



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 9TH JANUARY 2018

SUBJECT: JUNIOR AND YOUTH FORUM PRIORITIES

REPORT BY: CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of issues raised by Children & Young People via the Youth Service's Junior and Youth Fora. The report is seeking the views of Members prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the Youth Forum Conference in October 2017 and the Junior Forum meeting in November 2017, Children & Young People have identified issues important to them and have voted on Priority Issues for 2018.
- 2.2 The previously agreed process that follows the identification of issues has been as follows:
- Presentation of issues to SMT for information.
 - Young People present Junior Forum issues to Cabinet for information only and to request support in addressing the Youth Forum priority.
 - Young People to present issues to relevant scrutiny groups for information.
 - Young People to present issues to the Public Service Board for information.
 - Issues are presented directly by Young People.
 - Young People form a Project Group that meets weekly to address the Youth Forum priority issue, working directly with Officers and Members as appropriate on a range of initiatives intended to have a positive impact on the issue. This work continues until September 2018, with the process re-starting in October.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Local Participation Action Plan 2013.
- 3.2 The Caerphilly County Borough Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017(SIP) with particular reference to the LSB Citizen Engagement Strategy 2013.
- 3.3 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Welsh Government Extending Entitlement Guidance.
- 3.4 Involvement of children and young people in decision making contributes to the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016:

- *A prosperous Wales – Engaging young people in decision making and associated rights-based participative activity enables skills development and access to a variety of experiences which assists on a pathway to further education and employment.*
- *A more equal Wales – Involvement within the Fora aims to give all children and young people access to having a voice and being informed of their rights, regardless of background or circumstance.*
- *A Wales of cohesive communities – Much of the participative outreach related activity has been delivered in community based locations, aiming to connect communities of young people to local decision-making.*
- *A globally responsible Wales – Youth Forum related activity embraces the rights-based agenda with national and European activity, with links to the National Assembly for Wales, the UK Youth Parliament and the European Youth Parliament, enabling local young people to contribute to and influence global issues.*

3.5 The PSB Communication & Engagement Strategy, of which adheres to the National Principles of Engagement and the National Participation Standards for Children and Young People.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The Junior & Youth Fora are structured and organised around the five themes of the Single Integrated Plan: Prosperous Caerphilly; Safer Caerphilly; Learning Caerphilly; Healthier Caerphilly; Greener Caerphilly, enabling children and young people to have a voice on issues that affect them. Junior Forum Representatives are aged 7-11 years; Youth Forum Representatives are aged 11-25 years.

4.1.2 At the Annual Youth Forum Conference Young People are provided with the opportunity to explore issues previously raised via borough wide consultation. Young people attending the conference present their views on each of the themes and engage in a dialogue with relevant Officers and Cabinet members. From exploring all themes within the context of young people's lives, young people identify and agree on a priority issue for each theme.

Following the Conference, an overall priority is voted for by Young People representing the Youth Service, Schools and Youth Support Services. The issues, as voted for by 1491 young people in a post - conference consultation for 2018 are:

Youth Forum Issues:

54% Safer Caerphilly – **Overall Priority Issue**

Bullying – Increase peoples understanding of what is classed as bullying and help people to understand how to deal with bullying.

16% Learning Caerphilly

Life Skills – We need a curriculum to prepare us for life.

12% Healthier Caerphilly

Sexual Health – Improve young people's access to sexual health services.

12% Prosperous Caerphilly

Housing – Affordable housing for young people leaving home.

6% Greener Caerphilly

Adventurous Outdoor Play - Provide safe adventurous play areas suitable for young people to encourage them to use local outdoor spaces.

- 4.1.3 The Junior Forum representatives identified a priority within each Forum theme, raised via consultation and then voted for as the overall priority. The issues voted for by 98 children are:

Junior Forum Issues:

39% Prosperous Caerphilly – **Overall Priority Issue**

Homelessness - More support is needed for homeless people.

33% Safer Caerphilly

Drugs - Too many people use drugs, education needs to start at an earlier age.

18% Healthier Caerphilly

Smoking – People need to stop smoking and vaping around children.

8% Learning Caerphilly

Bullying – Bullying has a negative impact on children’s learning.

2% Greener Caerphilly

Green Spaces – Increase green spaces for outdoor play.

- 4.2 The Youth Forum will attend Education Scrutiny Committee on 9th January 2018. To present on the issues and outline the plans to address the Priority Issue, and wish to proceed with attendance at Cabinet to seek support in addressing the priority issue.

5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act by working with children and young people (and supporting other service providers to work with children and young people) to impact on decision making for short term and long term needs. By listening to the voices of children and young people, service providers are better able to respond to needs, better able to identify and understand problems as experienced by our citizens and thus better able to shape services in the future in a more effective responsive way.
- 5.2 Involving children and young people in decision making at all levels fosters a culture of expectation and responsibility, strengthened by increasing their knowledge and understanding in Children’s Rights.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the council’s full Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.
- 6.2 The participative activity that has taken place throughout 2017 has benefitted many different groups in the community with many children and young people having been recipients of engagement activity, rights-based education and informed service delivery.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 All responses from consultations have been incorporated in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That the Education Scrutiny Committee supports the presentation of Junior & Youth Forum issues to Cabinet.

10.2 That Education Scrutiny Committee considers how to support the Youth Forum in addressing their Priority Issue of Bullying.

10.3 That Education Scrutiny Committee considers how to support the Junior Forum in addressing their Priority Issue in supporting homelessness.

10.4 Education Scrutiny Committee to have due regard to issues raised within this report by Children and Young People when making decisions which impact upon their lives.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 To ensure members are informed of priorities identified by Children & Young People.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 'Shared Purpose: Shared Future, Statutory Guidance on the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015', and in particular SPSF 3 – Annex B, which is issued in accordance with Section 17(3) of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 and applies to local authorities in respect of local well-being plans and whenever they take decisions which might affect children and young people.

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