
Young People's Working Group

22 July 2009

Report of the Assistant Director, Partnerships and Early Intervention

Take Part Pathfinder 2

Summary

1. This report is for information. It describes the work being planned as part of the Take Part Pathfinder 2 programme including developments through:
 - Ward committee processes and commissioned services;
 - Schools Councils development;
 - Creation of a Youth Council (for young people 11- 19) and, through that, involvement in the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP).

Background

2. Further to discussions at previous meetings of YPWG, we are pleased to confirm that City of York has been awarded funding through the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) of £50,950 in 2009/10 and £60,930 in 2010/11 as part of the "Take Part Pathfinder 2". The funding has been allocated to meet a programme agreed by CLG, which is monitored and evaluated on a quarterly basis.
3. The overall aim of the programme is to embed and improve the quality and impact of active citizenship activity, citizen engagement activity and community leadership activity; and to support the delivery of NI4 and NI3 through creating the basis for long term impact on young people's sense of being able to influence decisions and democratic life in York. The 3 strands of the programme are:
 - Ward committee processes and commissioned services;
 - Schools Councils development;
 - Creation of a Youth Council (for young people 11- 19) and, from that, involvement in the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP).

These three strands will increase the ability of children and young people to influence decisions within their local neighbourhood and the wider city by providing young people with a voice, avenues to be heard and channels where they can have a real influence on democratic life in York.

4. In parallel with this, Yorkash (the fund where decisions are made by and for young people) has awarded a grant of £23,031 for the creation and development of Youth Council for York and involvement in UKYP. This will support priority16 in the Children and Young People's Plan to: *'Value children and young people's contribution and celebrate their successes by establishing an influential Youth Council in York and participating in the Youth Parliament.'*

5. Our aim is to ensure that schools councils will work increasingly with ward committees to support the local democratic process. The Schools Councils (specifically at secondary level), together with other young people's groups in the city (to ensure representation from disadvantaged groups), will feed into a new overarching Youth Council for York, which will link with the city wide democratic process. The Youth Council can in turn then link into wider national democratic processes through the UKYP.
6. Although the funding from each source is comparatively small, we are merging the two streams to act as a catalyst to coordinate existing work and develop work which had been previously identified.

Programme Management

7. A cross directorate steering group has been set up to oversee the project and an outline plan for the two year programme brought together. Through the steering group, reports will be made to CLG (the Take Part Pathfinder 2 funder) key partner directorates (Neighbourhood Services and LCCS) and to Yorkash.
8. A number of key actions will be developed in the next months to guide the overall management and development of the pathfinder:
 - An evaluation framework will be put together showing the impact of the project;
 - Consultation (through Schools Out) will be undertaken with children and young people about events in their area;
 - A programme of briefing sessions will be planned and delivered for briefing of key partners – Elected members in wards; officers in City of York Council and key partners within the City;
 - A website will be developed to highlight the development of the pathfinder.

Youth Council

9. A plan for the structure of the Youth Council has been developed (ANNEX A). The proposal is that the council will meet for 10 sessions annually, and have a number of sub groups which will become involved in a variety of issues. Membership of the full Youth Council will number approximately 60 young people (aged 11-19) with 2 representatives from each of the secondary Schools Councils, and from other Young Persons provision across the city. This structure will ensure a good representation in terms of geographic area and life experience. It will ensure that all young people have a route to be on the Youth Council, and such a structure is achievable with the limited resources available.
10. Invitations for representation have already been sent to secondary schools with arrangements in hand for information sessions at the start of September. Invitations for representation from other organisations will be sent over the summer. Representatives will be made be put forward by the end of September. From the end of September work (including a residential) will begin with the representatives who will make up the Youth Council. An important part of the group formation will be to enable the members of the Youth Council to work out for themselves the most effective means of operation (within the level of support available). This would include which issues they would like to focus upon – so that they can help to determine their own agenda.

UK Youth Parliament (UKYP)

11. One early role for the Youth Council would be to organize an election process for UKYP membership from 2010 onwards. In other cities, UKYPs have sometimes been elected from within the body of the Council. This will however be for our new Council to determine.
12. In the meantime, as Members will be aware, an opportunity arose at short notice for up to two young people (one as member and one as deputy member) to represent York at the UKYP annual sitting in Canterbury at the end of July of this year. We felt it important to take advantage of this if we could, and accordingly organized a 'Hustings Event' was on Wednesday 8th July in the Council Chamber to elect an *interim* Member and Deputy. Joe Feeney was elected as interim member of the Youth Parliament with Joe Armer elected as his deputy. The event and election has subsequently received positive coverage in local media. These two young people will be serving until January 2010.
13. We hope it may be possible for either the interim Member or his Deputy to attend the YPWG and discuss the role informally with members. One issue that needs debate is the interaction with the Children and Young People's Champion.

Ward Committees

14. The pathfinder will build on previous examples of work linking children and young people with the ward committees and building young people's understanding of governance and involvement in shaping neighbourhoods. This will include the conferences, which have been held annually for schools councils at both primary and secondary level. A key focus at the next conferences in early 2010 will be building schools links with their local communities.
15. Work is being undertaken to map out a rolling programme so that over the 2 year lifetime of the pathfinder all wards of the city can be included. Initially work will be aimed at 3 areas, linked to where there has been recent associated work and where access may be readily given by the schools for the September 2009 term. The aim would be to engage with children and young people in schools in 3 wards per term throughout the school year (between 200 –400 children and young people in the first year and between 300 – 600 children and young people in the second year).

Consultation

16. As stated previously, this programme of work brings together a number of pre-existing strands and priorities all of which have been subject to considerable consultation:
 - The Young People In York Scrutiny Panel of 2004 recommended: *'develop, promote and support the York Youth Forum and/or York Youth Parliament and encouraging initiatives that help to ensure that these bodies are sustained and strengthened over time.'*
 - The current Children and Young Peoples Plan has a priority: *Value children and young people's contribution and celebrate their successes by: establishing an influential Youth Council in York and participating in the Youth Parliament.*

- There was discussion of this overall proposal at the YPWG meeting in October 2008, initiated by young people themselves, and supported by the Children and Young People's Champion.
- The Yorkash decision to provide funding has been solely taken by young people, as is the ethos of Yorkash.
- The schools council conference in February 2009 discussed the Youth council and was in favour of the proposals.
- Pilot work in schools to facilitate children and young people having a voice in local decision making and ward committee funding priorities.
- The development of ward specific Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs) and Ambition Statements.

One of the early tasks for the Youth Council will be to decide on its terms of reference.

Options and Analysis

(This report is for information.)

Corporate Priorities

17. This work will help to 'Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city '. It will also, as it develops, contribute young people's views to development work on *all* of our corporate priorities.

Implications

- **Financial:** This work is being wholly funded through Taking part Pathfinder programme and Yorkash, as indicated above. This funding will continue until 31st March 2011.
- **Human Resources (HR):** There are no immediate HR implications. Funding will support existing capacity within Young Peoples Service and Neighbourhood Services.
- **Equalities:** The ethos of the work, the structure of the Youth Council and the work with ward committees and schools councils will promote inclusion of young people within decision making and will ensure the inclusion of disadvantaged young people.
- **Legal** *There are no legal implications*
- **Crime and Disorder** *No direct implications*
- **Information Technology (IT)** *There are no IT implications.*
- **Property** *There are no Property implications*

Risk Management

(There are no significant risks inherent in this report.)

Recommendations

18. The Young People's Working Group is asked to:

- receive the report for information; and
- make comment on the strategy and direction of the work.

Reason: to inform future strategic work on the development of the Take Part 2 Pathfinder and the development of a Youth Council for York

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Report Approved

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

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

ANNEX A – Proposed Structure of Youth Council

Background Papers: None