

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Briefing for Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee 2nd July 2014

BROMLEY YOUTH COUNCIL MANIFESTO 2013/14 CAMPAIGN UPDATE AND 2014/15 CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

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1. Summary

- 1.1 To update Committee Members on the outcome of the Bromley Youth Council Manifesto Campaign Programme for 2013/14 and to advise them of the BYC Manifesto Priorities for 2014/15.

2. **THE BRIEFING**

Bromley Youth Council

- 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 team.
- 2.2 Bromley Youth Council (BYC) has a current elected and co-opted membership of 41 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. The Youth Council hold biennial elections across Bromley Schools, Colleges, Youth Clubs and Voluntary services. In addition the Youth Council offers co-opted representation to the Living in Care Council, Bromley Young Advisers and Bromley Young Carers. The Youth Council has representatives on the British Youth Council and the United Kingdom Youth Parliament.
- 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 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. **A copy of the 2014/15 Youth Manifesto is available from the report author.**

Youth Council Manifesto - 2013/14

- 2.4 The Youth Council Manifesto 2013/14 identified 'Mental Health and Well-being' as the key issue, with youth activities, tuition fees and staying safe as the next most prioritised concerns. 'Mental Health and Well-being' became the primary campaign.

End of year update

- 2.5 The Youth Council ran a successful Mental Health and Well-being campaign involving all secondary schools in the borough, youth centres and voluntary sector services. The Youth Council has produced an End of Year Report detailing the impact of the individual campaigns as well as reporting individual and group outcomes and achievements. **A copy of the End of Year Report 2013/14 is available on request from the lead contact for this report.**

- 2.6 The key headline achievements for the Youth Council have been:

- During the year Bromley Youth Council has worked with, or surveyed, or listened to, or engaged in conversation with in excess of 6500 young people from across the borough.
- Young people have undertaken the research, planning and production of leaflets and a short infomercial style film to support the Mental Health and Wellbeing campaign message. (Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eq31G4F3MLE>.) The film and leaflet resources were launched alongside a green ribbon campaign on World Mental Health Day in October in Bromley. BYC were part of a consortium of groups offering mental health Information in the town centre on this day. During the event, Youth Councillors spoke to 628 young people, and 239 adults about mental health and wellbeing.
- Bromley Youth Council sent copies of their film and leaflets to all secondary schools across the borough. This was accompanied by a set of free core PSHE lesson plans produced by the Samaritans aiming to help students to develop an understanding of the meaning of the term 'emotional health' as it relates to them, and their friends/family/peers.
- The Bromley Youth Council Mental Health and Awareness Film was posted on Mindfull website. www.Mindfull.org This is a brilliant new service for 11-17 year olds. It provides support, information and advice about mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- 223 young people from across the Borough undertook a staying safe questionnaire and the recommendations were used to produce a

presentation given by young people at the Bromley Crime Summit in September 2013 to approximately 75 adult attendees.

- A copy of the Staying Safe campaign report and presentation was sent to Stephen Greenhalgh, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime for London.

Manifesto 2014/15

- 2.7 At the manifesto event in March 2014, 78 young people from 14 schools and colleges identified their priority issues as a mandate for the Youth Council. 'Portrayal of Youth in The Media' was identified as the key issue and will be the Youth Council's primary campaign for 2014, with 'Domestic Violence' as the next most prioritised concern and the focus of the secondary campaign.
- 2.8 The aims and objectives and the proposed work plans of the 2014/15 campaigns are the subject of the remainder of this report.

3. Primary Campaign: The portrayal of Youth in the Media

3.1 Bromley Youth Council want young people in Bromley to be portrayed as more than media stereotypes and want to raise the profile of the positive contribution young people make to their communities. Recent research commissioned by Women in Journalism suggests that more than half of the stories about teenage boys in national and regional newspapers (4,374 out of 8,629) were about crime. Nationally, 81% of teenagers felt they were negatively represented in the media and that this was having an adverse effect on their lives.

3.2 The campaign intends to address the following key priority areas:

- Young people were concerned that local press only seemed to run negative stories of young people re-enforcing stereotypes of young people undertaking bad or negative acts.
- Young people expressed that they would like to look at opportunities to work alongside local press to raise the profile of the positive achievements of young people and the positive contributions young people are making within their communities and the borough as a whole.
- There was significant discussion about the use of social media as a positive tool for young people and a way they can portray a better image of young people. Bromley Youth Council would like to look at ways which it could facilitate this.
- In addition young people raised concerns about the messages that the general media sometimes portrays to young people and the 'negative influences' it can have on young people. Young people also expressed the need for more positive images of 'youth' and youth role models to be encouraged across services, schools, advertising etc.

The portrayal of youth in the media campaign proposed work plan

3.3 To address the issues the Youth Council are proposing to:

- Undertake a survey through school councils – seeking views of young people about how they are portrayed in the media. In addition BYC will work with schools to encourage a proactive approach to this campaign and engagement in profiling positive news stories via social media and local press.
- Work alongside LBB Communications Team to look at how BYC could forge closer relationships with local press and look the stories they publish about young people; with an aim to regress the balance and influence the decision making process.
- To develop a BYC Facebook/Twitter page to raise the profile of positive contributions made by Bromley young people via social media. To promote positive contributions of young people across schools, colleges youth organisations etc.
- Bromley Youth Council would like to work with the local authority to engage in and promote Takeover day on Friday 21st November with senior officers and members http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/takeover_day. This will give senior officers and young people the opportunity to work together to raise the profile of the positive contribution young people can and do make and provide an opportunity to attract positive press.

4. Secondary Campaign: Domestic Violence

4.1 The Youth Council recognize that domestic violence affects children and young people in a number of ways. They can experience the abuse both directly and indirectly and the impact of this can be significant in terms of emotional, behavioural, mental and physical well-being. Children and Young people can also be affected by the impact of the abuse on their non-abusive parent, usually the mother. Teenagers also experience domestic violence in their own intimate relationships, in 2012 a new definition recognised 16 and 17 year olds as victims of domestic violence. The Youth Council see their key role in this campaign to be the need to raise awareness.

4.2 In 2009 the University of Bristol and the NSPCC looked at the issue of partner violence in teenage intimate relationships, this was the first report of its type on the UK. A confidential survey was completed by 1,353 young people, between 13 and 17 years old, from eight schools in England, Scotland and Wales.

- A quarter of girls and 18 per cent of boys reported some form of physical partner violence.
- One in nine girls and 4 per cent of boys reported severe physical violence.
- Three-quarters of girls and 14 per cent of boys stated that the physical violence had negatively impacted on their welfare.
- Nearly three-quarters of girls and half of boys reported some form of emotional partner violence.

- A third of girls and 6 per cent of boys stated that the emotional violence had negatively affected their wellbeing.
 - One in three girls and 16 per cent of boys reported some form of sexual partner violence.
 - 18% of children and 24% of young adults have experienced domestic abuse between adults in their homes during childhood.
- 4.3 Figures provided are from “Partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships”, NSPCC 2009.
- 4.4 BYC recognise that they need to work with the ‘experts’ to effect change through this campaign. The Youth Council are consulting with the Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy Coordinator, to discuss the opportunities to influence and shape services for young people working alongside already existing provision.
- 4.5 The campaign intends to address the following key priority areas:
- Ensuring that other young people had the knowledge to identify if they were in a domestic violent relationship, or were part of a family where domestic violence was a feature.
 - The Youth Council felt it was important to explain the range of verbal/physical violence, address some of the stereotypes of who is affected and raise awareness of rape and that no means no.
 - A further priority was to ensure that Schools prioritize the topic in PSHE and citizenship lessons.
 - Following the desire to raise awareness of the issue, the Youth Council were keen to ensure young people had knowledge of support mechanisms and information, and the personal effects of domestic violence, including lack of confidence and self-esteem.

Domestic Violence Campaign Proposed Work Plan:

- 4.6 To address the issues the Youth Council is proposing to:
- Work with Health Improvement Service on the review/evaluation of Your Choice Your Voice programme for year 9 students. The programme supports and compliments PSHE delivery in schools. The programme comprises four main sessions: Bodies and Sexuality, Sexual Health, Relationships and Substance Misuse and Risky Behaviour. BYC will work with programme deliverers/leaders to ensure that the programme addresses issues which may lead to domestic violence situations.
 - Develop further plans/actions with the Borough’s Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy Coordinator including looking at how BYC could be involved in/support the Bromley Domestic Violence Conference planned for November, how they can be involved in the

consultation on the new domestic violence strategy, and the ‘This is Abuse’ campaign <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>.

- Bromley Youth Council would like to hold an awareness raising event in the town centre perhaps using the ‘white ribbon campaign’. This campaign is a worldwide effort of men working to end men’s violence against women. The campaign uses wearing a white ribbon as a personal pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women. The campaign focuses on November 25, the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk.
 - The Youth Council will seek to raise awareness across schools, colleges and youth organisations in the borough and encourage a curriculum focus on domestic violence and engagement with the “This is Abuse” campaign.
 - They will seek funding to supply schools, colleges and youth groups with Women’s Aid educational resources promoting the hideout website and the educational tool kit Expect Respect. (Link: www.thehideout.org.uk).
 - The new BYC Facebook page will be used to send out regular updates on the campaign and raise awareness of key dates, information and activities and resources.
- 4.7 The Youth Council is currently in the process of seeking funding and exploring opportunities to resource both campaigns.

5. CAMPAIGN PROGRESS REPORTING

- 5.1 The Youth Council will produce a mid-term progress report during October 2014; copies will be available on request mid October 2014 via the lead contact officer for this report.
- 5.2 The Youth Council will also produce an End of Year Report which will look at the impact of the campaign as well as reporting individual and group outcomes and achievements; copies will be available on request from April/May 2015 from the lead contact officer for this report.