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**Meeting of Executive Members for Children's Services and Advisory Panel**

**8 June 2006**

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

**VOICE AND INFLUENCE**

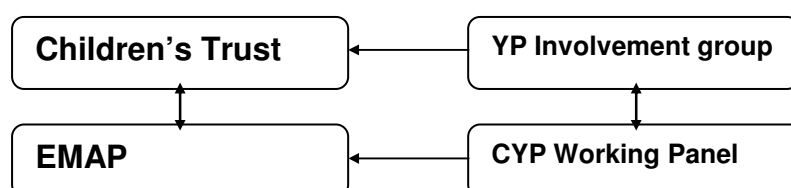
**Summary**

1. To review the remit, membership, frequency and powers of the Children and Young People's Working Panel (CYPWP) and to recommend options for spending the £25k of the Youth Service Scrutiny money.

**Background**

2. The CYPWP continued the work of the Young People's Scrutiny Panel, prioritising the recommendations of the scrutiny panel and looking to move these forward. Recently the CYPWP has overseen the selection of a Children and Young People's Champion for the City. The appointment of the first Children and Young People's Champion for the City as well as the adoption of the new constitution, which has changed the membership of the group, provides a good opportunity to review the work of the group and consider its future direction.
3. The group has historically focused its work around young people's issues, and as part of this has had a strong concern around Voice and Influence work with young people. This proposal continues this emphasis and focuses the group's work around Voice and Influence work with children and young people to ensure a positive focus on children and young people at elected member level.
4. It is proposed that the CYPWP should focus on:
  - Ensuring there are appropriate systems for Children and Young People's participation and involvement in place across the council (using the Hear By Right Standards as a guide). This would include: maintaining an overview of involvement work across the council and maintaining an overview of the use of monies that are subject to children and young people's recommendations.
  - Seeking children and young people's views on particular issues (e.g. those on the forward plan for EMAP) and making representations about how these may be reflected in policy.

- Driving forward issues raised by children and young people through this process and ensuring accountability results from involvement and consultation work
  - Receiving and making recommendations about the programme of activity proposed by the Children and Young People's Champion, to provide support to the Champion and ensure that action taken is relevant to the policy agenda set out in the Children and Young People's Plan.
5. As the group has a remit to focus on specific issues raised by children and young people it may be useful to co-opt or invite specialists to attend the group to address these issues as appropriate.
  6. Currently there is regular Officer representation from the Youth Service, the LEA consultant for citizenship and the Children's Trust. There is no representation from officers working with children aged 0 – 5, and limited representation from officers delivering work across the spectrum in the 5 – 11 age bracket. It is proposed that regular officer support for the Young People's Advisory Working Party should be through the Youth Service, and that other officers should attend to present reports as appropriate.
  7. There already exists within the Children's Trust a mechanism for bringing together partner organisations to work together to meet the identified needs of children and young people across the City. The Involvement group promotes the involvement and participation of children and young people in all the activities of the Yor-OK Children's Trust. Its role includes:
    - Promoting good proactive in voice and influence work with Children and young people
    - Maintaining an overview of the involvement work with children and young people across the City. And plan future work.
    - Raise issues that emerge with the relevant organisations and seek to address them
    - Provide advice, support and training to people around voice and Influence work.
  8. The relationship between these two groups needs to be clearly spelled out in order to avoid overlap and confusion. The Children's Trust Board is a partnership group, and, as a sub-group of the Children's Trust, the YorOK Involvement Group is a partnership group with the express aim of co-ordinating the work of all the partners involved in consultation with children and young people. The Children and Young People's Working Group (CYPWP) is a working group of the City Council, and, therefore, tasked with making recommendations to the Executive Member for decisions to be taken at a meeting of the relevant EMAP. This distinction is an important one that is represented by the following diagram:



9. The implications of this are that:
  - the CYPWP will both inform and be informed by the YorOK Involvement Group so that policy and practice are consistent between all partners including the city council,
  - the City Council will be represented on the YorOK Involvement Group in the same way as other partners, according to the agreed constitutional arrangements,
  - the Children and Young People's Working Group (CYPWP) will operate by making recommendations to the Children's Services EMAP and other EMAPs as appropriate.
10. It is proposed that the Executive Member recommends to the CYPWP the remit proposed in this report at paragraph 4.
11. In order to allow time for high quality officer support it is proposed that the meetings are moved to a quarterly basis, and that the working forward plan should be co-ordinated by the Departmental Management Team (DMT) for Learning, Culture and Children's Services.
12. The CYPWP does not legally have any power to take decisions and therefore has no budget or authority to incur expenditure. While the CYPWP will take a particular interest in budget spent around the area of Voice and Influence work, particularly money that is spent based on children and young people's recommendations (the £25k fund, Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund) the CYPWP should not confine its work to recommendations about particular sums of money or particular budget headings. The CYPWP has a broader remit and should be concerned with considering principles about how money should be spent and make recommendations to the appropriate EMAP based on children and young people's needs, but decisions about spend will rest with EMAP's to determine based on the availability of monies and the priority that the principle has.

### **Options for spending the Young People's scrutiny budget**

13. At the last meeting of the Children and Young people's Advisory Panel in April the panel considered options for spending the £25k allocated in the Youth Service budget under the heading of 'Young People's Scrutiny'. In 2005-6 the young people's scrutiny panel made a series of recommendations about developing services and provision for young people in the City. Because of budget constraints, it was not possible to implement the proposals made by the working group. The options considered by the working group are outlined below. They provide the background for recommendations by the CYPWP to the Executive Member for expenditure in 06/07.

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Scrutiny recommendation</b>	<b>Alternative funding sources</b>
A	Part time Voice and Influence support worker	£6400	To support the work of the Children and CYPWG	None identified
B	Furniture for The Basement	£2000	Developing sites for young people in the City Centre	Youth Capital Fund
C	Furniture for the new One Stop Shop	£3000	Developing a One Stop Shop for the City	Youth Capital Fund
D	Match funding for the promotion of activities available for children and young people	£5,000	Raise awareness about provision for young people across the City.	None identified
E	Urbie sessions (cost £6k for one session for 52 weeks)	£6000	Provide support to flexible youth provision	Youth Opportunity Fund
F	Theatre Royal Youth Theatre	£5000	Promotion of informal events for young people to share their views/activities to proactively engage young people and deter from anti-social behaviour	None identified
G	Part-time youth volunteer worker	£10000	Encourage initiatives to empower young people	None identified
H	Go karting project	£5000	Activities to proactively engage young people and deter from anti-social behaviour	Youth Opportunity Fund

## **Consultation**

14. Throughout its existence the Scrutiny Panel has involved and consulted with young people, through school lessons, questionnaires, events and informal meetings. The scrutiny recommendations were based on the views of young people, the role of the champion and the selection process were based on young people's ideas and involvement. Given the remit of the group, this strong link with the views and ideas of children and young people is key.

## **Analysis**

15. The Panel identified options A, D and F as priorities. None of these options can be funded through other channels. The provision of a part-time worker to support Voice and Influence work would increase the capacity to engage with young people across the City. The CYPAP also noted that there should be budget available to support the election process for the Children and Young People's Champion. The work of the Theatre Royal Youth Theatre was seen to link to the promotion of young people's involvement and participation, particularly through the work of the Catalyst project that encourages socially excluded young people to access provision. The promotion of activities that are

available to children and young people is important and links to corporate objectives as well as government initiatives (particularly the Youth Offer).

### **Corporate Objectives**

16. The work of the CYPWP supports the council aims and objectives around:
- 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.

### **Financial Implications**

17. This reports makes recommendations to the Executive Member for Youth and Social Inclusion for expenditure against a budget maintained by the Youth Service which was established to implement the recommendations of the Young Person's Scrutiny Panel. In order to clarify the arrangements for future expenditure against this budget, it is recommended that the budget be identified as supporting 'Voice and Influence' work on behalf of Young People. If the recommendations in the report are accepted, £8,600 will remain in the current financial year to support continuing development work. The breakdown of expenditure is as follows:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Part Time Voice and Influence Support Worker	£6,400
Publicity campaign for Summer Schools Out programme	£5,000
Theatre Royal Youth Theatre	£5,000
Development work	£8,600
Total	£25,000

### **Human Resources (HR)**

18. There are no HR implications.

### **Equalities**

19. There are no Equalities Implications.

### **Legal**

20. There are no legal Implications.

### **Crime and Disorder**

21. There are no Crime and Disorder implications.

### **Information Technology (IT)**

22. There are no IT Implications.

## Risk Management

23. There are no specific risks associated with the arrangements proposed in this report

## Recommendations

24. The Executive Member is recommended:

- To approve the remit proposed for the CYPWP at paragraph 4.

Reason: In order to provide a clear sense of direction for the Children and Young People's Working Group

- To approve expenditure on the 'Voice and Inclusion' budget as proposed in paragraph 16.

Reason: In order to encourage the involvement of Children and Young People as active citizens.

## Contact Details

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Report Approved  Date 26 May 2006

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### Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report