

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

3 March 2015

**REPORT OF THE ACTING STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN
&
YOUNGER ADULTS**

Derbyshire Youth Council Update – (Children and Young People)

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To update Cabinet on the work of Derbyshire Youth Council (DYC).

2. **Information and Analysis**

The notes from the DYC conference on Saturday 17th January are attached in order to update Cabinet on the latest work by DYC.

Key points:

- DYC has made progress against the two national campaigns as chosen by the UK Youth Parliament, looking at both of these campaigns from a Derbyshire perspective in order to make them relevant to local communities.
- Decisions were made on which Derbyshire topics from Make Your Mark should be prioritised. DYC felt that both Euthanasia and Maths & English Resits were less of a priority and to be reviewed at a later date.
- DYC came up with guiding principles to support spending of any additional funding which may become available in the future, which they hoped would also be adopted by any other organisations which might also be able to distribute funding.
- DYC members were pleased to be involved in the b_line work prior to this going to Cabinet so they had the opportunity to input. On the whole, Elected Members supported the proposed consultation but felt it essential that

this was widely promoted to make it accessible to as many young people as possible.

- DYC would like to extend an invitation to any Elected Members who may want to attend future conventions.

3. **Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: -; financial; legal and human rights; equality of opportunity; prevention of crime & disorder; health, environmental, human resources, property and transport considerations.

4. **Key Decision**

No

5. **Acting Strategic Director's Recommendation**

For Cabinet to note the work of Derbyshire Youth Council.

Ian Johnson, Acting Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults

Derbyshire Youth Council Conference 17/01/15

Notes from Derbyshire Youth Council (DYC) Conference on 17th January 2015 at County Hall, Matlock

Present: 27 DYC members, Ruth Pownall, Richard Hale, Neil Onyon, Rachel Sidebottom

Apologies: 6 DYC members, Cllr Greenhalgh, Ian Johnson

Rachel reminded members how important it was to confirm attendance at Conference in order to help with catering purposes as only 10 people had confirmed they were attending today (don't panic ... enough lunch was ordered for everyone).

Rachel opened the meeting with an explanation of the changes involving the DYC work stream moving into the Quality and Performance team and gave an overview of the new overarching management structure. Members are likely to see some new faces in meetings over the next few months as people want to come and meet them and find out more about the work of DYC.

Rachel passed apologies from Cllr Greenhalgh and Ian Johnson (the new Acting DCS replacing Ian Thomas).

All meeting notes will be typed and circulated within 2 weeks of DYC Conferences so Members know what actions they have agreed to and are able to share work with local forums and schools councils.

The whole agenda for this conference was around campaigning and looking at both the National and Local (Derbyshire) campaigns as elected through MYM. Other essential agenda items include

- b_line consultation and supporting shaping this consultation and feeding back to the working group
- Spending funding – guiding principles

Members were free to take pictures and tweet during the conference and all necessary parental consent was in place. During the conference, members would be using laptops for research purposes and reminded that they could not use this equipment for accessing social media accounts or anything unrelated to today's business.

Members were able to use their own devices to access social media through using the DCC public access Wifi.

National Campaigns

Members split in to two groups to consider the following national campaigns and how they can link in to them and what actions can be taken.

- 1. Everyone should be paid at least the living wage. Anyone who works, regardless of age, should have a decent standard of living.**

Decisions / Actions

- Need to link into **#raisethewage** UK Youth Parliament campaign

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- Members drafted a letter to go to all large employers in Derbyshire highlighting the campaign and asking them to
 - Support the campaign
 - Raise the wage to the living wage
 - Write back to DYC indicating their support
- Members did some internet research on who Derbyshire's biggest employers are so we know who to target
- Discussed sending the letter to all District and Borough Council leaders
- MYP's and DMYP's have a meeting booked with Cllr Western on 20th January to find out more about how DCC support the campaign (we know DCC supports paying the Living Wage for its employees).
- It is the National Day of Action on 24th January so need to Tweet pictures and complete Positive Stories for this date

Rachel to type up letter and send in the next 2 weeks

2. Mental health services should be improved with our help. We should learn all about common mental health issues at school and negative stereotypes should be challenged

Decisions / Actions:

- To raise the issue around mental health, members decided to make a series of short Youtube films talking about what mental health is, how it affects young people, it is okay to talk about mental health, and where to go for help and support. These could be stand-alone clips or included as part of a lesson pack for schools to use.
- Members decided to contact Zoella (Youtuber) for support as she is a widely recognised personality by young people and has previously made short films about her own story.
- Working group to be set up to look at how this is moved forwards.
- Members did some research about what resources are already available and agreed this needed looking into further.
- Members felt they needed to understand more about CAMHS and understand there is some sort of review of young people's access to mental health services underway.
- It was felt that mental health was not an issue discussed at school and work needed to be done to remove the stigma which is sometimes still attached to mental health issues.

Rachel to send e-mail to Zoella from DYC mailbox so this is a more formal request from the Council (rather than coming from an individual)

Working group need to meet during February half term to progress this work.

Local (Derbyshire) Campaigns

The Council split into 5 groups to discuss the top 5 Derbyshire issues. Members spent time considering the top 5 issues for Derbyshire elected through the Make

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Your Mark ballot with a view to what and how they would be able to influence the top 5 issues:

- **Everyone should be paid at least the Living Wage**

Decisions / Actions

It was agreed that, by feeding into the National Campaign, and the actions agreed in the earlier workshop, that this was being localised to Derbyshire. Hopefully the letter would start to give a picture of the importance of this issue in Derbyshire to inform members if they needed to do further work.

- **Bring back exam re-sits in Maths and English**

Decisions / Actions

Members felt that there was already opportunity to do re-sits in Maths and English and the real issue was around the old early entry system, which meant that in some instances young people were given a second opportunity to complete their exams.

It was agreed that this was not a priority for DYC as there was little opportunity to do anything to make a difference to the current exam system, which members felt was fair.

- **Work Experience.**

Decisions / Actions

Members agreed that this was an important issue and they needed to work with DCC to look at the current picture of work experience in Derbyshire in terms of which schools were and which were not offering these opportunities.

Members would like to meet with Jerry Sanderson (or one of his team) to look into this further before starting a wider campaign and contacting schools, as they were aware that DCC will currently hold a lot of information.

E-mail written to Jerry asking for support (send from DYC mailbox)

- **Euthanasia.**

Decisions / Actions

Members were aware of the Assisted Dying Bill which is currently progressing through the House of Lords and felt this issue was very emotive and difficult to discuss. Some schools would not allow this to be on the MYM ballot forms for religious reasons. Members felt at this stage this was not an issue they wanted to progress with, but may return to at a later date depending on how things progressed through the House of Lords.

- **A curriculum to prepare us for life.**

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Decisions / Actions

This was considered to be a priority issue for members to follow up as there was strong feeling that several important life skills were missing from the school curriculum, such as skills needed to move into adult hood (i.e. understanding income tax, opening a bank account etc). The Council agreed this needed more time to explore and develop an action plan of how this can move forwards. Need to look at what has already happened through UK Youth Parliament and how we can use some of the work to help us to shape things.

Campaign Groups and Action Plans

It was agreed that more time was needed to develop campaigning ideas both in and outside of DYC meetings.

Members were encouraged to develop ideas and follow through actions outside of DCY meetings, and people were reminded that they were free to contact people in their own time and to get in touch with Rachel if they needed any information or support. Previously members have written to their local papers, been interviewed on radio and met their local Councillor.

Members wrote short term action plans based on the National Campaigns which will be reviewed in the next conference (14th March 2015 @ DCAS). Time needs to be devoted at this meeting to making sure this work moves forwards.

Funding Available and Principles for Spending Money

Elected Members have pledged funding to support the youth council work and campaigning, with additional funding also going to the Local Area Committees (LAC's) as well as localities.

The Youth Councils allocation of the funding is to support their campaigning work. In order to ensure this is spent appropriately the Youth Council has been asked to develop a set of guiding principles which funding will have to adhere to.

Working as a whole group, members agreed on the following points as guiding principles:

- **Ensure that projects / campaigns supported through funding are accessible**

Make sure that work supported through additional finding is accessible to as many young people as possible or that if funding is targeted to a specific group it is very clear who this group is and why

- **Consider how many people it is going to impact**

The money may be working with a small group but the outcome of the project could have a much wider impact (making films to go on Youtube would only involve a small group but could impact thousands)

- **Consider the lifespan of the project – how long will it last?**

Make sure that the funding is not setting up a project that will not be able to continue once the funding ends – don't want to create something that cannot be sustained. A project might be high cost and short term (such as film making to make a resource for schools) but can have a long life span once the resource is made

- **Consider value for money – look at other ways this could be delivered and other people who could deliver it**

Need to get quotes for work to make sure you are getting best value for money and think about who you can work with (if it was a film project you could see if a college / university could help and that way you would be giving others that real experience too)

- **Think about the long term impact of the funding**

Is the funding being used to develop something that will have a long term impact or legacy and make sure the impact of the money can be measured

- **Be clear about what the money is being spent on**

Make sure the money is spent in the best way and not on buying unnecessary 'stuff' that is not really part of the project. People need to be able say how the money is being spent and not just ask for a certain amount

Members understood and were clear that any spending needs to follow any financial regulations already set by Derbyshire County Council.

B line Proposals and Consultation

Rachel outlined the proposed changes to the b_line travel discount scheme and shared the Cabinet report due to be presented to Cabinet on 20th January.

If Cabinet approves the report they will be approving the consultation on the proposals and NOT the actual proposals.

Through the Working group (which Rachel has been asked to sit on) DYC have been asked to look at the current proposed consultation document in order to make sure it was as accessible as possible for young people to understand and take part in, as it was likely that these changes would affect all young people of secondary school age and above in some way.

Feedback on b_line questionnaire

- Title – needs to say what it is!
- Too wordy and felt opening paragraph had an element of political bias. Bad way to open ... starts on a negative.
- Page 2 says return the questionnaire but where to? Need to rearrange the order of things

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- Use either one third or 33% - be consistent
- Like multiple choice questions
- Swap order of question 1 and 2 - more likely that under 16's will be completing the questionnaire to makes sense to put them first (and also means ages run in order
- 'Neither agree or disagree' isn't needed – 'don't know' is sufficient
- Black on white is not accessible for young people with additional needs / dyslexia. If printed needs to be on to coloured paper.
- Put the proposal in the question - that way you can answer the question even if you have not read all of the front page.
- Offer incentives to get it completed
- Is it a consultation or questionnaire ... be consistent in language

Question 1

Need to specifically reference people not in full time education as this is main change

Question 2

Rephrase – few people will agree with this

Question 3

Rephrase - Who will support this reduction?

Question 4

Why are you asking this? Does it make a difference to the consultation?
Make sure it is tick boxes

Question 5

Why the free text box. Most likely people will not answer or put irrelevant stuff.

Question 6

Question 7

Not everybody knows their postcode – could it say what area you live in (locality)

Question 8

If you're 16 you could be either bullet point – not clear enough – change to 14 to 15 and 16 to 18

Question 9

Language used is FAR too complicated

Rachel will feed back to the b_line consultation working group on Monday 19th January in order that these points can inform and shape the b_line consultation. Members also wrote all over the current consultation document and Rachel will pull together all of these note and retype document for working group meeting (see appendix A – completed document based on DYC feedback)

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Members recognised the importance of promoting this consultation to as wide an audience as possible to ensure that as many young people, families and communities got the opportunity to take part, as well as to ensure that the number of consultation responses received were representative of the population (a significant representative sample).

Ideas to promote the consultation included:

- Offer incentives to complete (entry into prize draw)
- Make it look more interesting – add colour
- Ask schools if this can be completed in tutor times / PHSE lessons – either through a paper survey or promoting the online link.
- Promote on schools extranet so schools are aware this is open to all young people.
- DCC to e-mail / write to schools to promote (like Ian Thomas wrote to schools asking them to support young people accessing the youth consultation)
- Create supplementary material (i.e. short Powerpoint) for people to show explaining the proposals before giving the questionnaire out
- Promote in assemblies
- All young people have schools e-mail addresses. Could an email be sent to schools asking them to forward on to young people so they have the link on an e-mail?
- Make sure vulnerable groups including young people who don't go to school get chance to take part
- Promote on-line
 - DCC web site
 - YOUTHINC
 - Links on social media
 - Facebook advert
 - Posters in schools / youth clubs / libraries promoting on line (maybe with tear off bit so people can take the link away with them)

Rachel to share all of this at the b_line working group meeting to ensure that all departments (PR / Communications / Policy / Schools) were actively promoting this consultation.

When the consultation is live (should it be approved through Cabinet) then Rachel will e-mail all members with the live link and members agreed to share this wherever possible.

It was raised that, in order to help save money, we should where possible be promoting the on-line link and avoid having lots of paper copies of the consultation where possible as this would save money in both printing costs and in time in entering paper-based consultations on to the on-line platform.

Members had several other questions relating to the consultation, which will be fed back at the next conference as they do not necessarily inform the consultation, but will need to be considered if the proposals being consulted on are approved:

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- If these proposals go ahead when do they start?
- Is it a roll out programme or will young people currently under 19 but not in full time education (e.g. those already on apprenticeships) get a card? How are you going to find these young people?
- How will you make sure older young people don't abuse the system when they reach 19?
- Are we sure this will save money?
- Can the High Peak Youth Forum contact transport companies in the High Peak to see if they will commit to doing anything differently?
- How do we know that bus companies won't change their minds and start asking for the adult fare?

The conference closed at 3.30pm. The next conference is Saturday 14th March 2015 at DCAS, Chesterfield.

Members commented that they had enjoyed the change in this conference form having lots of guest speakers to being able to develop their own work.

Appendix 1

Consultation document with DYC recommended amendments

B_line travel discount questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to ask about your views to proposed changes to the b_line travel discount scheme. We need to make changes to save money in the future.

By law, Derbyshire County Council doesn't have to provide young people with discounted travel but we have done, since 2001, through b_line. The Council pays the discounted part of the fare back to the bus and train companies.

This is how b_line runs now.

There are two types of b_line card:

- **b_line 1** – an orange card for 11, 12 and 13 year olds which acts as proof that the cardholder qualifies for a child fare on buses and trains.
- **b_line 2** – a silver card for 14 year-olds up to their 19th birthday as long as they stay in full-time education. The cardholder gets a third off adult single and return fares on all bus and train journeys in Derbyshire, including Derby, and on some journeys to nearby towns and cities where the journey starts or finishes in Derbyshire.

This is our proposal for b_line in the future:

- Withdraw the b_line2 travel discount for under 16s. Most bus and train companies currently offer their own reduced price tickets which generally match or beat the current b_line2 discount. (The main exception to this is High Peak Buses where their discount is 30% up to 14th birthday and 15% aged 14 plus.)
- Make a b_line2 card available to all 16 to 18-year-olds in Derbyshire and not just those in full-time education. This means apprentices, young people in other types of training and those looking for work would also get a travel discount.
- Reduce the current b_line2 discount from 33% to 25%.

Please note this questionnaire is only asking about travel discounts only. There are no plans to make changes to the shopping discounts or to b_line as a library card.

The closing date for returning this questionnaire is midnight on Sunday 22 March 2015.

You can complete this questionnaire:

- Online at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/blinechanges
- Fill in this printed questionnaire and send it to: Public Transport Unit, Economy, Transport and Environment or Highways, Transport and Infrastructure, County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG

Your Views

Q1. What do you think about our proposal to give b_line2 cards to more 16 to 18 year olds who are not in full time education to help them to get to be able to access training / work placements / apprenticeships? (Select one only)

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Q2. Our proposal is to withdraw b_line travel discounts for under 16s but to still issue a b_line card as proof of age so you can access the bus companies reduced travel rates. Do you ... (select one only)

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Q3. What do you think about our proposal to reduce the travel discount for over 16s from 33% to 25%? (Select one only)

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Q4. Please tell us about what type of journeys you use you use your b_line2 card to get travel discount. (tick all that apply)

- To get to school or college
- Shopping
- Leisure / entertainment
- Visiting family and friends
- Don't have a b_line card
- Other (please state below)

Q5. If you have anything else you would like to tell us about how the proposals would affect you, or suggestions on other changes we could make to b_line, please tell us

About You

We are asking about you to help us understand the views of different groups of people. Please answer all questions as fully as you can.

Q6. Are you.....

Female

Male

Q7. What is your home postcode?

XXX XXX

Q8. To which age group do you belong?

- 11 to 13
- 14 to 15
- 16 to 18 (up to 19th birthday)
- 19 to 24
- 25+

Q9. A disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental disability which affects their ability to carry out day to day activities. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No

Q10. If you answered 'Yes', what type of disability do you have?

- Disability affecting mobility
- Disability affecting vision
- A learning disability
- Disability affecting hearing
- Other

Q11. Are you answering this questionnaire as:

- A b_line1 cardholder
- A b_line2 cardholder
- A young person who is not currently in Full Time Education (at least 15 hours a week)
- A young person in part time education (less than 15 hours per week)
- An apprentice
- A young person on a training course
- A young person looking for work
- A parent / carer of a young person
- An owner / manager of a business or shop who offers a discount to b_line cardholders
- Other

Q12. What is your ethnic group?

- White
- Black / Black British
- Chinese
- Asian / Asian British
- Mixed race
- Other