

Progress Update of Youth Participation

Children's Health, Social Care and Education

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 29th November 2017

Author:	Project Manager – Swindon 10 to 18 Project (STEP)
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report provides the Children's Health, Social Care and Education Committee with an update of performance and key issues relating to youth participation; Swindon's Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs), Swindon Youth Council, Young Inspectors and Thought Tank (SEND Participation Group).
- 1.2 A key purpose of Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee is to hold Commissioners of Children's Health and Social Care Services to account.
- 1.3 This work links to the following One Swindon Priorities:
 - Everyone is enjoying sports, leisure and cultural opportunities
 - Improve health and wellbeing for all by widening participation in sports, leisure and cultural activities
 - Living independently, protected from harm, leading healthy lives and making a positive contribution
 - Increased community involvement so that everyone is able to make a positive contribution

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Continue to support the work of the Members of Youth Parliament, Swindon Youth Council, Thought Tank and the wider youth participation agenda across Swindon.
- 2.2 Make available opportunities for children & young people to contribute to the work streams of Health, Adults & Children Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3 Agree when a further report on progress should be brought back to the committee.

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3. Detail

Swindon Youth Council and Members of Youth Parliament

- 3.1 To support the campaign of the DMYP around access to health & Leisure services, the 'Your Space, Your Say' project has been designed. These sessions were co-delivered by a PhD Student in Health from Bath University. The group have looked at what they value about being active, factors that prevent them taking part in active lifestyles, and places where young people would like to be active.

The results of the project were presented at an exhibition at STEAM on the 23rd September 2017, and Members of Swindon Council / Leisure services attended to listen to the young people's findings; In all 70 guests attended the event.

The results and findings from the project have incorporated the views of all the young people involved including those recruited through Youth Council, 'The Dock', and SMASH.

Young People's Ideas for Change:

- Re-introduce the 'Swindon Card', a loyalty card that offers discounted prices on local leisure provision for young people
- Collaborations between businesses and Swindon Borough Council to offer discounted activities
- More cost-conscious options for active days out for the whole family
- More free leisure activities, such as Swindon junior parkrun, held in other areas of Swindon
- Private leisure companies and community based organisations need to prioritise young people
- More accessible leisure provision
- Introduce transport subsidies to leisure clubs to ensure ease of access to leisure clubs and various places in the community
- Joined up approaches are necessary to ensure council services work together to meet the needs of young people living in Swindon e.g. Children, Families, and Community Health;
- Environment and Planning; Police and Crime Commissioner; and Recreation, Leisure and Culture.
- Increased promotion of free/ discounted leisure activities

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- Use social media and other young people friendly websites to promote leisure opportunities in local areas e.g. through The Dock Swindon
 - Promote free leisure opportunities, e.g. junior parkrun, in schools and provide participation incentives to local school children
 - Informal opportunities for leisure
 - Provide more fun and sociable opportunities for young people to be active, rather than traditional sport; e.g. trampoline parks, ice skating, trampoline parks, bike rides, American football, outdoor and indoor skate parks, outdoor adventure parks, maintaining parks with ponds, nature and woodland areas, parkour
 - Offer free taster activities and beginner group sessions, to help young people feel more confident about joining new groups or clubs
 - Promote inclusive activities that focus on participation and not just excellence
 - Facilitating more safe, welcome spaces
 - Young people need more inclusive spaces, where they don't feel they are being judged
 - Help cut down on bullying and negative behaviour by making bullying more aware in schools and on social media
 - Additional staff training is needed in all services that interact with young people, to help and support young people who have had negative experiences with peers, such as conflict or hate speech
 - Support groups with a focus on holistic health and wellbeing, could help young people who face difficulties at home e.g. young people who are young carers, or have experienced care, family bereavements, loss of employment, divorce.

From the idea's gathered the Deputy Member of Youth Parliament will:

- Arrange a joint meeting with SBC Directors and Leisure service providers - funding / viability of a new card, or alternative options (cheap day Saturday / Half Term / School Holidays)
- Arrange a number of Inspections to assess the suitability and appropriateness of current services regarding young people's participation.

Updates to this piece of work will be presented at future meeting

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3.2 Public Health - Mental Health Project – Phase 1 has been completed, artwork has been supplied for the 'Mental health & Emotional Wellbeing Award, and all participation groups were given the opportunity to feed back on the Award criteria. All completed work so far has been passed on to the Public Health Manager.

Phase 2 – 'Young person led review of current provision' has begun, with a scoping exercise to understand the need of young people, Youth Council members were given the opportunity to interview their peers

Snapshot of findings highlighting the everyday pressures that young people face in Swindon:

- Job pressures and not sufficient jobs available
- Pressures to pass exams
- Anxiety, social abilities, confidence
- Lack of money to do leisure activities or spend time with friends
- Mental health and bullying
- The fear of bullying may prevent young people from doing leisure activities, the choices that young people make and making new friends
- Fear of bullying not just within schools, also or including in community spaces
- Fear of bullying and judgement due to being 'different' e.g. for disabilities such as autism, Asperger's, or for being a different size/ weight to peers
- Bullying prevents young people from showing their true capabilities
- Negative impact of bullying on mental health: impacts on young people's self-worth, self-confidence, mental wellbeing, happiness, focus on tasks in lessons at school

Ideas to prevent bullying; Increased awareness of bullying, need to increase the awareness of bullying, better training for teachers to be able to deal with bullying, keep away from bullies, stay near teachers, opportunities to talk about experiences of bullying in a safe place.

Ideas to make young people feel better about mental health:

- Raising awareness of mental health – aim to normalize the idea of mental health – By reducing stigma, children and young people will be more 'open' to talking about and addressing the issue of mental health

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- Increasing services to support young people's mental health, and increasing awareness of these services such as school counsellors, CAMHS and TaMHS services, Childline, STEP
- Talk about mental health more in school, home, or leisure clubs (such as with sports coaches)
- Recommissioning of CAMHS – This piece of work (in partnership with Wiltshire and BaNES) was completed in June. Young people from Swindon Youth Council were involved in the process, this is a good step forward and children and young people should be involved in all discussions concerning service delivery and commissioning for mental and emotional well-being.

Early 2018 young people will embark on a 'Reducing the Stigma' campaign, producing posters to be distributed around the borough alongside a short film that they hope will be used in schools and other youth settings.

- 3.3 Make your Mark 2017 - On the 10th November 2017, Members of UK Youth Parliament – including representation from Swindon - will come together to debate and decide in their House of Commons sitting the most important issue that they will campaign on for the year ahead. They will decide this from the top 5 issues voted on by young people from across the UK from the Make Your Mark ballot.

Although all Swindon's secondary schools (eligible to vote) were contacted, only 3 schools took part in the process – feedback has been given to the British Youth Council questioning the scheduling and time frame of the annual ballot and difficulty engaging schools due to break (summer school holiday) between launch – end of July – and actual voting – process needs to be reintroduced once schools returned in September.

Also, 2 schools have fed back that they are reluctant to engage as the outcomes, and annual work to the national priority is not forthcoming and not always relevant to their school. These Issues will be addressed at January 2018 BYC conference.

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Swindon's Make your Mark Results 2017

School or youth group	1. A Curriculum to prepare us for life	2. Votes at 16	3. Protect LGBT+ People	4. Support for Young Carers	5. Transport	6. First Aid Education for All Young People	7. Mental health	8. Make the invisible visible	9. Protect school's budgets from damaging cuts	10. Work Experience hubs for 11-18-year olds	Total Vote Count
St Joseph's Catholic College	100	61	50	24	49	47	58	24	46	146	605
The Dorcan Academy	125	32	99	42	71	32	41	53	15	55	565
Highworth Warneford School	88	97	77	17	96	57	83	25	20	60	620
STEP	1	1	1	3	1	2	6	2	1	2	20
Online votes	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
Total	314	194	228	86	217	138	188	104	82	264	1815

Curriculum for Life will be our local priority – we plan to discuss this outcome with the Youth Council and participating schools to assess the application and practicality of this campaign, to define what 'curriculum for life' means to those who voted.

Thought Tank

- 3.4 The group have continued their support around reviewing Swindon Borough Council's Transition process. Following on from the 'Transition Market Development Workshops' our young people were asked to feedback on the findings and contribute their own views. All findings have been forwarded to Head of Commissioning for Adults, and Head of Transitions.

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Snapshot of findings:

The young people expressed that they felt it was extremely important for all young people to have the opportunity to be as independent as possible.

They described independence as:

- Learning skills to cope on your own
- Managing own life decisions (if safe and appropriate to do so) with as little interference from others as possible, even if this meant making mistakes. They felt that making mistakes was part of the learning process and could help form decisions and actions in the future
- The freedom to take control BUT having the right to support to do so. However, the support should not be forced upon the young person, it should be reasonable and agreed by the young person always
- The process should be a gradual one / staged (maybe over several years) so that the young person, in a safe and supported environment, can get use to making their own decisions / learn skills they will need to live independently

Who do you think should support young people to become more independent? Just the providers or others as well?

The first response by all the young people in this group was that parents / carers extended family (including grandparents and older siblings) were the most important support mechanisms for young people to achieve independence.

Work will continue around 'Transitions' and will take a prominent role in the design of a young person focused 'Transitions Roadshow' in the new year.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 none

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

5.1 There are no financial or procurement implications arising from this report

Legal and Human Rights Implications

5.2 There are no direct legal or human rights implications arising from this report

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All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There are no implications arising from this report

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 A diversity risk assessment is not required as this is an ongoing service.

Risk Management

- 5.5 A risk assessment has not been completed as this report is not recommending a specific amendment to a policy or strategy.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None.