

Anyone wanting a glimpse of the future for education under Gordon Brown might cast an eye back to last March when the Chancellor's Youth Opportunity Card was scrapped within months of its launch.

His plan to give a £25 credit for leisure activities to young people who stayed out of trouble, hit the buffers when the technology needed to deliver it was found to be twice as expensive as planned. Ten local authorities, including Sunderland, prepared to implement the scheme but were then told to bin the whole programme, though not until £2 million of taxpayers' money had been wasted on it. A cost to us all and value to no-one.

Councillor Robert Oliver
(Conservative Children's Services Spokesman)