

Review of Statutory Burdens Team
Department for Communities and Local Government
3/H6 Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU
20 April 2011

Dear Statutory Burdens Team

DCLG: review of statutory duties

The National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) is the independent voice of the voluntary youth sector in England. We are the Department for Education's strategic partner for youth and represent a diverse network of over 280 national voluntary youth organisations and regional and local youth networks. NCVYS has been working since 1936 to raise the profile of youth work, share good practice and influence policy that has an impact on young people and the organisations that support them.

We are writing to formally endorse the consultation response prepared by Children England for this review. In particular, we are keen to express our shared concern at the status of consultation as an 'informal' review and the short time frame for organisations to submit a response.

Due to the very short timeframe for review, we are unable to provide due consideration to the full duties listed. In addition to supporting the response by Children England (appended) we would like to draw the Department's attention to the following priority duties that affect young people. Following the completion of this review, we would be very keen to meet with you to discuss further the views of our membership and the young people they serve in more detail than this review allows.

I would be grateful if you could offer me a time to discuss the review further with you.

Yours sincerely



Faiza Chaudary
Head of Policy and Communications

Additional comment to the review of Department for Education duties

We strongly recommend protecting duty DFE_046 to secure positive activities for young people. We realise that CLG has not had many responses asking for this duty to be protected. We are clear that this is largely due to the short time-frame for response at a time when our members are deeply occupied with delivering much needed services for young people who are being disproportionately affected by the cuts to public services. Our members would fully support the protection of this duty and we urge that it is retained. We know that young people need access to activities available outside of mainstream provision to improve their well-being and personal and social development and that they should be empowered to access these. We also know that placing young people at the heart of decision making regarding positive activity provision is a key way of ensuring services meet their needs and they remain engaged and active citizens in their local communities. Whilst we recognise that local authorities' implementation of this duty has been varied, removing the duty would further weaken the importance of such services for young people. Given the cuts that local providers of voluntary youth services are already facing, removing the duty would further damage the local priority given to such services.

In respect of duties DFE_157 to DFE_162, a strong focus in supporting young people's employability and training must be retained. We recommend protection of these duties to retain local focus on youth unemployment. This is even more important when we consider the changes to Connexions services as referenced by the review of duties DFE_150 to DFE_151 regarding the implementation of an all age careers service by April 2012.

Duty DFE_163 relating to the provision of education for persons subject to youth detentions must be retained. This group already achieves poor educational outcomes when compared with their peers. We need a strengthening of support for them and removing the duty may result even worse outcomes for this group.