recognised that the challenge was “whether sufficient data exist between specific

179 Cabinet Office (2010), *Modernising Commissioning*, p.10

180 Q 314

181 Q 327

interventions and their impact on those outcomes to build a robust case that would give investors sufficient confidence to put their money behind it”.¹⁸²

88. Some witnesses suggested that payment by results models might work in some targeted services, where a specific, easily measurable outcome was sought, but many foresaw difficulties with more open-access services. Garath Symonds, Head of Surrey Youth Service, noted that “we have just let a contract to move young people who are NEET into apprenticeships. We are paying the agency only when it gets the young person into an apprenticeship”.¹⁸³ David Wright, Chief Executive of the Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services (CHYPS), thought that “we know that by reducing teenage conceptions or later pregnancy we can see in the levels of investment that there are savings for the state as a consequence” but that “the more general and open access it is, the less clear it becomes”.¹⁸⁴

89. Even with a specific outcome in mind, being able to put a value on prevention would be extremely difficult. This was neatly illustrated in one exchange, in which it was rhetorically asked: “are we suggesting that people who are not pregnant by the time they are 18 pop in for a payment?”¹⁸⁵ Louise Savell agreed that applying the model to preventative services could be hard: “demonstrating a counter-factual—that if you hadn’t done something then there would be a negative consequence—is the key challenge”.¹⁸⁶

90. We do not believe that a system whereby local authorities withhold payment until a service demonstrates specific results is suited to the funding of youth services, particularly open-access ones. First, many services simply do not currently collect appropriate data to measure outcomes. Second, the cohort is ill-defined, with many young people dipping in and out of services over a period of time. Third, isolating the impact of a single intervention is hard when a service may be only one of several influences on a young person’s life. Fourth, results are likely to be achieved over a long time frame over which services would struggle to operate without any up-front funding.

91. However, we do believe that there is scope for a form of social impact bond to be applied at a local authority level, in addition to core spending on youth services by local authorities. Under such a model, the Government could encourage social investment in a basket of outcomes for young people in a local area. If those outcomes improved, there could be a return to the investor and also to the local authority. We recommend that the Government carry out a feasibility study on such a system, bearing in mind that it should be in addition to current spending on youth services, not an alternative.

182 Q 315

183 Q 222

184 Q 251

185 Q 317

186 Q 317

5 The youth services workforce

Size and composition

92. The youth workforce is as diverse as the range of services it supplies, encompassing a range of paid professionals and volunteers, including young people themselves. Recent analysis of the workforce by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) found that it stood at over 6.2 million in England in April 2010, comprising 912,000 paid staff and the other 5.3 million volunteers.¹⁸⁷ The largest paid workforces were sport and recreation (363,000), children's health (153,000), play work (110,000), creative and cultural industries (93,000) and youth work (85,000). It should be noted that the 'youth work' category included youth workers, youth support workers, and information, advice and guidance workers. The greatest concentrations of volunteers were in sport and recreation (3.4 million), the outdoors (1.15 million) and the youth voluntary sector (0.53 million). However, the CWDC noted that data collection and reporting is inconsistent, with different agencies often using incompatible data sets, including some time-series data and some one-off data collection; and it warned of gaps and double counting.¹⁸⁸ Since the term 'youth worker' is not a protected title and there is no requirement to register or obtain a licence to practice, there are no reliable national figures for the numbers of qualified youth workers (either full time equivalent or part time).

93. Recruitment and retention difficulties reported for youth and community workers employed by local authorities fell between 2001 and 2009: in 2001 some 47% of local authorities had difficulties recruiting nationally qualified workers, whereas 10% reported having difficulties recruiting in 2009. Over the same period the proportion of authorities reporting retention difficulties for youth and community workers fell from 20% of authorities in 2001 to 3% in 2009. In terms of other youth services staff, the vacancy data in 2010 showed a slight rise in overall vacancy rate in youth justice (from 3.7% to 4.1%), and a marked increase in notified vacancies for sports and leisure attendants in 2009-10.¹⁸⁹

94. David Wright, Chief Executive of the Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services (CHYPS), told the Committee that its survey of local authorities at the start of 2011 had found planned cuts of 10% in the workforce in the coming year.¹⁹⁰ This equated to around 3,000 local authority youth workers.¹⁹¹ Doug Nicholls painted an even bleaker picture of multiple redundancies, especially of youth workers: "by July (2011) nearly half of the professional youth work force could disappear as a result of redundancies".¹⁹²

187 Children's Workforce Development Council (2010), *A picture worth millions: state of the Young People's Workforce*, p.9

188 *Ibid.*, p.6. The main gaps in data apply to the housing, schools and education, social care and substance misuse sectors, employment in the voluntary and private sectors and volunteers. Data gaps particularly apply to age, disability, retention data, specific qualifications, current training data and detailed pay and benefits data

189 *Ibid.*, p.10

190 Q 233

191 *True scale of council youth service cuts revealed*, Children and Young People Now, 8 February 2011.

192 Q 271

Skills, qualifications and training

95. Requirements for initial qualification and professional status as a youth worker have increased over recent years. There are now two qualification levels for youth work: the lower 'Youth and Community Support Worker' range and the 'Professional Youth Worker' range. To qualify as a Youth and Community Support Worker, individuals need to hold a Level 2 Certificate or Level 3 Diploma in Youth Work Practice. From September 2010 the minimum entry requirement for the Professional Youth Worker range became a BA degree from a university or college of higher education validated by the National Youth Agency,¹⁹³ or the alternative postgraduate qualifications. Such awards are currently offered by around 40 English universities and colleges, under a range of titles including 'youth and community', 'community and youth studies', 'childhood and youth studies', and 'informal and community education'.¹⁹⁴ A move towards a more qualified youth workforce is mirrored elsewhere in Europe: in Germany we found that the most common qualification for youth workers was a Bachelor degree, whereas it had previously been a diploma.¹⁹⁵ In terms of pay, the current (2009) professional youth worker range minimum starting point is £20,591 as compared with a median starting salary for new graduates of £27,000, and an average public sector starting salary of £24,100 in the same year.¹⁹⁶ The current (2009) Youth and Community Support Worker range starts at £14,143.¹⁹⁷ These pay levels and qualifications apply to youth workers employed across all settings, not only those employed by local authorities.

96. It is hard to generalise about qualifications, skills and pay levels of non-youth work professionals in the youth workforce, since they are made up of a wide range of practitioners with different qualifications and training. In addition, most voluntary sector organisations have their own internal training and accreditation systems for volunteers. The National Council for Voluntary Youth Services and the Children's Workforce Development Council recently jointly launched the *Progress* project to provide 25,000 training places to workers in the voluntary and community sector, provide bursaries to 30 voluntary sector organisations to help them become accredited training providers, and support 360 individual trainers.

97. The Department for Education told us that it did not intend to take a view on workforce qualifications, development or regulation, stating that "the Government believes that the development and recruitment of both professionals and volunteers is best addressed by professionals themselves and their employers".¹⁹⁸ Amongst witnesses we

193 This change will not be applied retrospectively: all previously-gained professional youth work qualifications at Foundation Degree and Diploma of Higher Education level will continue to confer qualified youth worker status.

194 National Youth Agency, *Workforce and Training, Getting Qualified*: www.nya.org.uk/workforce-and-training/getting-qualified

195 See Annex [Note of Berlin visit]

196 High Fliers Research, *The Graduate Market in 2010*, p.19. Available at: http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/WoW/WOW_Docs/GM10Report.pdf

197 The Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Workers (JNC) is the formal oversight body for youth work and has two main functions: first, to set the national framework used to grade and pay youth work jobs, agreeing salary scales and other terms and conditions; and second, to endorse youth and community workers' qualifications which have been professionally approved by the Education and Training Standards (ETS) Committee of the National Youth Agency. Organisations representing employers and organisations representing staff sit on the JNC. Local authorities, and many voluntary organisations, will usually employ only youth workers with JNC-accredited qualifications

198 Ev 112

found varied views about what the appropriate mix of staff in the workforce should be. Many written submissions focused on the particular value of professional youth workers. For instance, TAG, the Professional Association of the Lecturers in Youth and Community Work, argued that :

Central to an effective infrastructure of high quality services are youth workers, who are educated and formed to initiate, develop and support informal educative work with young people. These workers also leverage the commitment and skills of a range of part-time and volunteer workers.¹⁹⁹

Linda Jack, Youth Policy Adviser at the Consumer Financial Education Body and previously a youth worker, identified a view “that anyone can do youth work and thus diminish the role of the professional youth worker ... Of course there will always be a role for support and voluntary youth workers, but if youth work is to be truly effective it needs excellent leadership and a highly qualified workforce”.²⁰⁰ Gill Millar, Regional Youth Work Adviser at Learning South West, told us that qualifications were “a mark of having undertaken the training” which offered “the chance to develop the skills to be able to respond in particular ways and at particular times”.²⁰¹ Doug Nicholls told us that:

the additionality that full time [youth workers] bring is to coordinate and bring the best thinking about informal education practice to bear on the voluntary staff that they work with ... They have a commitment to relationship-building with young people that is not a product of character. It is a product of sophisticated learning about group work, child psychology and education theory, which is developed within the training courses.²⁰²

98. In contrast, Changemakers, a charity which aims to develop young people’s leadership skills, argued against further ‘professionalisation’ of the workforce, particularly of youth work, and in favour of increasing numbers of volunteers: “the real workforce development need in the sector is to encourage more adult volunteers to get involved in delivering activities for young people”.²⁰³ Its Chief Executive, Adam Nichols, argued that “there is a danger that we see qualifications as being a prerequisite, when actually the bulk of excellent youth workers I know don’t have qualifications at all”, although he conceded that “there are clearly specialisms in working with young people who have particular types of issues and challenges”.²⁰⁴ Derek Twine, Chief Executive of The Scout Association, pointed to the example of young people as proof of the potential for volunteers in the workforce, saying “Rebecca and Meg as volunteers are both offering something as powerful as someone who had been on a particular so-called professional course. It is the training and quality that matters, whether that is delivered by volunteers or a college, whether you have letters after your name or not”.²⁰⁵

199 Ev w196

200 Ev w343

201 Q 280

202 Q 281

203 Ev 172

204 Qq 279-280

205 Q 126

99. Ginny Lunn, Director of Policy and Development at The Prince’s Trust, sounded a note of caution about the scope for using volunteers, noting that they were not necessarily a ‘cheap’ option: “volunteers cost money. It costs us £380 per volunteer to ensure they are properly trained and supported. We need to get away from thinking that you can just bung volunteers in to deliver something”.²⁰⁶

100. In reality the dividing line between volunteers and professionals in the youth workforce is porous. It is common for individuals to join an organisation as a volunteer, often having previously been a service user (as in the case of several of our young witnesses), and subsequently train as a youth worker. A submission from Hollie Hutchings, a Youth and Community Worker, stated that “most youth workers (like myself) usually start their youth work career with volunteering and then with experience start to get paid work”.²⁰⁷ Other submissions gave similar examples.²⁰⁸ Charlotte Hill, Chief Executive of UK Youth, told us that “the people who often become the best youth workers are the people who have been volunteers themselves”.²⁰⁹

101. Many of our witnesses agreed that a blend of professionals and volunteers was most desirable, led by youth workers but harnessing the enthusiasm of volunteers. The Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services (CHYPS) wrote that “for volunteers, it is the relationship they have with professional youth workers which ensures their success”.²¹⁰ Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency, noted that “successive Ofsted inspections have shown that best practice is where there are services strategically and professionally managed by professionally trained staff”.²¹¹ Jason Stacey, Head of Policy, Media and Research at YMCA England, also advocated “a mixture where you have the professionally trained youth worker with volunteers to support them”, but warned that there were limits to the appropriate use of volunteers: “in terms of the work that the YMCA does with some of the most damaged young people and the support that is required of them, I’m afraid it is really a lot to ask for that to fall on a volunteer”.²¹² Ginny Lunn added that “volunteers are really valuable ... but we would never say that volunteers can take the place of the workforce; they can add”.²¹³

102. Volunteers are highly valued and already much deployed across youth services and should continue to be encouraged. The experience of The Scout Association, amongst many others, shows the considerable potential for volunteers to be trained effectively and form a core part of the workforce. It is not, however, clear to what degree greater use of volunteers is possible, since they already comprise a sizeable proportion of the workforce—87% according to analysis by the Children’s Workforce Development

206 Q 168

207 Ev w4

208 For instance, the Confederation of Heads of Young People’s Services: “[volunteering] is often a route into the profession that adults begin as volunteers and continue to develop and grow into paid employment as a support worker and then occasionally into a professional role” [Ev 148]. See also Charlotte Hill, Q 78

209 Q 278

210 Ev 148

211 Q 81

212 Q 126

213 Q 168

Council—and there are costs to their training and support. However, additional barriers to their participation should not be introduced, and in this context we welcome the Government’s pledge to scale back the bureaucratic nature of Criminal Record Bureau checks.

103. Requirements for initial qualification and professional status for youth workers have increased over recent years. It is not clear to what extent this has been prompted by a wish to regulate and professionalise youth work, and to what extent to ensure that workers have key skills. We heard evidence that trained and qualified youth workers brought skills and an understanding of informal educational processes which less trained staff might lack. **We acknowledge that the requirement to have a degree in order to acquire professional youth worker status may have had positive effects in cementing youth work as a profession. However, we are not aware of any research that shows definitively that higher levels of qualifications in youth work lead to better outcomes for young people, and it was not clear to us why a degree should be the only route into qualified youth work status. We believe that it would be timely to review the knowledge and skills likely to be needed by youth workers over the next decade and the range of initial training and qualifications which would help to secure these.**

Continuing professional development

104. We heard that there was little in the way of continuing professional development for youth workers or other staff. Doug Nicholls told us that “CPD is in a woeful condition” and that, although the Joint Negotiating Committee terms and conditions for youth workers recommended that 5% of local authority youth service budgets be spent on CPD:

In the absence of a license to practice as in most other professions there is no requirement to undertake in-service training other than what good practice dictates ... most youth work professionals have not been receiving any form of Continuing Professional Development in their professional sphere for several years. CPD was the first victim of rationalisation. The last recorded figures are from the NYA [National Youth Agency] survey in 2008. You will notice that some local authorities provided no in-service training at all ... even if we take the figures as read, we see that it was a spend less than half of the JNC recommended level.²¹⁴

According to the National Youth Agency audit in 2008, 47 out of 144 local authorities spend nothing at all on continuing professional development.

105. **The low priority afforded to continuing professional development of the youth workforce is concerning, in particular the fact that, according to the last audit conducted by the National Youth Agency in 2008, some 33% of local authorities spent nothing at all on it, despite accredited terms and conditions for youth workers recommending that it should account for a minimum of 5% of local authority youth service budgets. Investment in continuing professional development would be particularly worthwhile in enabling practitioners to share good practice and new ways of working between services. The Government must engage with the questions about**

qualifications, training and continuing professional development which we raise in this Report, and set out how it intends positively to support the sector in its developing its workforce.

Licence to practise

106. Unlike, say, teaching or social work, ‘youth work’ is not a state-recognised occupation. As a consequence, some have argued, parents and communities cannot necessarily be confident that their young people are under the care of a ‘fit and proper person’, even if they have passed criminal records scrutiny. Doug Nicholls told us that “a number of people who have done terrible things have called themselves youth workers with absolutely no training qualification or relation to the field of youth work”.²¹⁵ Some suggested that one solution could be the creation of a ‘licence to practise’, under which each youth organisation defined what it regarded as appropriate skills for the work to be undertaken by its personnel, including volunteers, but with some settings (e.g. street-based work) requiring a professional youth worker qualification. Doug Nicholls explained why a licence was required:

The term youth work is unprotected. This is irresponsible and dangerous. Anyone can call themselves a youth worker. Urgent attention must be given to a simple parliamentary proposal to protect the title of Youth Worker for those working full time in the field with the relevant JNC or CE VE endorsed qualification, and the title Youth Support Worker for all those with the relevant qualification. A licence to practise needs to be introduced to provide registration and the recording of experience and qualification appropriate to the different levels of operation of youth workers, volunteers, part-time support workers and full time professionals and advanced practitioners and officers.²¹⁶

107. However, Adam Nichols, Chief Executive of Changemakers, disagreed, saying “I don’t see a benefit, particularly. You create artificial, unnecessary barriers to entry. You potentially create a false dichotomy between volunteers and paid staff. It could also be very expensive ... This idea that we are going to create some kind of protectionism, a bit like the safeguarding legislation, which basically takes as its assumption that everyone is a paedophile before they start, that if you are not licensed it is assumed you are not capable of working with children and young people, will mean that a lot of people who currently volunteer would simply say ‘Sorry, I’m not going to do that’”.²¹⁷

108. Others thought that a flexible model could be found that would apply different requirements to different staff. Gill Millar, Regional Youth Work Adviser at Learning South West advocated “a progressive licence to practise, perhaps similar to the Institute for Learning approach that has been taken with further education teaching, where there are recognised qualifications at different levels and a requirement to keep up continuous professional development alongside it in order to retain membership of an institute”.²¹⁸

215 Q 292

216 Ev 200

217 Q 290

218 Q 295

Jane Haywood, Chief Executive of the Children’s Workforce Development Council, thought that a voluntary, not mandatory, licence would be useful.²¹⁹ Mr Nicholls acknowledged that one size would not fit all and there were different possible models for a licence, which could allow it to apply to “different levels of voluntary intervention, part-time workers and full-time practitioners”.²²⁰

109. The Minister, Tim Loughton MP, believed that there was “merit” in the idea of valuing youth work more and that a licence to practise was “an interesting idea” which he could see the principles behind. However, he thought that “in practice, it could have unforeseen consequences. I need to be very much more convinced on how it will improve the quality and quantity of provision, rather than discourage people from coming forward. Who would regulate it? Would there be a college?”²²¹

110. We did not hear sufficient evidence to convince us of the merits or otherwise of introducing a licence to practise for youth work, although we note that it does seem rather odd that other professionals working with children are subject to protection of title, when similar standards are not applied to the youth workforce. A recent proposal by youth organisations to establish an Institute for Youth Work which could set minimum standards across the sector and promote continuing professional development, is worth further consideration.

219 Q 290

220 Q 292

221 Q 486

6 Youth volunteering and the National Citizen Service

Volunteering by young people

111. The National Youth Agency told us that 26% of young people were engaged in volunteering at any one time, and 52% reported that they had volunteered at some point between the ages of 13 and 18.²²² This was reflected in evidence from young people, whose enthusiasm was palpable. Our online forum asked young people whether they volunteered and what activities they volunteered for. The most common activities listed in the 65 posts responding to the question were: volunteering in a hospital, hospice or care home, for the Scouts or Beavers, tutoring younger children, working in charity shops, sports coaching, volunteering on a farm or in conservation, for the Red Cross or St John's Ambulance, at a youth club or with a local youth council or youth parliament. Many of the young people described the great sense of satisfaction or reward that they received from volunteering. Others considered it to be useful for their future career or CV, but all praised the enjoyment and fun they got from volunteering. Box 2 contains a selection of posts from the forum.

BOX 2: YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOLUNTEERING

I volunteer in a school (I tutor year sevens in maths) ... I love how my maths child has really grown confident with her sums - *Purple Ninja*

I volunteer by coaching basketball for kids aged 6-10. I do it partly because it looks good on CVs and applications and partly because I think it's good for children to participate in sports - *The Grandmaster*

I volunteer with Action for Blind people, working with blind and visually impaired children ... There's a sense of achievement and motivation in working with vulnerable people - *Annora*
I volunteer on the surgical ward of a local hospital. This teaches me a lot about my intended career as a Doctor, as well as giving me a sense of satisfaction at helping others who are in need - *Cityshy*

I volunteer at t local wildlife hospital. I do it because I think they do good work and can't run without help from volunteers like me. Also its fun - *imomo16*

I volunteer at an Oxfam bookshop and a museum. I do it because I enjoy it and I'm unemployed so it keeps me busy and gives me something positive to fill the gaps on my CV - *Norfolkadam*

I volunteer as a leader with Beaver Scouts and have done so for the past 3 and a half years, starting off as a Young Leader, and I'm starting my training as an official adult leader now - *beth103*

I volunteer with my local church group regenerating older disused parts of our town back into usable community spaces its very good - *TyrannosaurusBex*

I volunteer at a center involving care for the elderly with dementia and also for St John's Ambulance. I initially started volunteering because I want to do Medicine, but now I would continue with both even if I don't need to – *Evanesyne*

As a young person I volunteer as a member of Colchester Youth Council ... We organise events and information to help people get their voices heard and give them vital information about their life - *largey-small*

112. Successive administrations have introduced new youth volunteering programmes, from Millennium Volunteers, to V, to the current Government's embryonic National Citizen Service. Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency, told us that "the reality is that there is an incredibly rich infrastructure of pre-existing organisations that promote, develop and enable young people to volunteer".²²³ V—the National Young Volunteers' Service—was established in 2006 and is currently the lead national organisation for youth volunteering. Terry Ryall, its Chief Executive, explained that V's task had been to "develop a national service for young volunteers", with a team of specialists located in voluntary organisations covering every local authority area in the country whose job was to build the capacity of organisations to take volunteers. It had engaged 730,000 young people in 1,140,000 volunteering opportunities over a four year period through 'v involved', its national youth volunteering programme which brokered volunteering opportunities between young people and organisations. Volunteering opportunities ranged from short-term and part-time, to full-time activities. As well as a range of shorter-term volunteering projects and funds for young people,²²⁴ V ran a 'v talent year', a full-time volunteering programme which put 2,400 young people aged 16–25 over two years into structured placements in areas such as nursery education, play, youth work and supporter learning for 44 weeks. The programme cost £14.7 million per year.²²⁵ Mohammed Ahmed, who completed the 'vtalent year' described its impact on him:

I gained a lot—first of all confidence. I started at 14. I was quite a shy boy—shaky, nervous—but when I got involved I learned that there are no barriers to anything. You can overcome things. First, it has helped my education, because it has given me confidence and self-esteem. When I come across a challenge in my education, I think "I can overcome this, because volunteering has taught me this". It has given me the edge to participate in class discussions ... I have also got good life chances. I come from a very low-income background, but now the door's open for me. I am now a trustee of v, which is a big, impressive thing on a CV.²²⁶

An evaluation of the programme in 2010 found that 26% of those completing the programme in 2010 progressed to employment, 48% went on to further or higher education and 15% took up further volunteering placements. Given that a minimum of

223 Q 16

224 Other projects included: 'v cashpoint', a youth fund which gave money to young people to develop community projects; 'v inspired.com', a website where young people could find information about volunteering and join an online community of 100,000 members; 'v Match Fund', which partnered each £1 from private sector companies with £1 from the Treasury to invest in youth volunteering programmes.

225 Data taken from V, *Impacts of vtalent year 2010*. Available at: <http://vinspired.com/about-us/vtalent-year>

226 Q 379

40% of places on the programme are given to young people not in employment, education or training, these rates point to a successful programme.²²⁷

113. In addition, in 2009 the organisation established the ‘v schools’ programme, providing both personal and online resources to promote community action for 14–16 year olds through schools. V told us that ‘v schools’ had been part of the Youth Community Action programme set up to implement the then Prime Minister’s aim for every young person to have contributed 50 hours of community service by the age of 19, that it was “really welcomed by schools” and it was “a lost opportunity to embed a culture of giving and service at an age younger than 16 ... it would have been an excellent ‘feeder’ programme for National Citizen Service (NCS), preparing young people for the challenges of the personal development and social-mixing programme”.²²⁸ The scheme was closed in 2010 when the Government ended the Youth Community Action programme. Terry Ryall described the closure of ‘vschools’ as “a matter of regret”.²²⁹ V’s budget has been enormously reduced, from £114 million over three years to £4 million over the next four years, which Ms Ryall described as “quite dramatic”.²³⁰ An independent evaluation is currently being conducted to evaluate the impact that V has had on youth volunteering.²³¹

114. Germany has two well-established year-long youth volunteering programmes under which some 35,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 27 volunteer each year to gain work experience in a local public service: the so-called Voluntary Social Year and Voluntary Ecological Year. These programmes are supported by the federal government to the tune of €49 (£43) million a year²³²—an average of €1400 or £1228 per head—but are administered by the Länder (local government), which provide additional funding. The federal government is establishing a new Federal Social Voluntary Year in 2011, with an annual budget of €220 (£190) million. During our visit we spoke to several young people participating in the current voluntary years, who told us that the programme had helped them to get a place at university and offered essential work experience for future jobs, as well as offering careers advice and guidance.²³³ Alongside the government-supported programmes, Germany had other structured youth volunteering programmes, such as the Young Firefighters of Berlin, who we also visited. In addition to the clear enjoyment the young people gained from these activities, both the voluntary years and the Young Firefighters programme had the benefit of being excellent recruiters for public services.

Young people’s democratic participation

115. In addition to volunteering programmes, many young people take up positions of leadership or democratic responsibility in order to have a voice in local or national forums, for example becoming Young Mayors, participating in Youth Councils at a local level or

227 V (2010), *Vtalent year evaluation*, pp.5–7

228 Q 393 and Ev 180

229 Q 393

230 Q 400

231 Q 391

232 Figures provided by the BMFSFJ (German Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth). See Annex [Note of Berlin visit]

233 Annex [Note of Berlin visit]

the UK Youth Parliament nationally. The British Youth Council told us that “up to 19,800 young people, mostly aged between 11 and 17, already volunteer their time to represent young people as youth councillors, informing and influencing local decision-making” and that “young people from a wide range of backgrounds take part in local youth councils. A quarter of youth councillors are from a Black and Minority Ethnic background as opposed to 3.7% of adult Councillors. Half of youth councils ... involve young people from minority groups, for example lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people, young disabled people or young people living on a low income”.²³⁴ Various contributors to our online forum told us that they were youth councillors or members of the UK Youth Parliament.

116. The Minister, Tim Loughton MP, told us that the Government wanted young people “through the various vehicles that we have now, such as youth mayors, youth cabinets, the UK Youth Parliament and youth councils, to be engaged actively in every authority throughout the country, shaping policies as they affect young people and the local environment”.²³⁵ He added that the Government had allocated “a further £350,000” in the financial year 2011–12 to support youth democratic engagement, and a further £500,000 for 2012–13.²³⁶ It was his wish to have “in every authority in the country a clearly identifiable, clearly accessible youth engagement body that is able to hold the local authority and other local agencies to scrutiny and that is able properly to engage—not just tokenism”.²³⁷

117. We applaud those talented young people who are engaging in positions of democratic responsibility and leadership, and organisations like the British Youth Council and UK Youth Parliament for enabling them to take up such roles. We welcome the Government’s support for democratic participation, and urge it to translate into practice its ambition to have a youth engagement body in every authority in the country which plays an active role in shaping and scrutinising those policies which affect young people.

National Citizen Service (NCS)

The programme

118. A central plank—indeed, currently the only articulated element—of the Government’s youth policy is the introduction of a National Citizen Service (NCS) for 16 year-olds.²³⁸ Paul Oginsky, Government Adviser on the National Citizen Service, explained that it was “a flagship policy”²³⁹ which offered “a framework which all youth organisations can play a part in, either preparing young people for NCS or picking them up afterwards, or contributing to NCS itself”.²⁴⁰ The Government’s vision was that “eventually, as NCS

234 Ev 118

235 Q 411

236 Q 411

237 Q 419

238 See, for instance, *The Coalition: our Programme for Government*, May 2010, p.29

239 Q 346

240 Q 352

grows, it will become part of the culture of Britain—something that everyone will have done. In 10 or 15 years’ time people will be turning to each other and saying ‘where did you do your National Citizen Service’”.²⁴¹ The programme has been in development for several years. Mr Oginsky explained that he had spent four or five years “going around asking people what they think is important and how they think NCS should be shaped”,²⁴² and the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP, that “it is not something that just materialised on the eve of the election; we thought about it for an extremely long time ... serious money and time has been spent on development, so this is something we have been cooking quite slowly and methodically”.²⁴³

119. Under the Government’s proposals, National Citizen Service will last seven to eight weeks over the summer months, including at least ten days and nights on a residential basis. The Government has outlined five distinct phases, as set out in Box 3. The Minister for Civil Society explained that a central aim of the programme was “about throwing kids together who would not normally get a chance to meet each other ... we attach huge importance to social cohesion”.²⁴⁴ The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, Tim Loughton MP, added that “National Citizen Service is not actively discriminating but certainly actively promoting and judging the value of the providers on the basis of how good they are going to be at weeding out the difficult-to-access groups—those kids who have fallen foul of the youth justice system, those kids with disabilities, those kids with BME backgrounds and so on”,²⁴⁵ suggesting that the scheme would be, at least in part, a targeted one.

120. Twelve organisations have been awarded contracts to pilot the scheme in 2011 working with 11,000 young people. The Office for Civil Society intends to expand this to 30,000 young people in 2012, and, over time, to extend the offer to all 600,000 or so 16-year olds.²⁴⁶

BOX 3: NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

- Phase 1: An introductory phase in which expectations will be set and relationships built between participants and staff;
- Phase 2: A set of tasks, completed in a residential setting away from home, which are personally challenging (typically in the form of an outdoor challenge experience), and focused on personal and social development (one week);
- Phase 3: A set of structured tasks involving visiting and helping the local community and developing skills, again the aim is that this would be completed in a

241 Q 358

242 Q 346

243 Q 472

244 Q 445

245 Q 445

246 Rt Hon Francis Maude MP, Article on No 10 Website: <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/latest-news/2011/02/pioneering-teenagers-to-help-build-the-big-society-national-citizen-service-now-recruiting-60635>

- residential setting away from home (one week);
- Phase 4: Participants to design a social action task in consultation with the local community (one week);
 - Phase 5 onwards:
 - A period of 30 hours of social action on a part time basis;
 - A fair/event to encourage participants to get involved in ongoing social action or volunteering activities in their area (with a view to creating an NCS alumni scheme);
 - A large celebration and graduation event for participants and their guests;
 - An alumni programme, including training sessions and reunion events, to build on the enthusiasm and relationships generated by NCS;
 - We hope to be able to offer outstanding NCS graduates the opportunity to take part in a programme of social action projects in developing countries.²⁴⁷

Good principle, bad timing?

121. The principles of National Citizen Service and the Government's commitment to a personal and social development programme with social mixing and a rite of passage as its central aims were welcomed by young people and professionals alike. However, we heard concerns about the cost of the programme and practical difficulties relating to its implementation. Charlotte Hill, Chief Executive of UK Youth, welcomed the scheme, saying "it is brilliant that one of the Government's flagship things is about non-formal learning".²⁴⁸ Mohammed Ahmed, a V volunteer, told us that "it's a good thing, because anything that keeps young people off the streets and gets them involved in communities should be commended. I am concerned, however, that it shouldn't be a replacement for volunteering. Volunteering is a separate thing that should be encouraged".²⁴⁹ Young people posting on our online forum were broadly keen on the idea but said that it would depend on activities being fun. Several thought that young people who already volunteered or participated in programmes like the Duke of Edinburgh award might be more likely to sign up for National Citizen Service. Some young people responded positively, but thought it unlikely that they would give up post-exam holidays to participate. Rebecca Salawu, a Salmon Centre Young Leader, told us in evidence "I couldn't see myself willingly giving up my summer holidays for that" and Meg Hudson, a Beaver Scout Leader, agreed: "at the age of 16 I wouldn't give up three weeks of my holiday, because you've just done GCSEs and had full-on school".²⁵⁰ Similar sentiments were aired on our online forum (see Box 4).

²⁴⁷ Cabinet Office website. Available at: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2010/100722-citizenservice/national-citizen-service.aspx#note1. Accessed on 15 January 2011

²⁴⁸ Q 14

²⁴⁹ Q 399

²⁵⁰ Q 95

BOX 4: YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS ON NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE

Sixteen postings were made in response to the question, "Would a summer programme for 16 year olds leaving school interest you?". Most were positive, provided the programme offered engaging activities. Postings included:

It would only really be attractive if it would lead to better job prospects and was more interesting ... personally I think that a fully-funded programme where people can volunteer abroad for the summer (like Platform2) would be better – *unknownrebalz*

I'd take part as long as the project didn't solely involve repainting some community centre! – *Fandabidoze!*

This would have greatly interested me when I was 16 – *Ultimate_Geek*

As my summer holidays are usually for relaxing and having a good time, it would really depend on the volunteering activities involved – *doyoulikewaffles?*

I think that, depending on which activities are available, this would be quite a good idea which would be well used – *Lornskii*

I would love to take part! – *Beth*

I think there will be some interest in this, though it will mainly be those who already participate in other volunteering schemes like Duke of Edinburgh, the Guides etc who will benefit - *harriepoppy*

122. Mostly, witnesses were concerned that the introduction of National Citizen Service, whatever its individual merits, was inappropriate at a time when other youth services were being cut. Liam Preston, Young Chair of the British Youth Council, told us that he had surveyed 1,000 young people across the country and found that they broadly liked the idea of NCS: some 53% were in favour, 20% against and 27% did not know. However, he warned, they were "concerned that their own youth services are being cut ... their worry is 'what's going to be left for me afterwards if everything in my local area is being cut?'"²⁵¹ Jason Stacey, Head of Policy, Media and Research at YMCA England, said that whilst he would support the NCS, "it's not a replacement for sustained and regular youth services in a particular area ... the fear is that the focus would be placed so much on the NCS that other youth services would suffer as a result"²⁵² This concern was reflected in written evidence.²⁵³

Cost to participants

123. It appears that young people's participation in NCS will not necessarily be free. Paul Oginsky told us that whether to charge a participation fee and at what level was up to

251 Q 16

252 Q 95

253 For instance, Rick Bowler [Ev w10]; Steve Davies [Ev w60]; John Paxton, Head of Integrated Youth Support Services, Leeds City Council [Ev w69]; the Federation of Detached Youth Workers [Ev w136]; Integrated Youth Services, Luton Borough Council [Ev w153]; Railway Children [Ev w184]; The Scout Association [Ev w385]

individual providers, but that some providers were making nominal charges of between £25 and £100 to secure a commitment from young people.²⁵⁴ He was himself sceptical about this, noting that “young people make a commitment by signing up to a scheme that is meant to be challenging”.²⁵⁵ The Minister for Children and Families told us that, whilst “payment should not be a barrier”, he believed that “just offering lots of free places, so that people sign up and perhaps do not bother to turn up, is not an option”. He emphasised, however, that providers were looking at bursary schemes and that “the charge is absolutely a technical matter; it is not a qualification”.²⁵⁶ **Whilst we acknowledge that a nominal cost may ensure commitment on the part of participants, we believe that the inevitable effect of providers charging up to £100 for participation may well be to deter young people from low income families.**

Funding National Citizen Service

124. A total of £13 million has been set aside by the Cabinet Office to fund NCS in 2011—approximately £1,182 per young person; and £37 million for 2012—approximately £1,233 per head. The Government has not set out how it intends to fund NCS beyond the two pilot years of 2011 and 2012. We asked the Minister to clarify the costs of National Citizen Service post-2012, but he told us that those were as yet unclear, saying that “it’s very hard to be specific about that, because at the moment we are testing models. For example, for the 11,000 places this year we deliberately didn’t set a fixed price. We wanted the market to come to us with a price. We had tremendous variation”.²⁵⁷ The Government is, however, adamant that the programme is being paid for by additional central funds, not from existing Department for Education budgets. Paul Oginsky, Government Adviser on the NCS, told the Committee that “the money has been secured by the Cabinet Office from the Treasury, so it is additional money”.²⁵⁸ However, Mr Oginsky also said that “in future, the funding will come to the Education Department, but only if we can show the value of it”,²⁵⁹ and that “as part of the Government’s philosophy they do not want to fund this ad infinitum, indefinitely ... they have said ‘let’s see everyone in society contribute’”.²⁶⁰ In a similar vein, the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP, said that “we are also actively encouraging the local providers to tap into local support, whether from businesses or other bodies in the areas, and seek contributions in cash or in kind because we want this to be a genuine partnership approach. But we have the funding for the pilots”.²⁶¹

125. Evidence from the Minister for Civil Society and the Government Adviser on National Citizen Service suggested to us that funding for the programme may not continue to be ring-fenced beyond the pilots. Indeed, we found it ominous that both spoke in terms of generating funds from elsewhere, despite having emphasised that

254 Q 363

255 Q 363

256 Q 489

257 Q 477

258 Q 355

259 Q 361

260 Q 363

261 Q 474

additional money was being made available through the Cabinet Office. We are concerned that this may mean, contrary to the Government's assurances, that National Citizen Service might end up in direct competition with other youth services for funds at local authority level.

126. Derek Twine, Chief Executive of the Scout Association, noted that “for the same cost per head that the NCS is anticipating spending in the first tranche of pilots we could provide two or three years’ worth of the experience, week by week, for young people in the same age range”.²⁶² External observers, such as Tony Travers of the London School of Economics, have commented that the scheme would be “very, very expensive” in the long term if there was a large uptake by young people.²⁶³ Although the funding source and break down of costs for the scheme after 2012 is not yet clear, on the basis of a cost estimate of £1,182 per head in 2011,²⁶⁴ National Citizen Service would cost £709 million per year to roll out to all 600,000 16 year-olds. Even allowing for economies of scale and the likelihood that many young people will not sign up to participate, this is a huge sum: over twice as much as annual spending on all local authority youth services, which was £350 million in 2009-10. By way of further comparison, the German federal government pays £1,228 per young person—£43 million in total—for a whole year’s participation in one of its two voluntary programmes.

127. On the other hand, the point was made that NCS offered an opportunity to youth organisations to access money which would not otherwise be available. Terry Ryall explained that it formed another funding stream for organisations which, like V, had previously been funded to support youth volunteering.²⁶⁵ The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, Tim Loughton MP, said that “NCS is about a lot of money going into youth organisations. A lot of the people from voluntary organisations ... who are doing, or will no longer be doing, stuff with local authorities can also be part of NCS schemes. This is a huge investment not in NCS, but in the youth sector”.²⁶⁶ Indeed, Paul Oginsky warned that “I stress that if we take NCS at this point and say ‘let’s not do it. Let’s put it in the bin’ we will still face all the cuts that we’re getting at the moment. This is an opportunity to show Government ... what personal and social development programmes can do”.²⁶⁷

128. The cost of National Citizen Service in 2011 is around £1,182 per young person. By contrast, the German federal Government spends £1,228 per young person for a whole year’s work-based volunteering programme, which we heard enhanced young people’s skills and future careers. We do not see how the Government can justify spending the same amount for only six weeks of National Citizen Service.

262 Q 96

263 Quoted in article and video on Public Finance magazine and website:
<http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/news/2010/07/national-citizen-service-too-costly-to-last/>

264 The total cost of £13 million in 2011, divided by the 11,000 participants

265 Q 400

266 Q 481

267 Q 359

129. Although the Government has made clear that, subject to the success of the pilots, it wishes to make National Citizen Service a universal offer to all 600,000 16-year olds, it has given no indication of what percentage it calculates would actually participate. Based on the cost per head of the 2011 pilots, it would cost a total of £355 million each year to provide a universal offer of National Citizen Service assuming, for example, a 50% take up. Even allowing for economies of scale, the costs may well outstrip entire annual spending by local authorities on youth services, which totalled £350 million in 2009-10.

130. Several witnesses suggested to us that, rather than inventing another new programme, the Government could introduce NCS as a form of accreditation or badging of existing organisations and programmes. Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency, said “if you could do your D of E [Duke of Edinburgh] gold award and that would also be your NCS when you were 16, wouldn’t that be great?”²⁶⁸ Susanne Rauprich, Chief Executive of the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, considered that:

creating one stand-alone programme that builds on the principles and work of many organisations is fine but, in parallel, there is a range of other programmes that would deliver the same desired outcomes ... it would be much easier and logistically better if such programmes could be given an opportunity to continue what they do under the mantle of the National Citizen Service, which would reach an ever larger number of young people.²⁶⁹

She added that “several organisations, and the cadet forces, have proposed on several occasions that their programmes might be badged “National Citizen Service”. That might help the Government to resolve a fairly logistical problem about how to go about offering the range of opportunities that must be in place to cater for the whole cohort”.²⁷⁰ Charlotte Hill, Chief Executive of UK Youth, agreed.²⁷¹

131. Overall, we applaud the Government’s aspiration to make a universal offer to all young people, and for the emphasis placed by National Citizen Service on social mixing, skills building, community engagement and young people’s positive participation in society. In a world of less scarce resources we agree that introduction of the scheme would be a positive development. However, given the degree to which youth services are being cut, and in light of our concerns about the scheme’s cost and practical implementation, we cannot support the continued development of National Citizen Service in its current form. Consequently, we recommend that the core idea of National Citizen Service be retained, but that it be significantly amended to become a form of accreditation for existing programmes which can prove that they meet the Government’s aims of social mixing, personal and social development, and the component parts of National Citizen Service, such as a residential experience and a social action task. We acknowledge that this may further reduce the overall resources available to the youth sector, and thus recommend that Government protects those

268 Q 22

269 Q 18

270 Q 16

271 Q 16

additional funds currently earmarked for National Citizen Service and divert them into year-round youth services.

Annex: Visit to Berlin, 15–16 February 2011²⁷²

Visit participants:

Mr Graham Stuart MP (Chair)

Neil Carmichael MP

Ian Mearns MP

Lisa Nandy MP

Nic Dakin MP

Elisabeth Bates – Second Clerk

Ben Nicholls – Committee Specialist

DISCUSSION WITH GERMAN FEDERAL YOUTH COUNCIL (DBRG)

German Federal Youth Council (DBRG)

The German Federal Youth Council (founded in 1949) was an umbrella organisation comprising 30 youth organisations and 60 youth councils across Germany. Its range of member organisations included church groups, labour unions, environmental, recreational and social youth organizations and the Scouts. For historical reasons, party political youth associations and student organisations did not participate. The groups represented in the Council were all independent and had no direct input from the state, although they did receive some funding through Germany's children and youth plans. The Board of the Council reflected its diversity, with one Chair and six Deputy Chairs, all of whom were employed by member organizations and served the Council in an honorary capacity. The Council lobbied politicians and society for a framework for German youth activities.

The Federal Association of Girl Scouts represented the four biggest German Girl Scouting and Guiding associations, and had three pillars of activity. The first was 'girls and women', meaning that it represented the interests and particular needs of girls and women. The second was faith-related: as a Catholic organization it held masses at campsites, ran other faith-related activities and contributed to the formulation of church policy at diocese and national level. The third was promoting the principles of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), of which 'learning by doing' was the key principle. The Federal Association was locally based and locally focused, which was important in shaping its activities around the wishes and needs of young people.

The sector was organised around five principles: that young people's participation was voluntary, that staff served in an honorary capacity, that it was self-organising, that services were child and young person-focussed, and that they were value-driven.

²⁷² We would like to thank the British Embassy in Berlin for their excellent assistance in the planning and execution of our visit, in particular Sandra Matk, Sandra Nass and, of course, HM Ambassador Simon McDonald CMG.

Young people frequently progressed from being service users to holding positions of responsibility within an organisation, which they typically did unpaid and in their spare time. They might represent their organisation more widely, at a local or national level. It was important that young people made key decisions, such as how to use funds or facilities, within a framework set by adults.

A that a good framework and conditions were important for all voluntary activities, but especially for those with young people. The most important prerequisite for youth services was young people's complete motivation, which came from their individual convictions. Young people needed to be given sufficient time to volunteer.

The age of school leaving was decreasing—from aged 13 to aged 12 in some Länder—and at the same time the school day was being extended. The effect was to leave young people with less free time for voluntary activities. Extension of the school day would also affect many youth organisations which met in the afternoon after school. Similar changes were underway at university level, with longer days and fewer overall years at university putting greater pressure on young people involved with student organisations. The net effect was that increasing pressure was being put on young people about their academic performance and qualifications, leaving them with less time to do other things.

In terms of measuring the value and outcomes of youth services, both voluntary organisations and the government recorded measures such as the number of children involved in leisure activities, and organisations themselves collected participation data. However, it was hard to gather more detailed data to compare across all youth services. Assessing the value of services depended very much on what you wished to measure: the general benefit of youth work as a whole to society would be hard to evaluate. However, some academic studies did exist on, for instance, how many young people could be reached by certain activities, and there had been some retrospective surveys of adults about the activities they did as young people and how those had benefitted them in later life. Investigation had also been conducted as to whether those involved with youth services in early life had remained active in their community in later years: generally they were found to have done so. It was very important for young people to realise that society—including politicians as society's representatives—valued the activities of young people, and suggested that recognition could take different forms including perhaps benefits in kind.

Questions and answers:

- The Federal Council received some government funding from the Ministry, but also generated some of its own income. Board members were on loan from other organisations and so did not subsume additional resources.
- In terms of reaching lower socio-economic groups, some disadvantaged children were reached simply because projects were based in their area, whilst other projects specifically targeted these children. Other projects reached out through schools in particular neighbourhoods.
- The kinds of activities young people typically chose to do varied. Often children just wanted to be together, and so might spend all afternoon simply talking; on another occasion they might choose to run a project. The national youth organisations had an

annual theme (for instance, in 2010 the Federal Association of Girl Scouts' theme was 'Justice') and groups often ran projects around these themes.

- In terms of participation levels compared to other countries, the Girl Scouts were amongst the 'middle ranking' participation groups, with around 200,000 members. Purely labour-based or faith-based organisations would be likely to have many more members.
- A number of professional qualification routes existed for youth workers. There had previously been a standard diploma course, but now the most common qualification was a Bachelor degree, the subject of which depended on the specialisation of the individual worker.
- In terms of the structures of youth organisations, all groups had a local, regional and federal structure, but varied as to which level the organisation was principally administered from. Once they reached a certain critical size, organisations gained representation in the federal youth umbrella organisations.
- The Federal Council ensured that organisations were represented at a federal level: to parliamentarians, the federal ministry and the wider public. Other federal youth bodies were represented in the Council, such as German Sports Youth, the various youth organisations of political parties and the youth organisations of labour unions.
- Young people tended to join labour unions once they were apprenticed or in work.
- Mobility was increasing in Germany, especially for students. Young people tended to go where jobs were. This was having an impact on participation: statistically, young people often stopped volunteering in their community when they left for university and did not start again until they were settled with a family. For instance, those young service users who might later have taken on a leadership role in that same organisation often did not do so since they left for university.
- There was scope for a programme aimed at university students in the place they were studying: organisations needed to reach out better to students and young professionals at the point at which they might want to get engaged in volunteering.
- The proportion of young people who volunteered at different ages had more or less remained the same but the total number of young volunteers had reduced as the overall population fell. In part this was compensated for by increased volunteering by senior citizens.
- It had been more difficult to encourage youth volunteering in the former East Germany. The principle that voluntary organisations were independent of government had not existed in East Germany prior to reunification and so organisations had had to be established from scratch. The former East was still poorer, with lower employment and more structural problems.

VISIT TO YOUNG VOLUNTARY FIREFIGHTERS OF BERLIN

Following a demonstration by some young firefighters, the Committee held a discussion with adult and young firefighters.

There were 257,000 members of the young firefighters, of which 57,000 were girls. There had been a fast growth in membership, since establishment of the programme in 1964.

Questions and answers:

- There were 1.3m voluntary fire fighters and 30,000 professionals across Germany. Most fire brigades across Germany were voluntary, not provided by the state, and all Länder had youth fire brigades.
- The upper age limit for participation in the young voluntary firefighters was 18.
- When asked why they had joined, one young person said that he had wanted to make friends, and go on the summer camping trips. Another said that she had joined to meet people and that she loved the teamwork aspect. A third said that there were lots of competitions and championships where the young firefighting teams competed with other fire services to win prizes. For a fourth, his neighbour had been in the voluntary fire brigade and had invited the young person along for a trial. In a fifth case it was a family tradition, and yet another was the son of a professional firefighter.
- Participation was voluntary, but the programme of activities during a trip or at a camp was agreed with the coaches in advance. Which activities were undertaken depended to some degree on the weather.
- The most interesting trip to date was considered to have been a competition and fire services display in Leipzig the previous year.
- Some young firefighters were also members of other youth organisations; others played sports or music in their free time.
- The group met once a week between 6 and 7pm. They also met at weekends to learn skills such as tent building and setting up jumping competitions, and there was a summer camp of ten days' duration.
- In Berlin the fire service paid for the young firefighters' uniforms, but practice varied in different Länder.
- Skills gained through the programme included First Aid skills, technology and teamwork.
- The adult fire fighters saw great value in involving the young people: it was rewarding to see them grow and develop skills and they would eventually fight side by side with the adults.
- The young people represented had only fought one real fire, in a school stove. When they turned 16 they could take an exam which allowed them to join the adult fire

service. Once a year there was a firefighting exercise, “Firefighting City”, in which the young people set up a fire in a cellar and put it out.

- Young people could earn badges in exams and assessments. The “Youth Flame” was a similar award to the Duke of Edinburgh Award, and consisted of various stages, with a final combined exam.
- All the young people attending the meeting, when asked, said that they wanted to become adult firefighters.
- Overall, about 10-20% of the young firefighters tended to progress to being adult firefighters.
- The drop-out rate during the programme was about 15%.
- Young people concluded that they learnt team spirit, and that having the programme on their CV was valued by prospective employers more than, say, participation in a football or tennis club. Several young people had used certificates from the young firefighters when applying for jobs.
- Any young person could apply to be a firefighter. The service was active in going into primary schools to promote the programme. It attracted young people from different backgrounds, except perhaps those from fee-paying schools.
- Although not widespread, there were three young voluntary firefighter programmes in the UK.
- In addition to dealing with fires (which took up about 5% of their time), the firefighting service also had a Rescue and First Aid service. In Berlin, the Fire Department was also the main paramedic service.

VISIT TO BP CIVIL ACADEMY PROGRAMME

Six years previously BP had wanted to increase its corporate citizenship activity. It had had the idea of setting up a non-governmental academy in partnership with civil society, and so had linked up with the Federal Network for Civic Engagement (BBE). The resulting Civil Academy programme was a joint project between BP Europe SE and the BBE, and first ran in 2005. It was essentially a qualification programme for young people between the ages of 18 to 27 who had an idea for a project which would help to achieve the aim of the BBE to promote civic cohesion. The young people received training to support them to put their own ideas into practice.

In terms of the selection process, in response to a public call for participation, applicants provided a CV, letter of recommendation and an outline of their creative project idea. Selection of participants was by a jury of BP senior managers and representatives of NGOs, and 24 participants were selected in each round. Most applicants were students, and approximately 70 applications were received per round. Successful applicants were matched with trainers from BP and civil society. The Civil Academy tried to ensure that groups were diverse in terms of gender, nationality and educational background. There were currently two rounds per year, although they were looking to expand the programme,

possibly including franchising the structure to other partnerships between business and education.

The programme involved three weekend seminars during the year through which participants developed their own project ideas. Once a year there was a networking meeting. To date, 260 young people had completed the programme. Most 'graduates' remained engaged, with many attending an annual meeting.

One of the young participants said that he had valued the support he received in starting new projects, and learning how to structure them. He was pleased that young people were supported to develop their own ideas. His current venture was "World Citizen", which was a world dialogue between young people in different countries. He thought that the Civil Academy would not suit everyone, but it was very good for those young people who already had a project idea and some motivation.

Another presented his project, "Show Racism the Red Card" (www.theredcard.de). It had been based on an existing programme in Newcastle, UK, which had been in operation since 1996. That project involved professional footballers in public discussions of discrimination and racism. He had wanted to establish a similar project in Germany, run by students. The project had recruited 25 teams across Germany, three high-profile patrons and twelve freelance students, aged between 20 and 26.

Question and answer:

- Not every Civil Academy project was not-for-profit, but most were engaged with civil society.
- For the "Show Racism the Red Card" project, it was useful to have a clear example of a similar project already in existence. For instance, it had opened the door with experts in the field such as the relevant Ministry. However, there had been a previous 'red card' marketing campaign in Germany in conjunction with some sporting organisations, which had somewhat reduced engagement by those organisations with this project. The project did not yet have a sportsperson as patron but Andreas was keen to secure the involvement of one.
- The Civil Academy helped the young people by improving their organisational skills, providing professional advice on sponsorship and fundraising, and by removing their dread of 'big numbers'.
- There was no salary attached to the programme, but it was free and travel costs were paid.
- There were no formal outcomes measures, but participants had given feedback through the regular networking meetings that they had found the programme useful.
- All participants were given a certificate following the programme, which was valued by employers.

- Other commercial companies in Germany also targeted young people for corporate social responsibility projects, although most were engaged in schools rather than with older young people.
- BP promoted the Civil Academy on the internet, through magazines and in speeches and presentations. It was considering developing an internet learning tool through which some of the programme could be delivered—however, much of the value was in the young participants networking with one another and sharing ideas and advice. The young people thought that a definitive online guide to how to succeed in social ventures would be useful.
- BP conducted a voluntary annual survey of young people’s participation more generally. In the last one, 35% of respondents were engaged with civil society projects. The federal government conducted more extensive surveys each year, which seemed to show that young people’s engagement was increasing.
- Across Germany 23 million people of all ages were engaged in volunteering, one quarter of society.
- Civil Academy-type programmes did tend to reach those young people who were already more engaged with society: not necessarily the better-off but certainly the better-educated. Consequently BP was very pleased when it received an application from a young person from a more disadvantaged background.
- Germany had a strong tradition of social volunteering and engagement. From an early age most people were involved with community activities such as sports clubs.
- Volunteering had cross-party support. Following the Second World War the government had placed responsibility for volunteering into the Family Ministry rather than the Education Ministry: this was deliberate, to place it at arms’ length from federal government. Provision had also been made for state funding for volunteering.
- Over the previous ten to fifteen years there had been a number of interesting developments in volunteering: including a parliamentary commission of inquiry into civil engagement. One of the results of these developments had been better co-operation between the state and civil society.
- Much ‘volunteering’ during the Third Reich had not been entirely voluntary. However, prior to that period, Germany had had a long tradition of volunteering and civic engagement. After the Second World War there had been a strong desire to disengage volunteering from the state, with a greater emphasis on localism in volunteering.
- There were differences between the former East and West Germany in terms of volunteering. The West had had greater freedom; whereas in the East, if a young person had wanted to study particular subjects they had had to join a youth organisation.
- Engagement and volunteering structures varied across Länder, with different kinds of support offered. Local structures worked well: for instance, the southern states had high engagement rates.

- In terms of whether there was scope for BP to open a similar programme in the UK (especially given recent damage to the company's reputation), it had already established some engagement projects in the UK but considered that there might be scope for further work. Worldwide, BP's engagement strategy was based around "3 Es": energy, entrepreneurship and education. It had been felt that, in Germany, the second 'E' translated well into the kind of capacity-building programme offered by the Civil Academy.
- The abolition of compulsory military service and the civilian equivalent might have an effect on the number of young Germans volunteers. In this respect the Civil Academy could play a role in demonstrating that volunteering could be fun and successful.
- Faith communities were not heavily involved in volunteering.

LUNCH DISCUSSION WITH BERLIN SENATE FOR EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

The Berlin Senate provided all youth and child services for the locality (Länd) of Berlin, including making policy on children's services, schools, juvenile delinquents and youth work. There were about 80,000 volunteers in youth organisations across Berlin. It was harder to count the number of youth workers. About one tenth of the department's spending went on youth work.

The gap of opportunity between disadvantaged young people and non-disadvantaged was widening. The department was committed to getting youth workers and youth organisations more involved in schools. To this end, systemic co-operation between youth workers and schools had been established about three years previously.

It was hard to judge what the impact of the abolition of the alternative civilian service would be. One consequence might be that fewer young people wanted to join the armed forces: on the other hand, the army offered excellent training opportunities which might still attract young people. In general, it was true that those from more deprived backgrounds would continue to volunteer less.

With the exception of a few public services such as teaching, Berlin had been under budget constraints and a hiring freeze for several years. In addition there was now a deficit reduction plan, under which ministries were being cut and staff laid off: this would continue until at least 2020. Cuts were having an impact on youth services: many were starting to be effectively centralised as a result of efficiencies.

In Berlin the ruling coalition had pledged to reduce the number of Berlin public servants to 100,000. That target had not yet been reached. There was a difficult historic context: when the former East and West Berlin had merged there had been two different infrastructures, with the public sector in the former East generating almost all employment in the absence of industry. Part of the political agreement during reunification was that public servants in the former East would not be laid off.

There were far more applicants than there were teaching posts. This meant that different cities and Länder competed to attract the best teachers. In general it was very hard to get rid of teachers, especially as they were full tenure public servants. In Berlin, however, the

public servant status had been removed, making teachers easier to dismiss. The starting salary for a grammar school teacher was around €3,500 per month.

DISCUSSION WITH FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR FAMILY, SENIOR CITIZENS, WOMEN AND YOUTH

Volunteering policy remained part of the Ministry's remit until February 2011. There were in existence two voluntary years of service in Germany, both of which had been initially established for women and were based around social employment. In 1964 the Voluntary Social Year (FSJ) had been established in law, and in 1993 the Voluntary Ecological Year had been added. An overwhelming majority (over 80% in the FSJ) remained women. The schemes had been increasingly used as civilian alternatives to compulsory military service, with around 5,500 of the 35,000 participants being young men who had opted out of military service. Young participants carried out supporting duties in social institutions, such as schools, hospitals and care homes, but did not replace professionals.

Young people aged 16 to 27 could participate in the voluntary years. The programme typically lasted twelve months, but this could be shortened to six or extended to 24. It was seen as a full-time job, with participants generally working a 40-hour week, which meant that volunteers still had to pay taxes. There was an allowance paid of €180 a month and, where needed, expenses were available for food, accommodation and equipment. There were also 25 'education days' a year during which adults supported and trained the young volunteers.

The Government had set a target to increase the share of young people volunteering and earmarked funding to do this. It currently paid €100 per month to each young person participating in the Voluntary Social Year, and €153 per month to each young person on the Ecological Year. However, both these rates would increase to €200 per month per young person with the introduction of the Federal Voluntary Service on 1 July 2011. The Government saw volunteering as a good way of promoting social cohesion and increasing social responsibility, and of highlighting opportunities to the socially disadvantaged.

There were two other youth volunteering programmes in Germany. "Weltwärts" ("Towards the World"), run by the Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development, allowed young people to work in development projects overseas. "Kulturweit" ("Across Cultures") assisted young people in working in projects which promoted German culture overseas, in connection with the Goethe Institut (the equivalent of the British Council). These programmes had not proved as popular as expected: the target for Weltwärts had been 10-15,000 young people, but this had not been met; and only 800 young people were involved with the Kulturweit.

It would be hard for institutions to compensate for the loss of up to 90,000 volunteers through abolition of the alternative civilian service. A new programme was under consideration in parliament as a replacement to the alternative civilian service: a new

federal social service for volunteers. It was hoped that around 35,000 young men and women would join the new service, each volunteering for at least 20 hours a week.

Volunteering was not as common as it had been in the 1960s to 1980s. Studies had shown that people were willing to volunteer but that there were insufficient opportunities to do so. Some institutions had become closed to new ways of working, viewing full-time paid employees as the only people capable of carrying out tasks. The Government was working with schools, local authorities and other organisations to see whether certain duties could be taken on by volunteers. It was also considering how better to engage the unemployed in volunteering.

Question and answer:

- The Voluntary Social Year (FSJ) and Voluntary Ecological Year had a joint budget of €48.6m in 2011. The new federal social voluntary year would have a budget of €220m per year, and a new volunteering programme for all ages a budget of €7m per year. This only represented federal spending; in addition the Länder spent larger amounts on youth services.
- The two programmes were run by Länder-level government, whereas the new federal social year would be run at the federal level by those who currently administered the alternative civilian service.
- Young volunteers could continue to receive Child Allowance, a significant benefit which cost the state €68m per year.
- Young people with good educational backgrounds tended to be more engaged. The voluntary years offered the opportunity to gain a qualification, which could be an important bridge into work or apprenticeships.
- The voluntary years targeted migrants and could be carried out in migrant centres, for instance in the Turkish community.
- Of a total of 750,000 young people across Germany in a given age group each year, around 35,000 young people were involved in one of the two voluntary years, and a further 10,000 were involved in the other volunteering programmes. Taken together with a number of smaller voluntary programmes, around 10% of all young people were engaged in volunteering projects.
- Government responsibility for volunteering sat within the Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth because almost all the volunteering programmes had begun as 'youth policies', aimed specifically at young people.
- There was a broad political consensus about youth policy and the funding of youth services.

VISIT TO MEETING CENTRE OF THE VOLUNTARY SOCIAL YEAR PROGRAMME, KREUTZBERG

The Meeting Centre was a community centre, founded in 1919 as a social charity. The area where the Centre was based—Kreutzberg, in East Berlin—was one of the poorer districts, with a high proportion of migrants. Many of its projects aimed at assisting the integration of migrants into society, and at the social mixing of young people with different backgrounds and political views. The Centre offered counselling services, early childhood education, and ran projects with senior citizens. It took on a number of young participants on the Voluntary Social Year.

The Arbeiterwohlfahrt (AWO), was the largest umbrella organisation across the Berlin and Brandenburg Länder to run Voluntary Social Year programmes. The Meeting Centre was one of AWO's placement institutions. AWO had 500 young people on its programme in the current year placed in a range of organisations including childcare institutions, kindergarten, hospitals and senior care homes. The programme generally began on 1 September each year, although young people could be placed throughout the year. It received around 1,200 applications a year. On application, young people had an introductory interview: if successful, appropriate institutions for placement were identified depending on their interests. Participants then applied directly to the institution and underwent a one day trial, before a contract was drawn up.

Young people received a stipend of €240 per month. The institution paid AWO €500 per month, out of which was taken the €240 stipend and some €100 for administrative costs including funding for the 25 days' training each year which was offered to participants. This training was arranged into five blocks of five days, and content was tailored to individual need: for instance, wheelchair training might be provided to young people working with the disabled, or counselling on dealing with death to those working in care homes. Some young people did drop out, but most stayed the course and reported that the year had been valuable.

Question and answer:

- Exploitation of participants was guarded against by assigning each young person a contact in the AWO team who kept in close contact with them throughout the placement. If exploitation should occur, this individual would intervene and mediate with the institution.
- In terms of why they chose to do the programme, all three young people said that, on finishing their Abitur (GCSE equivalent qualification), they had needed to bridge some time before gaining a university place.
- Around half of the young people on the programme lived at home; others came to Berlin from across Germany and had to find accommodation.
- One young person, working in a care home, said that she had picked up a lot of technical and medical knowledge; another, working in a school, said that she had learnt professional teaching methods. Careers advice and guidance was provided in the form of the 25 days' training and, two months before the end of the year, there was a "futures workshop" at which participants' future plans were discussed.

- In answer to whether they would have joined the programme if they could have secured a paid job instead, one participant said that he would have done because he wanted to offer something to society—indeed, he had been offered a paid job but turned it down. Another said that her only paid alternative would have been at the level of the supermarket checkout, and so the skills developed through the FSJ were more valuable and interesting.
- The programme was seen as excellent work experience, developing skills like getting up on time and employability. Young people gained a certificate on completing the year.
- The programme could cut young people's waiting time before getting into university.
- The Meeting Centre was concerned about the abolition of compulsory military and alternative civilian service, as it was heavily reliant on volunteers. Staff were concerned that the new volunteering structures might just create parallel structures and red tape. The new federal social volunteering programme would not have an upper age limit like the Voluntary Social Year.
- The Voluntary Social Year was signposted on the internet, and many young people were referred by family and friends. One young participant said that she had heard about the programme from a friend who had undertaken it in France; for another, his mother had worked in the social department in another German city and had known about the programme. The parents of the three young participants were respectively an accountant, driving instructor, lawyer, social department worker, a retiree and a museum restorer.
- The programme seemed to attract more young people from the middle classes, but it did attempt to target the more disadvantaged, especially migrant families and communities. Around 20% of participants were from migrant families.

Conclusions and recommendations

The purpose and reach of services

1. Various government initiatives from 1939 onwards have aspired to create a universal offer of youth services to all young people, principally delivered through local authorities. Yet, although the number of young people accessing services has risen over the past decade or so, in reality youth services have never reached anything like 100% of young people. Services often referred to as ‘universal’ tend to be open to all young people but located in particular areas, often of disadvantage, and are arguably targeted in a geographical sense. We do not believe that there are any truly universal youth services and consequently propose to use the term ‘open-access’ rather than ‘universal’ in drawing a distinction with targeted services. We recommend that the Government do the same. (Paragraph 19)
2. Services for young people have myriad aims and we do not intend to comment on their individual merits. However, we do underline an important point of principle about provision: namely that the purposes of youth services should primarily be to offer positive activities and enriching personal and social experiences and not solely to be seen as a mechanism to divert young people from misbehaviour. This is especially important given that 85% of young people’s time is spent outside formal education. We urge the Government to announce publicly its intention to retain the statutory duty on local authorities to secure young people’s access to sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities, which requires them to take account of young people’s views and publicise up-to-date information about the activities and facilities available; and we remind local authorities that they must have regard to this duty. (Paragraph 27)
3. We understand that when public funding is limited priority may be given to services which support the most disadvantaged. However, our evidence showed that open-access services can sometimes be as effective as targeted ones in reaching those young people, that both can perform similarly life-changing roles in young people’s lives, and that young people often move between them. Consequently, in determining which services to commission, local authorities must recognise that an open-access service could be more appropriate than a targeted one for improving certain outcomes for young people, or that both types may be needed. (Paragraph 28)

Identifying successful services: measuring value and impact

4. In light of the limited and somewhat outdated research evidence base about youth services, we believe there to be a strong case for relevant university research institutions and other academics in the field, perhaps in partnership with sector research journals, to conduct a meta-analysis of studies relating to the impact and effectiveness of youth services. The Government should commission such an analysis from an appropriate consortium as part of its forthcoming youth strategy, and should publish the results, to contribute to the public debate. (Paragraph 36)

5. There is little doubt that good youth services can have a transformational effect on young people's lives and can play a vital role both in supporting vulnerable young people and in enriching the lives of others without particular disadvantage. However, we were frustrated in our efforts to uncover a robust outcome measurement framework, in particular those that would allow services to be compared in order to assess their relative impact. We were alarmed that the Department for Education is expecting local authorities to make spending decisions on the basis of such poor data about what services are being provided, let alone which are effective. (Paragraph 39)
6. We accept that the outcomes of individual youth work relationships can be hard to quantify and the impact of encounters with young people may take time to become clear and be complex. In that context, it is hard to reject the basic tenet expounded by a range of youth service representatives and young people themselves, that 'you know good youth work when you see it'. However, with a tight spending settlement and an increase in commissioning of youth services at a local level, we also believe it is essential that publicly funded services are able to demonstrate what difference they make to young people. (Paragraph 40)
7. Whilst wanting to guard against inappropriate or distorting measures like simple head counting, there is no good reason why robust but sophisticated outcome measures should not be developed to allow services to demonstrate the impact they have on young people's personal and social development. We accept the evidence we heard from the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) that such tools already exist and that what is needed is agreement on a common set of standards which will allow services to be evaluated and compared. Consequently, we welcome the Government's decision to commission NCVYS to deliver an outcomes framework for application across the sector. This framework should take account of personal and social wellbeing measures, young people should be closely involved in its design and application and it should be simple and inexpensive to administer. New Philanthropy Capital's wellbeing index presents a good template for initial consideration. (Paragraph 51)

Service provision: funding, commissioning and payment by results

8. We disagree with the Minister that spending of £350 million per year—equating to around £77 per young person aged 13 to 19—on youth services in England equates to “large slugs of public money”. On the contrary, we congratulate the sector for its long-standing dexterity in making limited resources go a long way and for continuing to support young people despite reliance on a patchwork of different funds. However, in the tight financial settlement, services will need to redouble their efforts to leverage in other sources of funding, including making better use of philanthropic and charitable funds and private sector investment. Our evidence suggested that many smaller services found it hard to access such sources: we recommend that the Government and local authorities take positive action to support them by brokering partnerships with alternative funders. (Paragraph 61)
9. It appears that provision of youth services is currently “patchwork”, as the Minister suggested to us, with a degree of duplication and overlap between activities and providers in some areas. We did not, however, hear evidence that decisions about

current cuts to services were being made on the basis of assessment of what was needed locally and in order to weed out overlapping provision. On the contrary, the Government's assessment seems to be that cuts are being applied across the board to 'salami slice' youth services, where they are continuing at all. (Paragraph 68)

10. Youth services cannot hope to be immune to necessary public spending cuts. However, there have already been very significant and, in the Minister's own words, "disproportionate" cuts to local authority youth services, ranging from 20% to 100% in some areas, and further cuts are planned over the Spending Review period. For many wholly or partially publicly funded youth services, changes to Government spending and funding structures—including the reduction to the value of previous funds redirected into the Early Intervention Grant and the reduction in overall Revenue Support Grant to local authorities—may be both dramatic and long-lasting. The Government's lack of urgency in articulating a youth policy or strategic vision is regrettable, is compounding an already difficult situation and should not be allowed to continue. In setting out its strategic vision the Government should indicate its expectations of the range and standards of youth services which should be available across the country including, for example, access to information and advice, to varied opportunities for personal and social development and to volunteering. Such opportunities need to reflect the different requirements of those beginning adolescence and those entering adulthood, as well as other socio-economic factors. (Paragraph 69)
11. We welcome the Government's issuing of draft statutory guidance to local authorities not to pass on "disproportionate" cuts to the voluntary sector. We urge it to finalise this guidance and ensure that local authorities are made aware of its application to youth services. However, if local authorities fail to meet their statutory duty to provide sufficient services for young people, the Secretary of State for Education should consider employing his powers to direct them to commission adequate provision. (Paragraph 70)
12. We agree with the Minister's concern about a lack of awareness and information-sharing between services and geographical areas. The Department should take a lead in sharing best practice. We recommend that it establish a dedicated area on the 'Youth' section of its website for youth services and young people to post examples of innovative practice to encourage services to learn from one another. Local authorities should establish similar area-wide repositories. (Paragraph 71)
13. We support the broad principle that local authorities should primarily become strategic commissioners rather than simply the default providers of youth services. However, given that a significant proportion of youth services are already provided by the voluntary sector, to make significant savings local authorities will need to consider radical options—for instance, converting entire youth services departments into social enterprises, as in Kensington and Chelsea, or handing management of youth centres to the voluntary sector, as in Surrey. (Paragraph 83)
14. We believe there are a number of practical recommendations which will make commissioning of youth services more effective. The Government should draw these to the attention of local authorities, either through its forthcoming Public Service

Reform White Paper, or by issuing guidance on commissioning practice. First, rather than simply continuing to commission those services currently being provided, local authorities should undertake a thorough review of what their young people want and need, avoiding duplication and waste and taking into account what is already being provided by other agencies. Second, the outcomes against which services are commissioned must include positive as well as deficit indicators. Third, local authorities should encourage partnerships bids, particularly those which mix large bodies which are well-known and have the capacity to invest in collecting management information, with smaller, community-based providers. Finally, Government should require local authorities to set out how they will involve young people in commissioning decisions, whether in representative roles, such as young mayors, or through processes such as participatory budgeting. The evidence we received suggested that such involvement can not only empower young people, but also enhance the effectiveness of spending decisions. (Paragraph 84)

15. We do not believe that a system whereby local authorities withhold payment until a service demonstrates specific results is suited to the funding of youth services, particularly open-access ones. First, many services simply do not currently collect appropriate data to measure outcomes. Second, the cohort is ill-defined, with many young people dipping in and out of services over a period of time. Third, isolating the impact of a single intervention is hard when a service may be only one of several influences on a young person's life. Fourth, results are likely to be achieved over a long time frame over which services would struggle to operate without any up-front funding. (Paragraph 90)
16. However, we do believe that there is scope for a form of social impact bond to be applied at a local authority level, in addition to core spending on youth services by local authorities. Under such a model, the Government could encourage social investment in a basket of outcomes for young people in a local area. If those outcomes improved, there could be a return to the investor and also to the local authority. We recommend that the Government carry out a feasibility study on such a system, bearing in mind that it should be in addition to current spending on youth services, not an alternative. (Paragraph 91)

The youth services workforce

17. Volunteers are highly valued and already much deployed across youth services and should continue to be encouraged. The experience of The Scout Association, amongst many others, shows the considerable potential for volunteers to be trained effectively and form a core part of the workforce. It is not, however, clear to what degree greater use of volunteers is possible, since they already comprise a sizeable proportion of the workforce—87% according to analysis by the Children's Workforce Development Council—and there are costs to their training and support. However, additional barriers to their participation should not be introduced, and in this context we welcome the Government's pledge to scale back the bureaucratic nature of Criminal Record Bureau checks. (Paragraph 102)
18. We acknowledge that the requirement to have a degree in order to acquire professional youth worker status may have had positive effects in cementing youth

work as a profession. However, we are not aware of any research that shows definitively that higher levels of qualifications in youth work lead to better outcomes for young people, and it was not clear to us why a degree should be the only route into qualified youth work status. We believe that it would be timely to review the knowledge and skills likely to be needed by youth workers over the next decade and the range of initial training and qualifications which would help to secure these. (Paragraph 103)

19. The low priority afforded to continuing professional development of the youth workforce is concerning, in particular the fact that, according to the last audit conducted by the National Youth Agency in 2008, some 33% of local authorities spent nothing at all on it, despite accredited terms and conditions for youth workers recommending that it should account for a minimum of 5% of local authority youth service budgets. Investment in continuing professional development would be particularly worthwhile in enabling practitioners to share good practice and new ways of working between services. The Government must engage with the questions about qualifications, training and continuing professional development which we raise in this Report, and set out how it intends positively to support the sector in its developing its workforce. (Paragraph 105)
20. We did not hear sufficient evidence to convince us of the merits or otherwise of introducing a licence to practise for youth work, although we note that it does seem rather odd that other professionals working with children are subject to protection of title, when similar standards are not applied to the youth workforce. A recent proposal by youth organisations to establish an Institute for Youth Work which could set minimum standards across the sector and promote continuing professional development, is worth further consideration. (Paragraph 110)

Youth volunteering and the National Citizen Service

21. We applaud those talented young people who are engaging in positions of democratic responsibility and leadership, and organisations like the British Youth Council and UK Youth Parliament for enabling them to take up such roles. We welcome the Government's support for democratic participation, and urge it to translate into practice its ambition to have a youth engagement body in every authority in the country which plays an active role in shaping and scrutinising those policies which affect young people. (Paragraph 117)
22. Whilst we acknowledge that a nominal cost may ensure commitment on the part of participants, we believe that the inevitable effect of providers charging up to £100 for participation may well be to deter young people from low income families. (Paragraph 123)
23. Evidence from the Minister for Civil Society and the Government Adviser on National Citizen Service suggested to us that funding for the programme may not continue to be ring-fenced beyond the pilots. Indeed, we found it ominous that both spoke in terms of generating funds from elsewhere, despite having emphasised that additional money was being made available through the Cabinet Office. We are concerned that this may mean, contrary to the Government's assurances, that

National Citizen Service might end up in direct competition with other youth services for funds at local authority level. (Paragraph 125)

24. The cost of National Citizen Service in 2011 is around £1,182 per young person. By contrast, the German federal Government spends £1,228 per young person for a whole year's work-based volunteering programme, which we heard enhanced young people's skills and future careers. We do not see how the Government can justify spending the same amount for only six weeks of National Citizen Service. (Paragraph 128)
25. Although the Government has made clear that, subject to the success of the pilots, it wishes to make National Citizen Service a universal offer to all 600,000 16-year olds, it has given no indication of what percentage it calculates would actually participate. Based on the cost per head of the 2011 pilots, it would cost a total of £355 million each year to provide a universal offer of National Citizen Service assuming, for example, a 50% take up. Even allowing for economies of scale, the costs may well outstrip entire annual spending by local authorities on youth services, which totalled £350 million in 2009-10. (Paragraph 129)
26. Overall, we applaud the Government's aspiration to make a universal offer to all young people, and for the emphasis placed by National Citizen Service on social mixing, skills building, community engagement and young people's positive participation in society. In a world of less scarce resources we agree that introduction of the scheme would be a positive development. However, given the degree to which youth services are being cut, and in light of our concerns about the scheme's cost and practical implementation, we cannot support the continued development of National Citizen Service in its current form. Consequently, we recommend that the core idea of National Citizen Service be retained, but that it be significantly amended to become a form of accreditation for existing programmes which can prove that they meet the Government's aims of social mixing, personal and social development, and the component parts of National Citizen Service, such as a residential experience and a social action task. We acknowledge that this may further reduce the overall resources available to the youth sector, and thus recommend that Government protects those additional funds currently earmarked for National Citizen Service and divert them into year-round youth services. (Paragraph 131)

Formal Minutes

Wednesday 15 June 2011

Members present:

Mr Graham Stuart, in the Chair

Neil Carmichael
Nic Dakin
Bill Esterson
Pat Glass
Charlotte Leslie

Ian Mearns
Tessa Munt
Lisa Nandy
Craig Whittaker

Draft Report (*Services for young people*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 131 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Third Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for publication on the Internet.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 21 June at 9.45 am

Witnesses

Wednesday 26 January 2011

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Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive, National Youth Agency; **Charlotte Hill**, Chief Executive, UK Youth; **Liam Preston**, Young Chair, British Youth Council, and **Susanne Rauprich**, Chief Executive, National Council for Voluntary Youth Services

Ev 1

Wednesday 9 February 2011

Mark Blundell OBE, Executive Director, Salmon Youth Centre (Bermondsey); **Meg Hudson**, Beaver Scout Leader; **Rebecca Salawu**, Salmon Centre User; **Jason Stacey**, Head of Policy, Media and Research, YMCA England, and **Derek Twine CBE**, Chief Executive, The Scout Association

Ev 18

Jas Hothi, Sports Development Officer, East London; **Amy Kirkman**, Prince's Trust Young Ambassador; **John Loughton**, Parliamentary Manager, Fairbridge; **Ginny Lunn**, Director of Policy and Development, Prince's Trust, and **Nick Wilkie**, Chief Executive, London Youth

Ev 28

Wednesday 9 March 2011

Janet Batsleer, Head of Youth and Community Work Studies, Manchester Metropolitan University; **Tony Gallagher**, HMI National Advisor (Youth Support), Ofsted; **Dr Howard Williamson CBE**, Professor of European Youth Policy, University of Glamorgan, and **Dr Jason Wood**, Head of Research, Youth and Community Division, De Montfort University

Ev 38

Harry Fowler, Head of Youth Services, Birmingham City Council; **Brendan O'Keefe**, Head of Youth Services, Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council; **Garath Symonds**, Head of Youth Services, Surrey County Council, and **David Wright**, Chief Executive, Confederation of Heads of Young People's Services

Ev 48

Wednesday 30 March 2011

Jane Haywood MBE, Chief Executive, Children's Workforce Development Council; **Gill Millar**, Regional Youth Work Advisor, Learning South West; **Doug Nicholls**, National Secretary, Community and Youth Workers Union in Unite, and **Adam Nichols**, Chief Executive, Changemakers

Ev 59

Rob Bell, Head of Social Justice Programme, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, **Martin Brookes**, Chief Executive, New Philanthropy Capital; **Bill Eyres**, Head of Sustainability, Think Big, O2 UK, and **Louise Savell**, Associate Director, Social Finance

Ev 66

Paul Oginsky, Government Adviser on the National Citizen Service

Ev 73

Wednesday 4 May 2011

Mohammed Ahmed, involved volunteer, and **Terry Ryall**, Chief Executive, V (the National Young Volunteers' Service)

Ev 79

Tim Loughton MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, and **Nick Hurd MP**, Minister for Civil Society, Cabinet Office

Ev 83

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List of unprinted written evidence

The following memoranda have been reported to the House, but have not been printed, and copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library, where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Parliamentary Archives, and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to The Parliamentary Archives, Houses of Parliament, London SW1A 0PW (tel. 020 7219 3074). Opening hours are from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays.

An expanded version of Ev w136 (Federation for Detached Youth Work)

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

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ISBN 978-0-215-56017-9



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