

**Agenda Item No.7 (f)**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**5 May 2015**

**REPORT OF THE 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 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015 are attached in order to update Cabinet on the latest work by DYC.

Key points

- DYC has identified 4 key campaigns for its second year of office
  - Young People's mental health
  - Living Wage
  - Work Experience
  - On-line safety
- DYC is keen to promote the use of social media to support its campaigning work, especially the use of information / advice films available through YouTube.
- DYC re-elected the Derbyshire Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs). The MYP's for 2015-16 are Lucy (High Peak), Mitchell (South Derbyshire), Asha (Erewash) and Odin (Bolsover)
- 10 members are going on the Youth Voice Leadership Development Programme residential in April, led by the British Youth Council in order to develop their leadership skills and to support them in developing as youth councillors.

- Members who have attended their Local Area Committee meetings to talk about YOUTHINC have enjoyed this experience, and some would like to be more involved in future meetings.
- DYC has invited the Leader of Derbyshire County Council to attend a future convention.
- The date of the next conference has changed from the original schedule to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2015 at County Hall, Matlock.

3. **Other Considerations**

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

4. **Key Decision**

No

5. **Strategic Director's Recommendation**

For Cabinet to note the work of Derbyshire Youth Council.

**Ian Johnson, Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults**

## Derbyshire Youth Council Conference 14/03/2015

Notes from Derbyshire Youth Council (DYC) Conference on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at DCAS, Chesterfield

**Present:** 21 members, Ruth Pownall, Richard Hale, Rachel Sidebottom, Ian Johnson, Jerry Sanderson

**Apologies:** 7 members, Cllr Greenhalgh,

Today's conference marks the beginning of the second year of the 2-year term of office so today is about planning for the future and thinking about what members want to achieve and leave as a legacy from their time as Youth Council members.

Rachel opened the meeting with an explanation of the aim of today which was to work on creating a DYC manifesto to let others know what our aims were for the year ahead, as well as to clearly identify priority campaigns.

### **Matters Arising**

- Work experience – Jerry Sanderson had been invited and was in attendance to feed back in response to questions raised
- B\_line consultation – had been a reasonable response, but needed one final push in schools.
- Living Wage – had been some positive responses to letters written at last conference. Workshop later will decide where next.
- Mental Health – Izzy R had produced a film as a result of the last conference which was shown (and will be shared at Children's Trust Board). Workshop will consider where next.

### **Work Experience**

Rachel introduced Jerry Sanderson, who members had invited following the workshop at the previous conference about Work Experience. Jerry fed back in response to questions asked (copy of Jerry's feedback attached in appendix 1). Jerry challenged the group to think about

- How can DYC support employer engagement
- That work experience has shown to have positive impacts on preparing young people for the world of work as well as increasing academic achievement
- All schools who offer work experience tend to do it at the same time of year, meaning placement opportunities are stretched

### **A DYC Manifesto**

The purpose of a manifesto is to

- sets out the principles and goals of an organisation
- Your manifesto should state what you would plan to do with your time in office, and what changes you would make
- Set your goals
- Be creative and inspiring
- Something to communicate with others

Ian Johnson spoke to the council around the vision for the Youth Council work in the next 12 months. This was:

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- Making the DYC work directly relevant to the County Council
- Needing to make sure we are talking to target groups
- Developing a programme of departments consulting with DYC so youth councillors can go back to constituents
- For DYC to act as a reference group to ensure more joined up engagement
- That a key priority should be around staying safe and looking at how we can develop CSE and on-line safety. Most members said they had done some e-safety work in schools but Ian challenged members to think about how we can make this better (and consistent)

Members split into groups to consider what a DYC manifesto for the next 12 months should look like. Each group fed back.

### Key points

- Who is Derbyshire Youth Council
  - Representatives of schools in Derbyshire
  - Motivated by students' voices
  - Young people to get involved and impact on decisions
  - Group of elected young people chosen to represent schools and make a difference
  - We are comprised of a group of young people aged 11-18 with an elected member from each school in Derbyshire including special schools. We have representatives on the Children's Trust Board who meet with senior managers to inspect and make changes to any upcoming plans, as well as a Derbyshire scrutiny group to review codes of conduct to ensure people are fulfilling their duties.
- Why is there a Derbyshire Youth Council
  - To get young people's voices heard
  - To help the County Council make decisions that affect us
  - We are a part of DYC to speak up for young people and to make sure the young people in our areas are being listened to
  - Essentially there is a youth council to empower young people and give young people a voice; we are here to campaign on issues relevant to Derbyshire which can then be relayed onto a national level. The Youth Council also represents the voices of people in their district to be effectively communicating Government and council issues to young people in their area.
- What do you want to achieve (statements)
  - Make local services more appealing to young people in Derbyshire
  - To save valuable resources where they aren't needed
  - To work more closely with the Police & Crime Commissioner's office and the Derbyshire Constabulary
  - More respect for disabled young people – raising awareness
  - Road safety awareness in schools
  - Better athletic facilities (promotion of sports for young people)
  - Ensure young people know all the services available to them
  - To significantly improve mental health service for young people (eating disorders / self-harm)

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- To improve communication links between young people and the council
  - Encourage more young people to engage with the youth council
  - To promote youth services
  - To ensure at least 45% of businesses in Derbyshire are Living Wage employers
  - To create an effective social media presence about campaigns
  - To make work experience compulsory
  - To work more closely with local councils
- A motto or 'strap line' to easily communicate with others
    - DYC for change
  - How will you know if you have achieved
    - To see a change in local services
    - To see things becoming more appealing to young people (YOUTHINC / Fearless)

The group agreed that all of these points should be drawn together to start to shape a DYC manifesto. Suggestions on how to communicate this manifesto to others included

- Printed manifesto pledges – short and easy to read
- Series of short YouTube films to promote key messages

Ian J advised contacting the Analyst team within DCC to gain more information about how many employers currently pay the Living Wage in order to gain a benchmark to measure progress against. Rachel will e-mail Mandy Stafford Wood to find out how this is done.

### **MYP Elections**

Due to Rachel W being elected in to role of PG and Tom's indication that he wishes to stand down, there were 2 spaces for re-election to Member of Youth Parliament. MYPs and DMYPs decided these should be elected from the current DMYPs but it should be a full council decision,

Adam chose not to stand for election. Mitchell, Asha and Issie M all gave 2-minute speeches and the full council voted.

Results were

- Mitchell 8
- Asha 7
- Issie 6

Mitchell and Asha are duly elected to role of MYP for the 2015-16 year of office, and Issie will continue in role of DMYP

### **Campaigns**

Members split in to four groups to consider next steps in developing each campaign based on what had already been actioned. Members chose which campaign group to be part of.

The four campaign topics for 2015-16 are

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- Living Wage
- Work Experience
- Young People's Mental Health
- On-Line Safety

### **Living Wage** (Baden, Adam, Danielle, Declan)

#### Decisions / Actions

- Find out what percentage of Derbyshire employers currently pay the minimum wage so we have a benchmark to measure the 45% target against (analysts)
- Find out which companies pay the Living Wage so we know who to target (analysts)
- Emphasise benefits to employers to encourage more to pay Living Wage (raised morale / increased productivity / Offset the costs, for example spend less on training)
- Look at zero hours contracts / informal work – DYC would support move to minimum hours' contracts rather than zero hours
- Need to expand campaign to look at equal pay for men and women. 5 million people are paid below the Living wage and 3 million are women
- There is a minimum wage but why not a maximum in order to cap annual earnings?
- Are Multi-National Companies (MNC's) more responsible for not paying the Living Wage and should these be our main target.
- Smaller business often can't afford it or it would mean employing fewer people as business incomes are not great enough. MNC's can afford to pay the Living Wage but often they are not willing to comply as it would affect profits
- LIVING WAGE NO MATTER WHAT THE AGE
- Some people are willing to accept lower pay if they can get more work and employers exploit this

### **Work Experience** (Sam B, Adam)

#### Decisions / Actions:

- The council felt the work experience should be compulsory for all year 10 students
- Need to encourage schools to timetable work experience all through the year to ease the pressure on finding placements. Is this something that the Education Advisory Service could help with?
- Find out which schools do not have work experience in their curriculum (contact Jerry Sanderson) and find out why. Youth Council member for the schools could take forwards.
- Look at how we can engage employers in offering more placements (write / e-mail / raise issue via social media)
- Find out a breakdown of the types of placements offered and what sectors they cover – are there any sectors (i.e. retail) which are under-represented and therefore need to be targeted?

### **Young People's Mental Health** (Rachel W, Cormac, Imogen, Merrin, Odin, Izzy R, Shaun, Rebecca, Harry, Lucy)

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### Decisions / Actions

- Make a series of films on specific issues so that people can relate to them and then find out where to go for more information
- Share films on social media (YouTube)
- Use DCAS to support film making
- Areas of mental health to be covered
  - Self-harm
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Eating disorders
  - OCD
- Ensure films are easy to understand and accessible (consider needs of students at Special Schools)
- Films need to be made by young people
- Films can use people to make them more personal, but also remember that Izzy's film was impacting and showed a lot of facts
- Promote sources where young people can get more information / support
  - Mind
  - Childline
  - NSPCC
  - The Site
  - Youth Access
  - Youth Minds
- Make sure that there is a section on YOUTHINC that is specifically offering support and advice on young people's mental health issues and where to go / who to talk to for further support
- Izzy and Odin have already arranged to visit the Den (Chesterfield)
- Develop training package for young people on how to deal with and offer support around mental health issues – courses to learn how to deal with mental health issues – take it into schools – develop peer mentoring work (already happens in some schools)
- Campaign to have easier access to CAHMS in schools

### **On-Line Safety** (Nakita, Issie M, Alex, Libby B, Asha, Mitch, Asha)

### Decisions / Actions

- Ensure there is a section on YOUTHINC about staying safe on-line and knowing how to report anything you don't like
- Continue to promote Fearless as an anonymous way of reporting things
- Where schools have safety ambassadors, make sure students know how to contact them
- Posters around schools on specific topics and youth council to be supported by experts to make a series of short films on being safe and where to go for help
  - Exploitation
  - Bullying
  - Identity theft
  - Nudes / sexting

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- Lots of web sites already out there. Need to pull together into a directory and then look at where the gaps are. Need to make things different in order to stand out and be taken notice of
- Invite guest speakers into schools who can talk from real life experiences rather than just theatre groups – might have more of an impact when people know it's real

Tom E is going to do a presentation to Children's Trust Board on Thursday (19<sup>th</sup> March) about what we have done so far around mental health as this is a priority on everybody's agenda, so we need to make sure we have a joined up approach.

Rachel S is going to take all of today's information and begin to pull together a manifesto document. Once in draft this will be circulated for members to comment / redesign / improve and a smaller group pulled together to finalise as needed.

Individual members are continuing to work on different elements of campaigning. Need to set up separate campaigning group sessions (at DCAS?) to move campaigns forwards.

Rachel thanked those members who have been (and are) attending the Local Area Committees to talk about and promote YOUTHINC.

Members to share minutes at local forum meetings and school councils so other young people are aware of the campaigns and can develop at a local level.

The conference closed at 3.30pm. The next conference is on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2015 (note change in date) at County Hall, Matlock.

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



**Appendix 1**

- How many schools participate in offering compulsory work experience in Derbyshire?

56 Secondary and 7 Special (this includes both Derbyshire and Derby City schools and independent schools within Derbyshire). We also support placements for other CAYA Services including the Care Leavers Service, the Talent Match programme and the Adult Community Education Service traineeship programme. Finally, we also work with University of Derby (Buxton College campus)

Last year, approximately 9,500 young people were placed using the database and the service we offer.

- How many businesses participate in offering work experience and what are the major areas of industry that participate in work experience?

At present there are 17,500 employers offering a total of 18,500 jobs on database. Major areas are Administration which covers all sectors, Construction, Catering, IT, Education & Training, Manufacturing, Personal and other services (Hair, Beauty etc.)

- What does your department do to ensure safety in the place they go to for work experience?

All placements which are used by young people who are engaged with our programme will have been visited and vetted by a health and safety adviser to ensure the placement being offered is safe. As part of the visit, a specific young person's risk assessment is carried out with the employer. (Whilst this is technically an employer's responsibility, this is often a significant barrier especially with small and medium-size employers and by us undertaking it with them during the visit it removes this barrier. We work hard to dispel the myth that what we do is unnecessary red tape).

Placements are risk-ranked and then approved for a time period based on that risk-ranking, and this shows on the database. If placements have expired in terms of their safety approval on the database and a young person wishes to use them, then they are reassessed before they can be used again. We visit all newly found placements and no placement can be used unless it passes the vetting visit.

We have an agreement in place with other organisations across the East Midlands region that all placements used will be vetted in this way and by qualified staff (we also have 'read-only' access to each other's databases).

Further afield, we have links to other organisations who vet placements within their area but the standards applied in these areas vary. We have a rule that no placement out of county can be used unless we have paperwork for that

placement from the area and it shows that the placement has been approved by them.

- How do schools expand their lists of employers who offer work experience placements?

Send letters to parents of the cohort asking if their employers would be willing to offer placements where they work or if they or their relations own businesses who would be willing to participate. School co-ordinators spend a lot of time ringing around local employers, students themselves finding new placements, liaising with other schools in the area to share information and opportunities.

Occasionally the Local Authority is approached by employers offering placements

- If any schools don't offer a compulsory work experience program, what steps are being taken to encourage them to develop one?

This is more difficult to answer as we are primarily a health and safety service. We take any opportunity to engage with schools (or other agencies) who approach us regarding using our service and explain clearly the benefits to them and their pupils of using our service. We have, over the last couple of years, had a number of people approach us who now use the service but we are not actively promoting this unless the opportunity arises.

In addition to the above, the following have been expressed as barriers to work experience at present:

**Finance** - As the service is fully traded it is reliant on schools continuing to purchase the service which is no longer subsidised by central funding. Concern has been expressed that if costs increase, schools may decide not to purchase the service. Even if costs do not increase substantially, given the demands on school budgets, the fact that work experience has no statutory element is causing some concern amongst co-ordinators that funding may be removed and diverted to other areas within school.

There is possibly a piece of work here around the benefits of work experience in supporting academic performance but also in preparing young people for the world of work or to support University applications. This may help convince budget holders in schools that despite the removal of the statutory element, work experience plays a vital part in the development of young people towards the world of work or academic progression.

**Employer Engagement**- Many employers who have traditionally offered work experience no longer exist or have downsized and therefore are stating that they do not have the staff in place to support and supervise work experience. Also, a number of employers have taken on apprentices and this has become their focus so they are no longer able to offer work experience. This is a message we are increasingly hearing from work experience co-ordinators who are struggling year on year to find placements. We often hear reports from Employers organisations that young people are not ready and prepared for the world of work. Again there may be scope to engage with a variety of employer organisations and major employers to promote the

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benefits of work experience as part of an on-going package of work related activities which prepare young people for the world of work and to actively encourage them to offer placements.