YOUTH SERVICE

REGIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2017 - 2020

Introduction

The Department of Education's policy for youth work is set out in detail in *Priorities for Youth – "Improving young people's lives through Youth Work",* published in October 2013. The policy document (*PfY*) provides the strategic direction and overall framework for the future delivery of DE funded youth services.

One of the key actions required within *PfY* is the development of a **Regional Youth Development Plan (RYDP)**. This has been developed following publication of the **Regional Assessment of Need 2017 - 2020**, and consultation with the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) and with representatives of Local Advisory Groups (LAG) including a significant number of young people at a RAG/LAG conference held on 11th March 2017. Further consultation took place with Regional Voluntary Youth Organisations and their constituent groups providing additional information at a RAG meeting on 23rd March 2017.

The RYDP is a 3 year, strategic Regional Plan, responding to assessed need and focused on outcomes to address the priorities and actions identified in *PfY*.
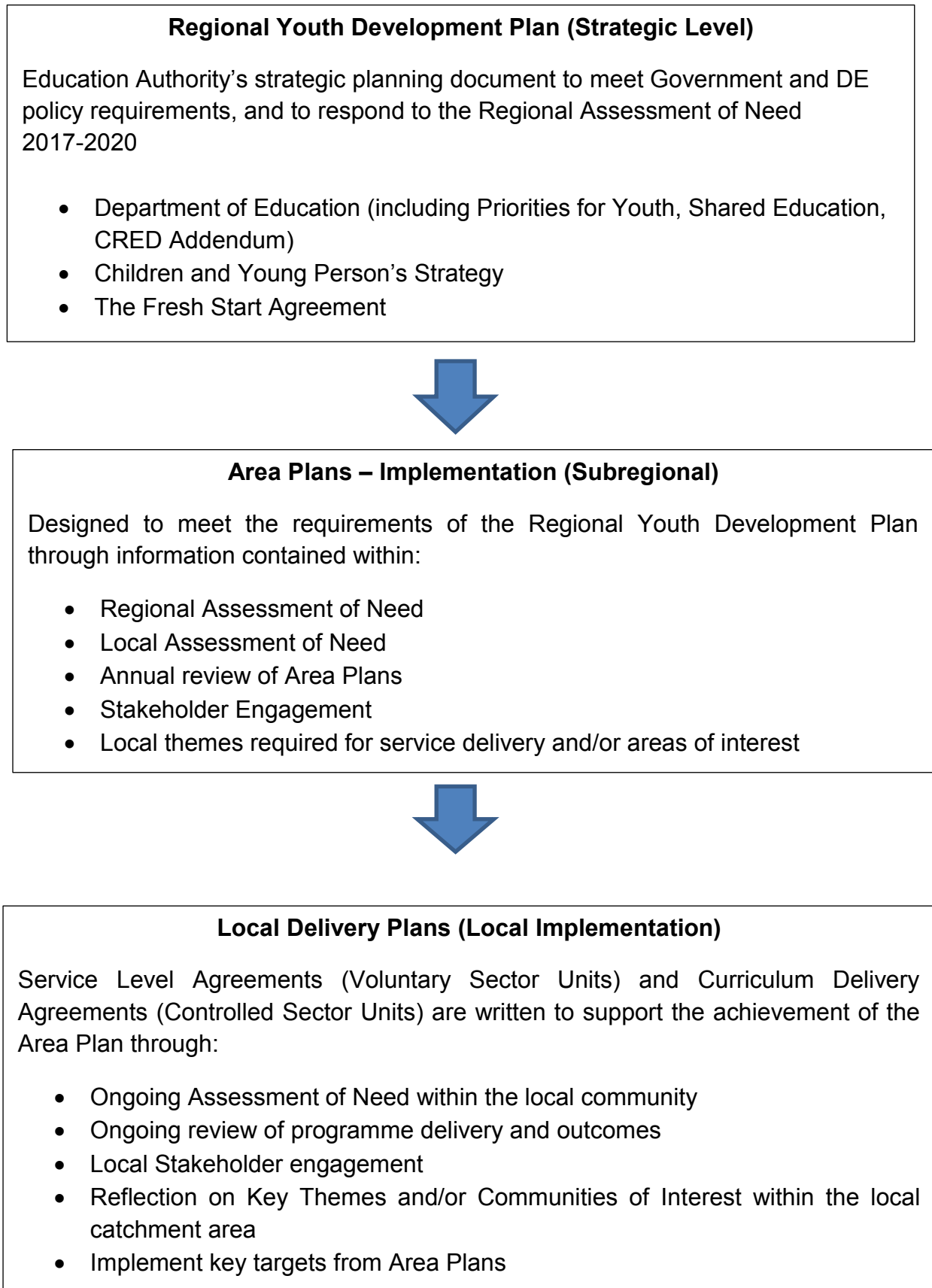
Area plans are designed to reflect the priorities established in the RYDP and are the key drivers in meeting need particular to local areas. Area Plans are informed by a local assessment of need, including local consultation, and will deliver on both strategic and local outcomes.

The Area Plan will outline the specific policies that impact on the service and the current model of service delivery in the Division. The Area Plan also details a summary of the key points arising from an extensive assessment of the needs of young people in the area, which incorporates a review of relevant government statistics and the views of a range of stakeholders; including parents, young people, youth workers and delivery partners on the priorities for the service.

Local Delivery Plans are agreed and expressed in either local Curriculum Development Agreements (Controlled Sector) or Service Level Agreements (Voluntary Sector). These plans are produced to meet the requirements of the Area Plan in agreement with the Area Youth Officer, as well as incorporating specific

actions in response to unique need in the Unit's catchment area, identified by stakeholders in the community.

The diagram below summarises the planning process:

Regional Youth Development Plan (Strategic Level)

Education Authority's strategic planning document to meet Government and DE policy requirements, and to respond to the Regional Assessment of Need 2017-2020

- Department of Education (including Priorities for Youth, Shared Education, CRED Addendum)
- Children and Young Person's Strategy
- The Fresh Start Agreement

Area Plans – Implementation (Subregional)

Designed to meet the requirements of the Regional Youth Development Plan through information contained within:

- Regional Assessment of Need
- Local Assessment of Need
- Annual review of Area Plans
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Local themes required for service delivery and/or areas of interest

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Local Delivery Plans (Local Implementation)

Service Level Agreements (Voluntary Sector Units) and Curriculum Delivery Agreements (Controlled Sector Units) are written to support the achievement of the Area Plan through:

- Ongoing Assessment of Need within the local community
- Ongoing review of programme delivery and outcomes
- Local Stakeholder engagement
- Reflection on Key Themes and/or Communities of Interest within the local catchment area
- Implement key targets from Area Plans

Policy Context

In accordance with the Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) (2015) there is now a statutory basis for the development of a new **Children and Young Person's Strategy** from 2017. This will provide the overall strategic direction for the work of the Northern Ireland Executive to improve the lives of children and young people.

The Children and Young Person's Strategy will consider the key issues facing children and young people and will outline how government will work collaboratively to improve their well-being. The Children's Services Co-operation Act sets the framework for the development of the strategy and defines well-being in terms of the following 8 general parameters:

- Physical and mental health
- The enjoyment of play and leisure
- Learning and achievement
- Living in safety and with stability
- Economic and environmental well-being
- Making a positive contribution to society
- Living in a society which respects their rights
- Living in a society in which equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted between persons who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share the characteristic.

Whilst all government departments will be involved in its implementation, the Department of Education will be the lead body and will determine the appropriate roles to be played within education, including Youth Services.

The **Fresh Start Agreement** (November 2015) provides a set of inter-related and high-level proposals which seek to overcome some of the most challenging and intractable issues within Northern Ireland. One of the key issues addressed within The Fresh Start is that of legacy and the impact of paramilitary activity. Among the strategic actions to end paramilitarism is a commitment to a cross-departmental programme to prevent vulnerable young people becoming involved in paramilitary activity.

The expertise within the Youth Service, particularly its strong track record in transformative and developmental work with young people who have been exposed to paramilitary threat, interface violence and sectarianism, ensures that the Youth Service can make a positive contribution in supporting initiatives relating to the Fresh Start Agreement.

The DE **Priorities for Youth** policy, published in October 2013, clearly sets out the positive contribution that Youth Services can play in achieving the Department of Education's vision that every young person can achieve to his or her full potential at each stage of his and her development.

The policy affirms that Youth Work can, through various methodologies and in various settings, provide additional opportunities to support young people's learning and development and improve employability by re-engaging disadvantaged young people with education.

The policy also recognises that Youth Work has a significant contribution to dealing with the legacy of conflict, moving towards a shared and inclusive society; by equipping young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours to recognise, understand and respect difference.

Priorities for Youth revised the overarching aims of Youth Work to reflect a closer alignment between Youth Work and education priorities and presented the strategic aims of Youth Work as:

- To contribute to raising standards for all and closing the performance gap between the highest and lowest achieving young people by providing access to enjoyable, non-formal learning opportunities that help them to develop enhanced social and cognitive skills and overcome barriers to learning; and
- To continue to improve the non-formal learning environment by creating inclusive, participative settings in which the voice and influence of young people are championed, supported and evident in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes.

The policy identified the following principles underpinning all aspects of Youth Work supported by DE:

- Participation in Youth Services is voluntary and should enable young people to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to tackle the issues that are important to them
- The active participation of young people should be fostered, supported and evident across all youth settings
- Equality and inclusion should be fundamental to planning and implementation and the values of equality, diversity and interdependence should be at the heart of Youth Work
- Young people, their families and the wider community should be involved in Youth Work in a meaningful way, with expectations managed within the resources available
- Young people should expect high quality services, which follow best practice including the highest standards of child protection
- Collaborative working between the voluntary, uniformed, faith-based and statutory sectors should play an important part in securing improved outcomes for young people and the continued commitment from the youth workforce, including volunteers
- The contribution of the volunteer workforce within the youth sector is invaluable and should be acknowledged, supported and celebrated
- Resources should be used to achieve priority outcomes for young people in the most cost effective way, according to best practice principles (public value)
- The needs of the young person should be the key focus at each stage of development
- Activities should be engaging, enjoyable and planned to deliver improved outcomes

Priorities for Youth directs that Youth Work must be planned in response to the assessed need, prioritised age ranges and other identified groups. It emphasises that strategic planning within Youth Services must reflect wider DE policy and that future Youth Provision will be consistent, transparent and allocated proportionate to the level of disadvantage experienced by young people.

In 2014/2015 the DE undertook a formal review of the **Community Relations, Equality and Diversity** Policy for Youth Services and schools to ensure that the policy was meeting its aims and objectives and to inform further development of the policy. The review findings confirmed that the policy was fit for purpose and largely effective in improving attitudes of children and young people towards those they perceived to be different, helping prepare them to take their place in an increasingly diverse society.

In September 2016 the DE published the **CRED Addendum**. While the core CRED policy remains unchanged, the Addendum provides an updated set of commitments to be read in conjunction with the policy. The Addendum recognises the close relationship between the CRED, Shared Education, and Priorities for Youth Policies. DE states that its arms-length bodies will assist educational partners in reflecting the aims, objectives and core values of the CRED Policy within plans to progress Shared Education and Priorities for Youth in a holistic way.

The Addendum identifies a range of key issues and actions for DE and education partners. In terms of resourcing CRED work in the youth sector, it notes that the Regional Youth Development Plan will articulate how CRED related issues will be addressed. It also highlights that the Education Authority and other delivery organisations will take account of the particular needs of those of differing sexual orientation, racial groups and disability.

The **Shared Education** Act (NI) 2016 defines Shared Education as the education together of those of different religious belief, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons and those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not. This form of education is secured by the working together and co-operation of two or more relevant providers. A 'relevant provider' means a person providing education at a

grant-aided school or services of any kind, including youth services, which provide educational benefit to children or young persons.

Shared Education means that the provider and delivery of education must align to the following three principles:

- Meets the needs of and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status
- Involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements
- Delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

The vision for Shared Education articulated in the DE policy 'Sharing Works' (September 2015) is for: *Vibrant, self-improving Shared Education partnerships delivering educational benefits to learners, encouraging the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.*

Priorities for Youth makes specific reference to recommendation 18 of the Review of **Irish Medium Education** which states that *The Department of Education should encourage and support informal opportunities for learning through the medium of Irish in the youth sector*.

DE Action Plan against Child Sexual Exploitation

The findings of a report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland, the Marshall report, were presented to Ministers of the NI Executive in 2014. In 2015 the DE published an Education Action Plan in response to the Marshall Report which comprised 40 recommendations and associated actions, including eSafety advice and guidance to teachers and an eSafety zone within the C2k Exchange.

Among the recommendations which may directly relate to the Youth Service are:

- DE should conduct a review of Youth Services that take account of the views of young people and aim to ensure that such provision is attractive and appropriate

- DE should explore the possibilities for peer education and mentoring as a way of informing and supporting young people about CSE

- DE should ensure that Youth Workers, whether paid or voluntary, should receive training to help them to inform and support young people who may be at risk of CSE and to identify and report safeguarding issues appropriately.

Youth Service

REGIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

ACTION PLAN

2017 - 2020

DE Priority: Raising Standards for All				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
Assessment of Need	Regional assessment of need Local assessment of need, drawing on findings of Regional Assessment of Need, local consultation and engagement with LAG	• Composite assessment of need • Local priorities, assessed as needed, identified	• Annual review of Regional Assessment of Need to capture emerging need • Local assessment of need to inform Area Plan 2017 – 2020, developed in each EA Division by end January 2017	4.2 4.3
Planning	Regional Youth Development Plan Area Plans Youth Development Plans	• An effective and coordinated regional youth service • Effective allocation of resources in response to local assessment of need • Targeted provision • Generic Provision • Local delivery reflecting assessment of need and Area Plan priorities	• 3-year RYDP implemented 1st April 2017 • Local Area Plans devised and LAG consulted by end February 2017, for implementation on 1st April 2017 • Local Area Plans to include support for generic and targeted provision • Annual Youth Development Plans developed and approved for implementation on 1st April 2017	4.2 4.6.2

DE Priority: Raising Standards for All				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
Planning	Specifications for regional support services and local service delivery for EA-registered youth groups	• Regional priorities planned to complement and support local and tailored provision • Voluntary sector supported to provide local services assessed as needed	• Voluntary sector supported to tailor regional delivery to required standards in transition year (2017-18) • Specifications drawn up for services to be procured regionally and locally (2018-2020) • Statutory youth service to be provided where there is no viable alternative	2.20
Local Engagement	Local Advisory Group meetings	• Effective local engagement	• Number of consultation events on local plans	4.6.2
Framework of Outcomes	Training on Outcomes Based Reporting to all youth units in receipt of significant funding from EA Proportionate implementation of OBR	• Youth units and youth workers are trained to implement proportionate OBR • Young people's progress and achievements through participation in youth service are measured	• All regional and local youth organisations and EA youth workers trained in OBR and use of measurement tools by March 2018 • Data collection and measurement tools published for implementation of OBR from 1st April 2018	4.6.4

DE Priority: Raising Standards for All				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
Voluntary Sector Delivery	Baseline audit of current voluntary sector delivery	• Gaps in provision and potential for over-provision identified	• Baseline audit completed by March 2018	4.20.1
	Annual review of Controlled Delivery	• Opportunities to devolve controlled provision identified	• Increase in local delivery by voluntary sector	4.3
	Regional support to build voluntary sector capacity	• Voluntary sector has capacity to deliver	• Regional Voluntary Youth Organisations resourced to build local capacity	4.3
Management Information System	Integration of MIS into EA system	• Youth Service MIS functionality agreed with EA ICT Managers	• Action plan for development devised based on outcome of ICT Managers advice by December 2017	4.6.5
			• Implementation of M.I.S. by April 2020	
Annual Report	Annual report	• Outcomes of Youth Service provision published	• Report on youth service outcomes published in June 2018 and annually thereafter	4.6.6
Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) or agreed bespoke quality assurance system	• Continuous improvement • High quality services	• Each RVYO and youth group in receipt of major funding to implement agreed quality assurance system by April 1st 2017	4.6.10

DE Priority: Raising Standards for All				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
Research	Research on the needs of rural young people	• Greater understanding of the needs of rural young people	• Research commissioned by October 2017	4.8.4

DE Priority: *Closing the gap between the highest and lowest performers, improving access and equality*				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/ Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
Non Targeted / Generic Youth Provision	Funding for registered youth groups	• Non targeted/generic youth provision supported	• Funding for registered youth groups issued for 2017/18 financial year	4.8.3
Thematic / Communities of Interest/Section 75	Programme funding at local level for themes of work and work with communities of interest and S75 groups assessed as needed	• Local youth groups delivering priority areas of work	• Local programme funding implemented 2018-2020	4.8.4
	Programme funding made available to RVYOs to support key themes of work and work with communities of interest and S75 groups assessed as needed	• Regional support for the delivery of key areas of work	• Regional programme funding implemented 2018-2020	
Irish Medium	Irish Medium Youth Work Funding at local level Regional support for IMYW sector	• Irish Medium youth work supported • Needs within IMYW sector ascertained	• Funding Scheme implemented annually • Annual regional seminar conducted • Review of Youth Work though the Medium of Irish Language provision locally and regionally, including a baseline audit conducted by March 2018	4.8.5

DE Priority: *Closing the gap between the highest and lowest performers, improving access and equality*				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/ Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
Youth Service contribution to formal education	Youth work provision in and with schools in areas of high deprivation	• Reduction in underachievement and barriers to learning	• Number & % of pupils achieving accreditation on the Qualifications Framework • Number of pupils at KS3 and above achieving positive outcomes • Number of Transition Programmes conducted in Primary Schools (KS2) • Number of pupils involved in Transition Programmes • Number of Peer Mentors supported in Post-Primary Schools	4.8.4
CRED Addendum	CRED Programmes for young people	• More inclusive youth service	• Key actions within CRED Addendum reflected in regional & local plans	4.8.5

DE Priority: *Closing the gap between the highest and lowest performers, improving access and equality*				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/ Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
Promoting Positive Mental Health	Working group to look at how youth service can address challenges	• Improved health and well-being	• Terms of reference drawn up by June 2017 • Report by December 2017	
	Research on mental health needs of newcomer children and young people	• Improved health and well-being	• Specification drawn up by June 2017 • Tender issued by August 2017 • Report received by March '18	
	App promoting positive mental health	• Improved health and well-being	• App developed signposting mental health services and resources by March 2018	
	Mindfulness programmes	• Improved health and well-being	• Mental health programmes referenced in 100% Area Plans	
LGBT&Q	Regional funding to take forward LGBT&Q actions	• Improved relationships with others	• Specification drawn up by December 2017 • Tender issued by April 2018	

DE Priority:	Developing the Education Workforce			
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/ Target**	**PfY Ref.**
Workforce Development	Workforce Development Strategy for volunteers, part time and full time staff	• Workforce Development needs identified and addressed	• Workforce Development Action Plan, to include actions around specific themes (eg Mental health; LGBT&Q), developed and reviewed annually • Strategy evaluated 2019	4.13.1 4.13.2
	CPD Framework	• Raised standards of professionalism	• CPD framework devised and implemented by September 2017 • CPD framework reviewed and revised annually • Minimum 80% participant completion of annual CPD programme	4.13.1 4.13.4
	Part Time Staff Training Volunteering Framework	• Professional training routes for youth workers • Enhanced and increased skills for volunteers • Increased training opportunities and accredited programmes for young people	• Training route, Volunteering Framework and suite of training programmes devised and implemented; September 2017 • Minimum 80% participant completion of training; accredited and non-accredited •	4.13.1 4.13.2 4.13.3 4.13.5 4.13.6

DE Priority:	Developing the Education Workforce			
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/ Target**	**PfY Ref.**
Workforce Development	Young People's Suite of Training	• Increased employability	• Minimum 80% participant achievement of accreditation and transferable skills	4.13.1 4.13.2 4.13.3 4.13.5 4.13.6
	Practice Development System	• Sectoral needs in relation to Training and Support, Organisational Development and Compliance addressed • Coordinated, resourced and supported youth work curriculum and services	• Practice Development System established for implementation from April 2017 • Equality and Inclusion Strategy, Engagement Framework and Supporting Inspections Framework developed and implemented by June 2017 • Frameworks and Strategies reviewed annually	4.13.1 4.13.3
	Training for Teachers and Youth Workers	• Partnership Approach between teachers and youth workers to promote lawfulness among children and young people involved in risk taking behavior	• 3 year development plan devised by June 2017 • Training programme developed by June 2017 • Training programme delivered by December 2017	

DE Priority: Developing the Education Workforce

Area for Action	Outputs	Outcomes	Measurement/ Target	PfY Ref.
	Training for Teachers and Youth Workers	• Partnership Approach between teachers and youth workers to promote lawfulness among children and young people involved in risk taking behavior	• 3 year development plan devised by June 2017 • Training programme developed by June 2017 • Training programme delivered by December 2017	

DE Priority: Improving the Learning Environment

Area for Action	Outputs	Outcomes	Measurement/ Target	PfY Ref.
Participation – Voice of young people in decision making	Network for Youth established	• Young people able to influence others, advocate on behalf of others or take on representative roles	• Pilot Network for Youth reviewed April 2017 • Revised Terms of Reference for Network for Youth in place by April 2018 • Annual Monitoring of Network for Youth in December 2018 & 2019	4.20.3
	Young people supported to be involved in Regional Advisory Group (RAG)	• Increased participation of young people • Young people contributing to shaping the direction of regional Youth Services.	• Young people aged 17+ involved in setting key priorities each year, based on regional assessment of need • Young people attending or contributing to each RAG meeting	4.6.2
	Young people supported to be involved Local Advisory Groups (LAG) Youth Advisory Training for young people on LAG	• Increased local participation of young people • Young people contributing to shaping the direction of local Youth Services.	• Young people trained and supported to participate in LAG by Senior Youth Worker at minimum monthly meetings • Young people involved in setting key priorities each year, based on local assessment of need • Young people attending and contributing to each meeting of LAG • Young people involved in all local funding assessment panels	4.6.2

DE Priority:	Improving the Learning Environment			
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/ Target**	**PfY Ref.**
Participation – Voice of young people in decision making (continued)	Youth Councils in each EA Area	• Increased participation of young people	• Youth Council operating in each EA area by September 2017, involving young people aged 14+	4.20.4
	Small Grants Scheme	• Increased participation of young people	• Small Grants Scheme launched and administered by young people annually from April 2017	4.20.5
International Work	Common guidelines and procedures for International Work	• Contributing to Individual and Societal outcomes of Youth Services particularly development of work skills and active citizenship.	• Review of the extent of International Work and the outcomes sought commenced by June 2017 • Guidelines and procedures for effective International work across the region developed by December 2017	4.20.3
Outdoor Education	Implementation of agreed recommendations from the Review of Outdoor Education and Residential Centres	• More effective use of Residential and Outdoor Education resources to meet assessed need. • Outdoor Education contributing effectively to Individual and Societal outcomes of Youth Services	• Key actions implemented on a planned and phased basis	4.20.1

DE Priority:	Improving the Learning Environment			
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/ Target**	**PfY Ref.**
Statutory Youth Estate	Review of Statutory Youth Service Estate	• High quality environments for learning for young people • More effective location of Youth Service estate across EA.	• Review all EA Youth Estate in terms of location and maintenance completed by December 2017.	4.20.1
ICT Infrastructure	ICT Strategy for Youth Services	• Improved ICT capacity of Youth Service across the region.	• Action plan devised and implemented by January 2018	4.6.5

DE Priority: Transforming Governance and Management of Non-Formal Education				
Area for Action	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Measurement/Target**	**Priorities for Youth Reference**
New Funding Scheme	New funding scheme developed	• Funding scheme linked to regional and local assessment of need • Historical funding considerations replaced by investment directly linked to assessment of need	• Funding scheme developed and transitional arrangements agreed for implementation in April 2017 • New funding scheme totally operational from April 2018	4.21 4.22 4.23 4.24
	Schemes to enhance collaboration and cost-effectiveness	• Cost-effective regional support structures	• Sectoral partners facilitated to explore areas of collaboration, sharing back office functions, clustering etc during 2017/18	4.24.3
	External funding	• Additional resources for youth work delivery	• Applications to external funders eg Peace 4; Shared Education; other Government Departments	4.24.5
Safeguarding/Child Protection	Organisational Safeguarding/Child Protection policies	• Young people are safe and protected	• 100% organisations funded by EA are compliant with DE regulations	