

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

**Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development
Committee**

Special Meeting held 17 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair), Mike Chaplin, Julie Grocutt, Francyne Johnson, Alan Law, Joe Otten, Kevin Oxley, Colin Ross, Jim Steinke and Cliff Woodcraft

Non-Council Members in attendance:-

Sam Evans, (Diocese Representative - Non-Council Voting Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Alison Warner School Governor Representative – Non-Council Non-Voting Member) and Alice Riddell (Healthwatch Sheffield – Observer).

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

4.1 There were no questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

5. MAKE YOUR MARK 2019 RESULTS

5.1 The Committee received a report of the Sheffield Youth Cabinet, which outlined the findings from the “Make Your Mark” consultation which had been undertaken to decide what the Youth Cabinet priorities were locally, regionally and nationally for the year ahead.

5.2 Present for this item were members of the Youth Cabinet representing the North, East and West areas of the city.

5.3 The Chair, Councillor Mick Rooney, asked the Youth Councillors in turn what the two most important issues to them were. The responses were as follows:-

5.3.1 **Cameron Smith, Youth Councillor, East Area**

- The Protection of the Environment – Cameron said that young people were more aware about the issues surrounding the environment and climate change.
- Curriculum for Life – Cameron said that, unless young people had family and friends to provide them with vital citizenship education, they don't learn about vital life skills and he felt that these should be taught as part of the curriculum to include political education; sex and relationships education (SRE); cultural awareness; community cohesion; finance skills; sustainable living and Citizenship Education.

5.3.2 Nye Roberts, Youth Councillor, West Area

- Across West Sheffield, nine schools had taken part in the Make Your Mark ballot with over 4,500 young people casting their votes. The most important issue for him was to protect the environment and encourage schools to become more eco-friendly.
- On the issue of mental health, he didn't think there was enough support, both inside of schools and externally, given to children with mental health problems. He said the waiting lists for referrals were far too long.

5.3.3 Muneera Al-Yafai, Youth Councillor, North Area

- She felt that not enough was being done towards dealing with Knife and Hate Crime. It was a major issue locally and nationally and there doesn't seem to be any help towards the prevention and reduction in violent crime. She said that people were afraid to contact the Police for fear of repercussions.

5.4 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-

- Many young people had said "scrap Brexit" but it was not on the list of issues to be discussed. Although Brexit was a national issue, it was not considered to be a local one.
- Following the outcome of the Make Your Mark consultation and vote which was announced at the end of October, members of the UK Youth Parliament visited the House of Commons on 8th November, 2019, to debate and decide upon two issues to become national campaigns for the year ahead.
- On the issue of litter – there are a lot of social clubs but none of these carry out litter picks. At one school in the city, recycling bins have been installed and this has been working well however, only plastic bottles can be recycled so a lot more could be done to encourage more general recycling. The school had also switched to a green energy provider.
- It was felt that there should be some degree of parental responsibility for

young people dropping litter. Parents should teach their children how to dispose of litter responsibly. Young people were passionate about tackling the issue of litter and protecting the environment.

- Consultations had been held with South Yorkshire Police and the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner regarding knife crime and there were plans to hold other consultation meetings. A lot of work was done with the Police, but due to purdah, it had not been possible to publish a lot of what had been done nationally.
- Following funding received by the Police and Crime Commissioner, Project 0114 had been set up which will be delivered by Sheffield Futures in conjunction with delivery partners, Sheffield City Council, ACT Sheffield, The Unity Gym Project, St Marks Church in Broomhill, Manor Castle Development Trust, My Life Project, Princes Trust, and Change Grow Live (CGL). The Project was to include an education programme for all secondary school pupils across the city as well as year six pupils in primary schools in areas deemed to be most at risk. A second strand to the project will engage children aged 10-13 identified as at risk of grooming for gang involvement and serious violence with positive enrichment activities
- Videos had been shown in schools of people risking their lives but the police don't always resolve matters straight away.
- More pressure and funding for schools to be able to detect mental health problems and ways of prevention.
- In one school, local police officers had attended the school assembly and the children felt more able to engage with them. It was felt that if the police were able to attend more school assemblies and engaged with young people, they might feel more comfortable at contacting them.
- Young people rely heavily on family, friends and parents for guidance on life issues such as paying taxes, insurance, learning to drive etc. If children haven't got anyone to ask, where do they go to. Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons should form part of the curriculum and be compulsory in schools. Relationships were completely brushed over in schools and it was felt that they should be studied in more depth.
- The members of the Youth Cabinet said they would like to be more involved with the Council but were unaware of how to contact Councillors. They said that social media would be better than emails or letters as young people could relate more to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc., and use it on a daily basis.
- Councillor Jim Steinke has been tasked with finding the best way to communicate with young people. He said that it was a generational thing and there was a need to get the right balance, even with younger children.
- There shouldn't just be one way to communicate. Schools should be

encouraged to produce a simple leaflet titled “This is how you contact the Council”.

- The topic of Brexit has caused a massive surge in interest in politics and produced a lot of debate in class. Young people were ready to get engaged and become more involved as Brexit and whatever happens, is their future.
- It was almost impossible to think of ways to stop cyber bullying on social media. There should be more support given in schools to reduce pressure on those who were vulnerable and in danger of being bullied.

5.5 The Chair asked members of the Youth Cabinet to sum up the issues that matter to them. These were as follows:-

- In some schools, after school clubs can cost up to £8 per session, and holiday clubs £20 per day, these were unaffordable for many families
- There was only one school in the city that teaches “A” level politics. It was felt that politics should be taught at a much younger age. If not, people just don’t know how to get involved.
- There was an issue about different parts of the city and how things get reported and are dealt with. If an incident occurs in the east of the city, it gets reported in depth but in the west of the city, things tend to get brushed over.
- The Council should contact the schools that didn’t participate in the ballot and ask for their reasons why and encourage them to be more pro-active in teaching democracy and politics in schools.

5.6 The Chair thanked members of the Youth Cabinet for their attendance at the meeting and said that he and the Deputy Chair of the Committee looked forward to attending meetings with the Youth Cabinet whenever possible. The Chair said he would write to schools to encourage them to participate in future Make Your Mark consultation and would write to Cabinet Member about young people’s priority of a Curriculum for Life.

5.7 RESOLVED: That the Committee recommends:-

- (a) to relevant Cabinet Member that Youth Cabinet have at least one place on the Citizens Assembly for Climate Change;
- (b) the Committee’s Task Group *Voice and Influence of Children and Young People*, led by Councillor Jim Steinke, work with the Youth Cabinet with regard how best to connect and work with the Council governance system;
- (c) that City Council Cabinet Members be asked to address a meeting of the Youth Cabinet;

- (d) the Youth Cabinet find out through their arrangements what topic young people in Sheffield would like Sheffield Scrutiny to take up; and
- (e) Young People through Youth Cabinet feed back to the Committee, solutions to issues of importance to them in the city.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 6.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday, 3rd February, 2020, at 10.00 a.m., in the Town Hall.

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