

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Briefing for Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee 23 January 2013

UPDATE ON BROMLEY YOUTH COUNCIL MANIFESTO CAMPAIGN PROGRAMME

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1. Summary

- 1.1 To update Committee Members on the current performance and recent achievements of the Bromley Youth Council Manifesto Campaign Programme.

2. **THE BRIEFING**

- 2.1 Bromley Youth Council is the elected youth forum of the London Borough of Bromley, which enables young residents of the Borough to have a voice in local decision making and encourages young people to take part in campaigns and projects to address the issues that affect them. The work of the Bromley Youth Council is managed and supported by the Bromley Youth Support Programme's Youth Involvement staff team. Bromley Youth Council celebrated its 10th anniversary in November 2012.
- 2.2 Bromley Youth Council (BYC) has an elected and co opted membership of 75 young people aged 11-19 years old (up to 25 with a disability or special education need). Bromley Youth Council promotes key functions including youth leadership, volunteering, youth democracy, listening to young people and putting young people at the heart of decision making.
- 2.3 Each year the Youth Council host a youth manifesto event, to which all borough secondary schools and colleges are invited to send representation. The event is planned, delivered and evaluated by youth councillors and supported by youth support work programme staff. Key decision makers in the borough, including elected members, officers and service managers are invited as guests, to listen to the views and concerns and answer questions from young people either living, being educated or growing up in Bromley. The outcomes from this event contribute to and complete the BYC Manifesto for the forthcoming year.
- 2.4 At the manifesto event in March 2012, 75 young people from 15 schools and colleges identified their priority issues as a mandate for the Youth Council. Bullying was identified as the key issue, with gangs, sex and relationship education, and employment as the next most prioritised concerns. The initial identification of issues at the manifesto event formed the basis from which campaign plans for these concerns were drawn up by youth council members.

Bullying was identified to be the Youth Council's primary campaign for 2012 with the others as secondary campaigns.

2.5 Progress on this primary campaign is the subject of the remainder of this report. Information on the Youth Council's secondary campaigns is available from the contact officer for this report.

3. BULLYING CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

3.1 The campaign is addressing the following:

- Bullying policies in schools: Young people feel awareness should be raised of school's bullying policies and they would like the opportunity to work with their schools to develop these and review those already in place.
- Raising awareness of all forms of bullying: Young people felt that there were a number of different forms of bullying that were not known about, including the variety of social media networks being used for bullying as well as covert emotional and psychological bullying.
- Raising awareness with Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams: Young people were keen for a more integrated approach between schools and communities to ensure young people are aware of the support mechanisms available to them.
- Peer pressure/peer support programmes: Young people were keen to look at ways in which previous victims and perpetrators of bullying could be supported to undertake peer support programmes or 'buddying' type programmes in schools.
- Raise awareness of national Campaigns and initiatives: Allow BYC to act as a conduit to school councils of events led by British Youth Council and UK Youth Parliament.

4. BULLYING CAMPAIGN ACHIEVEMENTS

4.1 The Youth Council canvassed the views of young people through the manifesto event and chose to raise awareness of the steps individuals can take to minimise risk from cyber bullying; supporting young people to safeguard their information on social networking sites and empowering young people by ensuring they have access to good quality, accurate information. 12 representatives of Bromley Youth Council formed the main bullying campaign working group. They researched facts and figures using the internet and local information to Bromley, gaining new skills and knowledge.

4.2 The Chair of BYC undertook a training course to learn how to support other people who were experiencing bullying. In addition they worked alongside schools, colleges and other youth organisations to agree and sign up to a simple 'Anti Bullying Pledge'; to tackle and support both victims and perpetrators of bullying.

4.3 Young people took responsibility for identifying the policies available within their own schools and groups to inform the BYC campaign and raise awareness of the pledge and the poster campaign. The campaign group produced an anti-bullying campaign pledge and a poster to advertise the campaign. (Copies of the poster and the pledge are available in the Members' Room.)

- 4.4 All Bromley secondary schools including special schools and the Pupil Referral Unit signed up to the pledge. Bromley College signed up to the pledge alongside all Bromley Youth Support Programme projects, Youth Offending Team, Living In Care Council, Bromley Young Advisers and several voluntary sector organisations. In total, 44 pledges were signed by the time of the pledge launch on 22 November, which was chosen to coincide with National Anti-Bullying Week. All signatories to the pledge were given a framed, signed copy for display.
- 4.5 Prior to the pledge launch, Youth Council members undertook 100 pre launch questionnaires with young people to gauge their awareness of cyber bullying and prevention methods. A similar exercise will be undertaken in February 2013 to gauge whether young people have an increased awareness level following the campaign.
- 4.6 During National Anti-Bullying Week and the week of the pledge launch, youth council members and youth support programme staff delivered 13 assemblies or workshops across the borough. The public launch event in the Glades Shopping Centre, was attended by 17 BYC members.
- 500 wrist bands promoting the 'beat bullying' message were disseminated to young people.
 - 500 wallet size copies of the pledge were distributed to young people.
 - 570 people were spoken to during the course of the anti-bullying campaign pledge launch, 448 of these were aged 11-19.
 - 600 copies of the cyber bullying poster have been distributed to youth organisations, schools, colleges, clubs and other public venues.

Publicity for the event was secured via an interview by Bromley Times with the Chair of BYC during September 2012, which was published on 20/9/12, promoting the work and campaign of BYC. This was further enhanced via the partnership between the Portfolio Holder for Education, the Children's Champion and the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Community Safety. Both Portfolios funded a piece in the Newshopper, in which the Youth Council, their 'bullying or banter' campaign and the work of several local schools in relation to anti-bullying was highlighted (article published on 21/11/12).

5. FINAL CAMPAIGN REPORT

- 5.1 Bromley Youth Council will produce a final campaign report for the end of their 2012/13 campaigns at the end of February 2013. This report will be presented as an introduction to the 2013 Youth Council manifesto event in March 2013.
- 5.2 An appendix to the final report will identify both individual and group outcomes and achievements.