

Subject:	Brighton & Hove Youth Council Update & Presentation
Date of Meeting:	7 September 2009
Report of:	Director of Children's Services
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Key Decision:	No Forward Plan No. N/A
Wards Affected:	All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of Brighton & Hove Youth Council (BHYC) 08-10 (including UK Youth Parliament) - why it exists, how it works, its current campaigns, its achievement in the last 6 months, and challenges for the future.
- 1.2 Making a Positive Contribution Priority 16 of the CYPP 2006 – 09 is “To increase opportunities for children & young people to play an active part in making the decisions that affect their lives and well-being” and Priority 17 “To empower children & young people to develop positive relationships & to involve them in developing solutions to bullying & discrimination”. The continued growth of the BHYC is one of the strategic actions to support both service improvements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the information in the report be noted.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Brighton & Hove Youth Council (BHYC) is a unique way for young people to engage in a meaningful democratic process; to represent the issues that matter most to them; and to make a positive contribution to their community.
- 3.2 Members of the Youth Council are aged between 11 and 19 (up to 25 for those with disabilities). They are elected or nominated by young people through schools and community youth and volunteer groups across the city. The aim of the Youth Council is to give all young people a voice and more influence with decision makers, including local MP's and councillors. The Youth Council and its sub-groups are supported by the Participation Team, within “YAP”.
- 3.3 BHYC 08-10 has 64 elected and nominated members from Schools and voluntary and other youth groups. All new members receive accredited training for their active participation (Youth Achievement Award) and have the opportunity

to take part in the OCN accredited Young People as Trainers training, as well as communications training.

- 3.4 Last year 5 Youth Consultants were elected by their peers, to 'fill the gap' of 6 months between the ending of the term of office for the first Youth Council in March 2008, and the election of the new cohort in November 2008. However this proved to be too much responsibility for a team of 5 young people. As a consequence the BHYC constitution has changed to increase Youth Councillors term of office from 18 months to 2 years.
- 3.5 Youth Council members wanted to be more involved in local issues and chose to mirror the City Council's new structure, with Cabinet Members with Portfolios. The Youth Cabinet holds quarterly meetings in Brighton Council Chambers, and the full Youth Council meets monthly at Brighton Youth Centre. Smaller sub-group (portfolio) meetings take place fortnightly at Ovest House.
- 3.6 Elections for the BHYC 08-10 took place in November 2008. A Celebration Event was held in December 2008 to launch the new cohort of Youth Councillors. Councillor Vanessa Brown addressed the young people and other guests included, Steve Barton (CYPT Assistant Director), school staff and community and voluntary sector workers.
- 3.7 An Induction Meeting of the Youth Council was held in January 2009 with representatives from services across the city invited to take part, including, Councillor Anne Norman (now Mayor Norman), Steve Barton (BHCC AD), Brighton & Hove Bus Company, Superintendent Grenville Wilson from Sussex Police, and other council officers. Here the new youth council members heard from decision makers and learnt about children's rights and how to become active citizens making a positive contribution to their community.
- 3.8 The Youth Council decided to campaign for the introduction of a 3-in-1 discount card for young people in the City, an innovation they feel is particularly important in the current economic climate. Each of the 6 portfolio groups have identified issues and are planning campaigns relevant to their interests.

An outline of the BHYC citywide and portfolio campaigns can be seen on the campaign sheet, attached as Appendix 1.

- 3.9 In addition to the portfolio groups other Youth Council activities include:
 - Standards Monitoring Group (SMG), who recently conducted a 'Mystery Shopping' exercise to help assess Connexions Plus Centres across the city, on behalf of the IYSS. The group of 14 youth council members (who call themselves Connect4teen) used Hear by Right (HbR) standards to evaluate the Centres.
 - Question Time Advisory Group who are involved in the planning, organisation and delivery of the young people's Question Time 2009 (part of the proposed 'Get Involved' Event) in conjunction with Democratic Services. There are 6 youth council members on this group. They meet monthly.

- 3.10 The UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) is a national organisation that enables young people to take part in local, regional and national democracy. All UKYP local authority representatives, known as Members of Youth Parliament (MYP's) and Deputy MYP's, are elected by their peers in their own local authorities. The Brighton & Hove MYP and DMYP are elected from within the BHYC. 13 Youth Council members stood for election this year.

Both the MYP and DMYP attend fortnightly meetings to work on their local campaigns, and regional meetings every 2 months to discuss regional issues.

Both attended a Regional Residential on the Isle of Wight, in March of this year. Here they met their peers from the South East, receive training and decided on their regional campaign: 'Votes at 16'.

The MYP has attended the Annual Sitting in June, with other MYPs from across the UK. During this 4 day event they received more training, heard from Public speakers and voted on 3 national campaigns: Fares Fair – cheaper public transport, Abolition of tuition fees, and Political Education.

Our MYP will attend the first ever UKYP debate in the House of Commons later this year.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Youth Council representatives on the CYPT Board were consulted, and advised on the content of this report.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation to note this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Jeff Coates

Date: 17/08/2009

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Layer Consulted: Natasha Watson

Date: 20/08/2009

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The BHYC supports equality by encouraging young people to take part from all different backgrounds, abilities, sexuality, ethnic and minority groups. BHYC also has connections with the BHCC Equality and Inclusion team, to consult and support where possible.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 BHYC is represented on the Sustainable Communities Act Panel and supports sustainability where possible in Brighton & Hove.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 BHYC has a member referred from the Youth Offending Service.

The BHYC have been asked to provide representatives to sit on a pan-Sussex Youth Advisory Group convened by Sussex Police.

The Environment, Safety and Transport portfolio group is campaigning to promote safer spaces for young people in Brighton & Hove.

The Culture, Recreation and Tourism portfolio aim to reduce racially related incidents through its campaign.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

Risk Assessments are completed to cover all BHYC & UKYP activities.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 BHYC & UKYP campaigns plan to have positive implications for young people within their community, Citywide and for CYPT, as well as influencing national objectives.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To ensure that the CYPTB is kept fully informed about the developments of the Brighton & Hove Youth Council 08-10, including UKYP.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. BHYC Campaign Overview
2. UKYP Campaign Overview
3. BHYC Presentation

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None

