

Report from the Assistant Director, Partnerships and Early Intervention

## **Young People's Involvement**

### **Summary**

1. This report invites Members to have exploratory discussions with representatives from the Youth Council about issues that are a priority for young people at this time. The Young Inspectors Team will also give an informal presentation and invite discussion about their activities.

### **Background**

2. Members of the Young People's Working Group (YPWG) have often indicated that to engage in informal debate and discussion with young people would be beneficial to themselves as elected representatives and also enable young people to express their views in a more comfortable and less formal manner than is often the case in committee.
3. To this end, the Youth Council have asked to bring forward a number of issues for discussion, either to inform members about a specific issue or to seek advice, support or direction from the YPWG on items that are not straightforward.

### **Topics for Discussion**

4. We have listed below the items that we understand the Youth Council will wish to raise with, in note form, some of the points they are likely to make. Members' views will be sought on all of these points.

#### **5. Political Education**

- Members of the Youth Parliament and the Youth Council worked together to create a resource pack called 'Future Decision Makers'.
- This toolkit for use in citizenship and democracy education was given to secondary schools in April, before the general election.
- Great resource for getting involved in Youth Council, through elections.
- Youth Council are now seeking help to promote it in schools.

#### **6. Funding the Youth Council**

- 2 years funding for staffing from 'Take Part' will cease in 2011.

- Unsuccessful bid to the York Youth Community Action Pilot. However, sufficient resources have been identified from other sources for the remainder of 2010-2011. The concern is really about what happens from next April onwards.
- In addition to staffing, money is needed to fund residential activities, running costs for meetings and funds to attend regional meetings of UKYP.
- The explore centre would be ideal for the work we want to do, but the charges for using facilities are prohibitive.

## 7. City Centre Building

- Update on the project including location of building.
- An application for change of use has been made.
- An informal leaflet circulated to businesses in area.
- Informed Guildhall Ward Councillors.
- £54k raised so far. Our initial target is £100k.
- Further funding applications to Holbeck Trust and Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Seek help to support the campaign, assist with funds through the ward committee budgets, and positively endorse in community.

## 8. Social Networking

York Youth Council want to be able make full use of opportunities presented by Social Networking Sites and in particular Facebook. Social Network Sites (SNS) present opportunities to communicate with young people, families and communities but opportunities and risks go hand in hand. The Youth Council has worked together with Council officers to develop a framework for how they plan to use social networking sites. The framework covers all of the key elements that should be included in a robust plan for safely making use of these sites. The framework is available as **annex A**.

The framework should be seen as a complete document and not summarised for this report. However there are a few key elements that should be highlighted from the framework:

- It is not the intention to encourage any children or young people to use social networking sites who are not doing so already. The work is about engaging those that have already chosen to do so, and helping them to do so safely.
- The use of these tools does not condone or promote children and young people lying about their age to join social networking sites.
- Where support is offered through CYC, a disclaimer makes clear our organisational position on the use of social networking sites. The suggested statement is: *“City of York council does not control and can not guarantee or endorse the content on this site. This website is a social networking tool and the conduct of its users is not controlled by City of York Council. City of York council is making use of this site within a defined framework to positively engage with the community it serves. We would encourage all internet users to make sure they are fully aware of how to use the internet safely by visiting [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk).”*

We will need to run this past the Council's lawyers before it is finalised.

## Corporate Priorities

- 9 The issues discussed in this paper are consistent with the Council's objectives to encourage children and young people to become active citizens, and to consult them about decisions that affect them.

## Implications

10. **Financial** implications: none immediately, but any costs identified for the Youth Council beyond 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 are not in budgets at the moment.
11. **Human Resources** implication: none immediately.
12. There are no, **Equalities, Crime and Disorder, IT or Property** Implications.

## Risk Management

13. There are no specific risks associated with this report.

## Recommendations

14. That the Young People's Working Group discuss the topics and issues identified in this report with representatives of the Youth Council. The outcomes of these discussions may in some cases need to be forwarded to the Executive Member for Children's Services or the Executive for a decision.

*Reason: To ensure young people's views are taken into account in Council decision-making.*

## Contact Details

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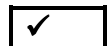
### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

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Report Approved  Date

### Wards Affected:

All



**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:** None

### Annexes:

**A Social Networking and York Youth Council**

## Social Networking and York Youth Council



Social Network Sites (SNS) present opportunities to communicate with young people, families and communities but opportunities and risks go hand in hand.

This framework aims to ensure that these tools can be used effectively and safely to support the work of the York Youth Council (YYC).

### Contents

This framework is broken down into sections;

- Aims
  - Why use Social Networking Tools
- What evidence of demand is there locally and nationally
- What does York Youth Council want to achieve
- How risks to children and young people are minimised
- The practicalities

### Aims

- To get the Youth Council's message across to young people.
- To consult young people on what they want.
- To campaign on issues affecting young people
- To get young people's message across to older generations
- To raise the profile of York Youth Council
- To communicate within York Youth Council

### *Why use Social Networking Tools*

- Large numbers of young people use social networking sites
- It is a quick, easy and accessible tool
- It is more environmentally friendly than older forms of communicating

It should also be made clear that York Youth Council is not actively encouraging those not already using Social Networking Sites to begin using them. The aim of this framework is to communicate with the large numbers of young people already using these sites.

### **What evidence of demand is there?**

#### *What local evidence is there?*

- York Youth Council has already successfully made use of Social Networking tools engage with young people.
  - An online consultation around discounted bus fares was publicised by York Youth Council through Facebook. There was a massive response from hundreds of young people within a matter of days.

- Acts have been found for the first York Youth Festival.
- Information was created to help publicise elections for members of the Youth Parliament from York.

*What national evidence is there?*

- There are lots of national and international evidence showing how young people are using Social Networking Sites. A selection of key statistics are shown below;
  - Facebook is used every day by 25% of 16-19 year olds.<sup>1</sup>
  - Devon youth workers consulted with young people about engagement through social networking sites. There were 94% of young people who said they would be interested in engaging in participation through social networking sites. Also 80% said they would share opportunities to engage with their friends.<sup>2</sup>
  - Brent council have used Facebook, twitter and youtube successfully to communicate with residents.<sup>3</sup>
  - Kent council have used social networking sites to talk communicate to young people what the council had done.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> How are young people using social media? - Forrester Technographics Media and Marketing Study Q3 2008

<sup>2</sup> <http://worktogether.org.uk/2010/02/28/devon-county-council-%E2%80%93-knowledge-hub-case-study/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://worktogether.org.uk/2010/02/28/brent-council-%E2%80%93-knowledge-hub-case-study/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://worktogether.org.uk/2010/03/01/kent-county-council-%E2%80%93-knowledge-hub-case-study/>

**What does York Youth Council want to achieve**

<b>What does York Youth Council want to achieve?</b>	<b>What will be the impact of this?</b>
<p>To get York Youth Council's message across to Young People;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing information</li> <li>• Planning for York Youth Festival</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised awareness</li> <li>• Recruiting volunteers and acts</li> </ul>
<p>Get other young people involved in York Youth Council with comments on campaigns around;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycle groups</li> <li>• Discounted bus travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving more of a voice to more young people in York</li> </ul>
<p>Building a cross generation campaign.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make people realise York Youth Council are "not just a group of kids" and raise awareness of the YYC aims.</li> </ul>
<p>Communicating within YYC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More active discussion between members of York Youth Council</li> <li>• Easier to manage than the current NING community</li> </ul>
<p>Connecting to other Youth Council's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing knowledge</li> <li>• Making campaigns better by learning from others</li> </ul>

### How risks to children and young people are minimised

There have been a number high profile reports about social networking sites and safety. The main focus of concerns are about:

- Online bullying
- Paedophiles and inappropriate sexual conduct

However there are also risks that need to be considered around:

- Commercial (losing personal information, illegal downloads)
- Aggressive (violent web content)
- Values (racism, misinformation)

This section sets out what York Youth Council will do to minimise the risks to young people who are using Social Networking Sites.

#### *Commercial risks*

<b>What is the risk or concern?</b>	<b>What is done to minimise this risk?</b>	<b>What are the implications of this? (cost, training)</b>
Identity theft	Provide links to information about how people can protect their personal details. Encourage users to make sure they have appropriate privacy settings.	Add links to key pages.
Illegal downloads	Moderator of YCC groups/pages to remove any links or references to illegal downloads.	Time to moderate and remove any links.

#### *Aggressive*

<b>What is the risk or concern?</b>	<b>What is done to minimise this risk?</b>	<b>What are the implications of this? (cost, training)</b>
Online bullying	Set out ground rules for those using YCC groups/pages. Moderators of the group to report any bullying. Provide links to information about what to do if people are being cyber-bullied.	Writing out ground rules. Time to moderate pages. Add links to information.
Stalking	Ensure security levels so only friends can see groups and pages. Encourage users to make sure they have appropriate privacy settings. Provide links to information about what to do about if people are worried about online stalking.	Time to moderate and remove these links.
Violent content	Moderator to remove any inappropriate content or links from YCC groups/pages.	Time to moderate and remove any links.

*Sexual*

<b>What is the risk or concern?</b>	<b>What is done to minimise this risk?</b>	<b>What are the implications of this? (cost, training)</b>
Grooming	Moderator to report any inappropriate contacts. Provide links to the report abuse button from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection agency. Provide links to information about saying safe online. Encourage users to make sure they have appropriate privacy settings.	Time to moderate pages. Add links to information.
Self publishing of sexual material	Moderators to remove any inappropriate content. Report any concerns where children or young people may be placing themselves at risk.	Time to moderate.

*Values*

<b>What is the risk or concern?</b>	<b>What is done to minimise this risk?</b>	<b>What are the implications of this? (cost, training)</b>
Racist views	Set out ground rules for those using YCC groups/pages. Moderator to remove any inappropriate posts that are racist.	Time to moderate pages.
Misinformation	Moderators to ensure information provide by YYC is correct. Where misinformation is given about the YYC moderators to proactively offer correct information.	Time to moderate.



## **The Practicalities**

### *House rules*

- Set out rules on using pages/groups around bullying, offensive and racist information

### *Guidance and training*

- Train any administrators/moderators on house rules and how to deal with problems.
- Train what steps should be taken when setting up a new group.

### *Set up an admin group of moderators from YYC*

- Have a number of administrators/moderators for pages/groups to ensure information is up to date and any risks already identified are acted on.

### *Constant evaluation*

- Keep a record of any problems
- Keep information about what works well

### *Youth Worker Support*

- York Youth Council would like the support of Youth Workers to support those carrying out the administration/moderation of any pages/groups. Work would be lead by York Youth Council but youth workers would be used as the last resort for any moderation or adding information.