



# Worcestershire Council for Voluntary Youth Services

May 2010

Dear Colleagues,

## **Impact of voluntary and community organisations working with children and young people**

Organisations in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) work with many thousands of children and young people and their families across Worcestershire. Most groups and organisations started up to meet the needs of their communities - whether locally or nationally.

Over time the need for all those working with children and young people and their families to work together has been recognised. Partnership working includes not just the statutory agencies but also voluntary and community sector organisations and groups.

The sector plays a part in improving outcomes for children and young people and makes a significant contribution to the priorities in Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

The work that the sector does is widely recognised and valued in communities and also by leaders in the County and Districts. A tangible aspect of that recognition is the £3,500 which each County Councillor distributes in small grants to voluntary groups to support positive activities for young people. Many groups, including smaller clubs, have made use of these grants to improve their programmes.

Back in February there was a survey of the provision of 'positive activity' sessions across statutory and voluntary organisations in Worcestershire (and the rest of England). This exercise is being repeated in July to give a snapshot of activities in the summer months and I would ask you to provide the necessary information so that the contribution of the sector can be measured.

The sector has places on both the new Children's Trust Board and also the Safeguarding Children Board and representatives play an active role across many partnership groups. There are plans to further develop local 'children's trusts' and we need to be ready to join those partnerships too.

All plans, including the CYPP, should be evaluated and from time we are asked to contribute data to give a clear picture of the effectiveness of the Children's Trust overall. We work to make the data collection as easy to complete as possible while providing high quality data to ensure effective evaluation and we hope that all organisations/groups will participate appropriately in the evaluation process. In a time of financial challenge for statutory bodies there will be opportunities for the 'third sector' (another name for the voluntary and community sector) to fill gaps by providing support more cost effectively. We need to ensure that the decision makers have sound data inform their decisions.

Best wishes

Michael Hunter  
Chairman, WCVYS  
Voluntary Sector Representative on the Children's Trust for Worcestershire