

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

15 July 2010

Young Person's Engagement with Scrutiny

Purpose

To consider how the panel can extend young people's engagement with the scrutiny process for children and young people in the city.

1. Context

- 1.1 The city has a strong record of enabling engagement and participation with children and young people. In the recent Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children, published in May 2010, participation was judged to be outstanding.
- 1.2 Examples of young people's engagement include:
 - Plymouth Youth Cabinet
 - City Youth Council
 - UK Youth Parliament
 - Out Youth Group
 - Young Reps
 - Looked After Children's Forum (Listen and Care Council)
- 1.3 It is important to utilise a range of different approaches to engagement because young people have different ways of expressing their views and opinions determined by age, gender, disability and particular interest group. This model of consultation is still evolving and becoming more broadly based.
- 1.4 Scrutiny needs to be wide ranging in its approach to youth engagement because it deals with a wide range of issues, some of which apply to all CYP and some of which are more specialised in their nature.
- 1.5 A number of Councils have approached engagement in Scrutiny in different ways with varying degrees of success.
- 1.6 When young people engage with the panel in future, we need to be clear on the following:
 - What are the panel's expectations?
 - What are the young people's expectations?
 - What barriers do we need to overcome?
 - What support needs to be in place?
 - What resources are needed to support the CYP?
- 1.7 We also need to focus on how we can support young people to:
 - Feel comfortable within the role and environment
 - Understand the content and context of Scrutiny
 - Feel confident to contribute to the process and ask questions

- 1.8 Terms of reference should be reviewed to ensure they include appropriate and clear guidelines and thus provide clarity for both the panel and young people.

2. Options for Panel's Consideration

- 2.1 That Active Citizenship as a curriculum entitlement for all is promoted throughout Plymouth's schools. This has at its core understanding the democratic process, acquiring political literacy and taking informed and responsible action.
- 2.2 That the CYP representatives on the Scrutiny panel comprise one member of the UK Youth Parliament and one member to be elected from either the Youth Cabinet or the City Youth Council, these being the forums with the broadest electoral base and/or levels of relevant experience.
- 2.3 That the above representatives hold their posts for one year and help to mentor their successors.
- 2.4 That Routeways are commissioned to undertake a review of CYP engagement over the autumn, bringing their findings back to the scrutiny panel in January 2011. The review to be based on the proposed Participation Network, bringing together the views of the forums listed in para 1.2 above, as well as any others who feel they have an interest in the process. The purpose of the review would be to develop a wide and inclusive strategy for ensuring the engagement of children and young people in the scrutiny processes in Plymouth, and to establish for which of the agenda items routinely dealt with by Scrutiny it is appropriate and desirable for CYP to have their views heard.
- 2.5 In the interim, if there are any agenda items that you would like to consult with young people on, the Plymouth Youth Cabinet and City Youth Council would be happy to look over any items and give feedback.

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