

---

## Young People's Working Group

25 October 2006

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

## UPDATE FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHAMPION

### Summary

1. This report provides the group with an update on the work undertaken by the Champion.

### Background

2. In April/May 2006 City of York involved 1600 children and young people in selecting the City's first Children and Young People's Champion. Since then the Champion has met with children and young people at:

- Lowfield school council
- Oaklands school council
- Burnholme school council
- Canon Lee school council
- Applefields school council
- Urbie- Stockton on forest
- Castlegate consultants group
- Clifton Green Primary school
- Galtres school

Visits to primary and secondary school councils are being planned for the next term.

### Issues emerging from these discussions

3. These discussions identified the following:
  - Young people don't feel that there are enough things for them to do and places to go in their local areas. Young people wanted existing youth clubs to open more- at weekends and in the school holidays and would like them to have better equipment. Some young people would like youth shelters providing in their area. Young people liked more informal kinds of provision.
  - In a couple of areas young people would like skate park provision.

- Young people find leisure provision that is available (this usually seemed to mean sports clubs/cinemas) too expensive and liked the idea of there being discounts available for young people who wish to use these facilities.
  - Young people found public transport too expensive, many are not aware of the YoZone card. The YoZone card should be better promoted in schools and it should be easier to sign up- possible being able to do this at school rather than having to travel to town.
  - In some areas there were issues in the relationship between young people and the police, some young people suggested there should be regular meetings between school councils and the local police to talk about things.
  - Young people would like more swimming facilities in the City.
  - Young people would like more information about grants and loans available to them when they leave school.
4. Young people also raised a number of issues that were specific to their own schools, common themes were:
- Toilets - not being clean/open/having toilet roll etc.
  - Uniform - young people wanting it to be less formal and rigid
  - Access to drinking water
  - Young people would like better facilities/equipment available in school (particularly sports equipment)
5. Other issues were raised in individual schools:
- Quality of school buildings, particularly older buildings weren't always good.
  - Bullying is not always addressed as well as it could be.
  - Lack of adults for young people to talk to in school.
  - Lack of access to computer facilities.

### **Action taken as a result of these meetings**

6. As a result of these meetings:
- Initial work has been started exploring the option of taking the YoZone card sign up out into schools. Waiting for information from transport department about the feasibility of this.
  - Information has been passed on to relevant area Team Leader for the youth service.
  - The possibility of a pilot project bringing together local police officers and young people is being explored in the West of the City.

7. The Champion also worked with Cllr Jamieson-Ball and the Lord Mayor to organise an evening for young people at the mansion house which was attended by 28 young people from years 10-12 from 13 schools across the City. Similar themes and issues were identified around leisure opportunities, transport and young people's relationship with the police.

**Other issues identified by young people:**

**8. 16+ education**

- Vocational options should be provided to all young people not only those who teachers think would benefit.
- Young people would prefer more continuous assessment measures rather than the focus on exams which creates pressure on them.
- Young people would like more encouragement for travelling (e.g. Gap years) before they go to university, through the provision of more information and more funding to support it.
- Young people would like more support in finding jobs when they are at university.
- Young people felt there is too much pressure on the year 10 work experience, as there is only one opportunity they felt pressure to make the right choice about work placement. They felt that careers guidance information needed to start earlier and wanted additional opportunities to do work experience again after year 10. They wanted to make sure that work experience wasn't just about 'making coffee' and would like more opportunities to shadow people who do jobs they are interested in.
- Young people felt that education should be less about the grades and more about the individual.
- Some young people would like to stay on into 6th form but can't as their school doesn't have one.

**9. Why young people get a 'bad press' in the community?**

- The picture of young people presented in the press isn't representative; there isn't a balance between the good things young people do and the bad things. Young people need to show more of the good things they do, there needs to be more emphasis placed on feeding positive stories to the press.
- There need to be more integration between young people and their communities.

**10. Housing**

- All young people should be able to afford housing and be entitled to a safe, warm place to sleep.
- All young people should have access to information about the services that are available if they become homeless.

- Schools should provide lifeskills training covering things like budgeting, DIY, information about housing rights. This could be done via collapsed timetable days.
- Schools need to accept that homelessness is an issue for students at their schools.
- It would be good if there were a reconciliation service to help resolve difficulties between young people and their parents in order to support them in remaining living at home.

### **Other work**

11. Champion email address.

We are working towards establishing an email address where the Children and Young people's champion can be easily contacted. Cllr Scott has been speaking with Amanda Oxley in democratic services, the current idea is to establish an email address of [champion@york.gov.uk](mailto:champion@york.gov.uk), which would be used for all the champions. Democratic services would then filter any emails and forward them to the appropriate Champion.

### **The Social Inclusion working group**

12. The social inclusion working group are seeking to ensure young people's representation on this group, however there are some debates about the best way of doing this. Cllr Scott and Cllr Jameison Ball have been working with Julian Horsler, Bernie Flanagan and Carole Pugh on this.

### **Corporate Objectives**

13. The work of the Champion meets the Council objectives of:
- Encouraging all Children and Young People to become Active Citizens
  - Consulting with young people about the future of the City and about provision by the council on behalf of young people.

### **Implications**

14. **Financial** No implications.

**Human Resources (HR)** No implications.

**Equalities** No implications.

**Legal** No implications.

**Crime and Disorder** No implications.

**Information Technology (IT)** No implications.

**Other** No implications.

## Risk Management

15. There are no risks associated with this report.

## Recommendations

16. That the Working Group:

- 1) Notes the report and comments on its content

Reason: to ensure the involvement of young people in the life of the City.

- 2) Requests a report from the relevant officers on the work that is being done towards establishing discounted travel for 16 and 17 year olds across the City.

Reason: To respond to the issues raised by young people in discussion with the Champion

- 3) Requests a report from the Equalities Team on young people's representation on the Social Inclusion Working Group.

Reason: to ensure the involvement of young people in the life of the City.

## Contact Details

### Author:

Carole Pugh  
Voice & Influence Co-ordinator  
Youth Service  
628829

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Patrick Scott  
Director, Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Report Approved

Date 10 Oct 2006

Report Approved

Date

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report