

# **Warwickshire County Council Youth Service**

## **“Recognising Young People’s Involvement.”**

### *DRAFT POLICY*

#### **Background**

Warwickshire County Council Youth Service actively encourages the involvement of young people in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of its service. It also has a lead responsibility for ensuring Young People are also consulted and involved in the decision making process around services that relate directly to them either as individuals or as young people within the communities where they live. This is a requirement set out in “Transforming Youth Work, Resourcing Excellent Youth Services” - Objective 5, published by the DfES.

The Youth service should ensure that all activities young people are engaged in are high quality, enjoyable and positive experiences. This will act as an incentive for young people to become involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of the service in the future. Recognition of this involvement should always be considered to ensure young people feel valued, their contribution is appreciated and that they are not being exploited. However, consideration should also be given to the negative impact that over use of rewards will have on the willingness of individuals to participate in Voluntary activity.

#### **Mission**

To show that we value participation by ensuring that young people receive appropriate recognition and are re-imbursed for their participation in shaping and influencing decision making within the Youth Service and the wider County Council.

#### **Age Range**

This policy refers to all young people aged 11-25 years.

#### **Principles.**

##### **Expenses**

- That no young person should be in financial deficit for carrying out work on behalf of the County Council.
- That young people should always be re-imbursed for out of pocket expenses.
- Where ever possible, young people should not have to pay upfront for out of pocket expenses.
- That re-imburement of expenses should be made within 10 working days where they are not paid up front.
- Where a young person takes time from work and incurs a loss of earnings these earnings should be re-imbursed. This does not include where a young person participates in a normal Youth work activity outside of that stated in the Background section above, or is attending a day trip as a reward for previous work

done on behalf of the Youth service or County Council i.e. Alton Towers, etc.

### **Rewards**

- That no Young person should receive payment in cash as a reward.
- That rewards should not be offered up front as a means of encouraging young people to participate in any activity co-ordinated by the Youth Service.
- Financial recognition for work carried out by young people, should be seen as a one off payment only and should always be in the form of a gift or voucher, up to the maximum of £20.
- Regular payments/gifts to the same young person are not permitted other than for out of pocket expenses as listed in appendix 1. Regular payments, even in Gift Vouchers, begins to raise questions over employment issues.
- That at a minimum young people should receive a certificate of attendance recognising their contribution to the work stated in section one.

### **Childcare**

- A contribution to childcare cost should be made. This should only be made, when appropriately approved/qualified childcare provision is being used, and payment should be made direct to the Carer. No payment should be made where a parent, guardian, relative or friend is acting as the Child carer.
- Where ever possible the County Council's financial systems should be used. (Purchase orders and invoices).

### **Accreditation**

- Young people should be made aware of the opportunity to use their work as a part of gaining a recognised award such as Youth Achievement, Millennium Volunteers and the Challenge Award.

### **Social Security/Benefits**

Complex regulations govern the receipt of earnings and other income for people receiving social security benefits. Therefore it is advisable for service staff to ensure that any "reward" does not impact on the young persons benefits. However the impact on young people's benefits needs to be assessed on an individual basis therefore the young person must inform Jobcentre plus of all: earnings, expenses, payments in kind, events attended and other income.

### **Management of Policy**

The delivery of this policy and any arbitration issue's will be overseen by a County officer, who has responsibility for the Lead Participation workers group, and will ensure that it falls within the quality assurance framework.

### **Budget**

Areas will need to ensure that they have an appropriate budget in place to meet those cost occurred at a local level.

County events and the cost of MYPS, will be met by the County office, in line with available budget.

### **Equal opportunities.**

All staff should ensure that operational practice of this policy should not exclude any young people from becoming involved in the work of the service, and is covered by the County Councils equality Policy.

**Peter Hatcher  
Youth Service  
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