

ASSEMBLY

19 February 2014

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| Title: Annual Report of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum | |
| Report of the Divisional Director, Targeted Support | |
| Open Report | For Information |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: No |
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| Accountable Divisional Director: Christine Pryor | |
| Accountable Director: Helen Jenner | |
| Summary: This report is a summary of the work and achievements of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum during its January to December 2013 sitting. | |
| Recommendation(s) The Assembly is recommended to continue to provide member support for the Forum and its associated campaigns. Members who are School Governors to continue to encourage their schools to work in partnership with the BAD Youth Forum and aid schools to promote pupil voice through the provision of a robust school council. Members to support improvements suggested by young people around accessibility and quality of sexual health services, Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons in schools and recommendations made by Young Inspectors through inspection. Minutes of the BAD Youth Forum to be sent to school council leads. Children's Services Select Committee to invite officers to respond to recommendations made by the BAD Youth Forum. | |
| Reason(s) The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum is a borough-wide platform for young people to express their views and help shape services. Members of the Barking & Dagenham Youth Forum are democratically elected each January through schools and youth groups to represent their peers. Through their participation, young people develop youth-focussed campaigns based on topics most important to young people in Barking and Dagenham. The campaigns aim to raise awareness of the issues being tackled and to | |

bring about change that will positively impact young people's lives. Through the fortnightly consultation sub-group, council officers and partner agencies have the opportunity to promote services, gather feedback about policies, strategies and services as well as gaining a youth perspective on how services can be improved and promoted to young people locally. In addition, a single member of the Forum sits on the Children's Services Select Committee as a co-opted member.

The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum Young Inspectors sub-group provides local services with the opportunity to have their services inspected by trained, experienced youth inspectors. In 2013, the Young Inspectors sub-group successfully carried out inspections of ten pharmacies - offering feedback on their condom distribution scheme aimed at young people and an inspection of Becontree Leisure Centre and the L&Q Housing Association. This report was fed back directly to the Community Sports and Art Group Manager, Andy Knight. The Young Inspectors also attended the Subwise, where they inspected the young people's drop in clinic and fed back to the team leader who has compiled an action plan based on the recommendations made in the report. Young Inspectors wanted to inspect local general practitioners' surgeries; as a result they arranged to inspect Patient Participation Groups which act as steering groups.

The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum members have gained many skills through their participation in the forum, including communication, leadership, negotiation, presentation and social skills, essential life skills which young people can utilise in a variety of settings.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In January 2013, 65 young people were elected to the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum. The young people were elected from all secondary schools and Trinity School, which has two representatives and a key worker who supports the young people during sessions.
- 1.2 At the beginning of the forum year, all members attended two full forum sessions and debated current youth issues that the forum might tackle in 2013. As a result of this meeting two sub-groups were chosen, 'Education' and 'Media'. Two subsequent full forum meetings took place throughout the year in the Council Chamber. A question and answer session was held with senior council officers, Police and Health officials as well as, a full forum meeting with Jon Cruddas MP at the Houses of Parliament .
- 1.3 The Young Inspectors have continued as a sub group of the forum in order to sustain the programme. The transition from being an independent project within Integrated Youth Services to a sub-group of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum continues to be successful.
- 1.4 To further support the Youth Forum's drive to reach more young people a promotional DVD was filmed and edited by the young people. The final copy has been sent to all secondary schools and was shown at the School Council Summit in November.

1.5 The consultation sub-group continues to be used by officers, partners and external organisations to consult with forum members on one-off issues. The consultation sub-group also participates in a number of national online consultations. The group meets fortnightly and has been very successful with 25 distinct consultations undertaken with young people this year.

2. Proposal and Issues

Sub-groups' work outline

2.1 Education

The sub-group thought it was vital to improve the communication between the schools in our borough and the BAD Youth Forum, to help them all work together for young people to voice their views and make a difference.

The sub-group planned a schools' conference with All Saints School, for all 9 Secondary schools in the borough to come together and participate in workshops, discussions to help improve school councils. This conference was planned and delivered by the education sub-group in a young people friendly way. The conference ran a number of workshops and the pupils learnt about issues and resolutions, leadership within teams, picking roles within a council and strategic decision making.

The schools feedback their progress from the previous year's school council summit, what their main achievement had been and also the obstacles that they had faced.

Each school has been actioned as a result of their attendance to develop their Pupil Voice action plan, and their progress will be reviewed at next year's School Council summit.

The sub-group also focussed their attention on the content of PSHE/Citizenship lessons. They felt these lessons should include information on, for example, how to open a bank account, budgeting, CV writing, how to vote etc. The sub-group created a survey asking the schools to get a selected number of the young people from each year to fill it out. The PSHE survey results have been presented to Jo Caswell (Advisory Teacher for Heath).

2.2 Media

Through discussion, the members of the Media sub-group decided that one of their projects will be on stereotyping, as it is something many young people in the borough have issues with.

The Media sub-group met with Ken Baker from the Police to find out the facts about Stop and Search and to hear the statistics around this, as they felt the police are also stereotyped around the percentage of ethnic minorities that they stop and search in Barking and Dagenham.

The Media sub-group developed their project, which is a media based video clip raising awareness around stereotyping. The video filmed young people's reactions to a number of scenarios they were presented with, which were aimed at highlighting how the stereotyping affected their choice of answers. The recordings were of their reactions and

responses when they found out the actual answers. The video will be toured to various youth groups and shared with schools to make as many young people as possible in the borough aware of the effects of stereotyping. The aim of the video is to challenge people's negative stereotypes and get them to think differently as to how they view different groups of people in society.

2.3 Young Inspectors

Young Inspectors entered its second year as a Youth Forum sub-group.

The young inspectors have been trained to carry out Come Correct condom distribution site inspections and 10 pharmacies have been inspected to date to ensure that they are complying properly with the scheme.

The group completed an inspection of Becontree Leisure Centre. Two of the report's recommendations were:

- To ensure that the swimming pool facilities are kept clean and that wet floor signs are visible in the changing rooms.
- To consult with young people about fun days that they could be running during the school holidays to attract young people.

A review will be conducted in 2014.

Young inspectors successfully carried out four inspections in partnership with London & Quadrant Housing Association. The bid has secured an income for the service to the sum of £3300. Three young inspectors presented their findings to the L&Q funding panel in November.

Below is an extract of the different inspection recommendations:

Estate Observation

- 'We would also like to recommend that L&Q consult with their residents on a weekly or fortnightly basis about the quality of any repairs that have been conducted, and also to discern whether or not any further repairs are needed, this could be done through the medium of a suggestion box which is checked on the same time frame as above or through a consultative survey that is distributed to residents. This is important as, on one hand it will strengthen the cohesion between L&Q and their residents, and on the other it will allow the residents to make sure that their concerns are heard and dealt with subsequently'.

Telephone mystery shop

- Regular workshops and training given for the L&Q telephone Operatives, in order to keep them refreshed and up to date on the L&Q policies and information that their customers may need.

ASB Inspection

- More time needed to complete the notes as that would give the Neighbour Safety officer (NSO) more time to draw out key ideas and points from the cases and write the accurate information down.

Young inspectors conducted an inspection on the Subwize substance misuse service, after consulting with Simone James, the Service Manager of Subwize.

Young inspectors wrote a review of the Youth4Us website before the website was relaunched in September, providing guidance on the type of content that would be most valued by young people. In addition, a member of the Forum helped to build the site as part of his work experience programme.

Young inspectors are in the process of completing three PPG (Patient Participation Group) inspections, which is a patient forum for Doctors' surgeries. It is hoped that this will open more doors for the young inspectors to inspect GP surgeries in the near future. These inspections have secured £10,000 of funding for the service from the Barking and Dagenham Clinical Commissioning Group.

Young inspectors are currently planning and delivering consultation with the 14-19 Careers Service, to improve the way in which careers advice is provided in schools and to lower the numbers of NEET and Unknown young people.

As an acknowledgement of their hard work, Young Inspectors were short listed for the Mayor of London's Team London Awards 2013, in the 'My Community' category. Team London is the Mayor of London's volunteering programme for London.

2.4 Consultation

The following one-off consultations took place, in collaboration with council officers and external partners:

- Jackie Chamberlain (Children's Commissioning and Procurement) - Borough transport operation
- Shola Akala (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Consultant) - Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy & Health Strategies in the Borough - Elizabeth Winnett (LSCB Business Support Manager) - LSCB Website Feedback
- Kid space - Kid space Online Survey for Anti-Bullying
- Manisha Modhvadia (Healthwatch) - Pharmacy services offered in the Borough
- Simona Daniel (New Media Advisor) - Effectiveness of StreetBase Local Facebook page
- Chris O'Connor (OFSTED stakeholder Engagement Manager) - CAFCASS Online Survey
- Helen Oliver (Group Manager Safeguarding Adults) - DV 'Are you living in Fear' Poster
- Bobby Green (Community Safety Coordinator) – MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Police and Crime) event around the closure of local Police Stations & Feedback on London 5th Safety Plan
- Transport for London – TfL Online Survey School and Young Person Delivery Plan
- Justice Board - 'You be the Judge' Online Feedback on sentencing

- Phillippa Banister (Sustrans Coordinator) - DIY Streets Project in local community
- Florence Jane (Health Improvement Specialist) - Sexual Health Questionnaire: Relationship & Sex Education
- Chain Reaction – Spread The Word, teenage pregnancy prevention campaign
- Perdita (Young person) - Human Trafficking project
- Home Office public consultation on powers for stop and search
- Education Sub-group - Improving School Councils
- BAD Youth Forum – BAD Youth Forum format
- Young Minds - online survey improving the lives and wellbeing of young people
- Sex Education Forum – online Survey was your sex and relationships education good enough?

The results of each consultation have helped to shape service delivery.

2.5 UK Youth Parliament

In February, two members were elected to represent LBBD in the UK Youth Parliament. Known as Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) and Deputy Member of Youth Parliament (DMYP), they attended three conventions, the Annual Sitting at Leeds University and a national debate in the House of Commons during Democracy week.

2,300, a new record number of young people in Barking and Dagenham, were balloted regarding what they felt the UK Youth Parliament focus campaign should be for the following year. These votes were added to the ballots collected nationally and the UK Youth Parliament, has chosen 'votes at 16' as its national campaign for 2014. 'A curriculum to prepare us for life' was also chosen as the UKYP's priority campaign for England.

2.6 Children's Service Select Committee (CSSC)

The Chair of the BAD Youth Forum participated as a co-opted member of the CSSC. Following a presentation made by the co-opted member to the CSSC in 2012 around student voice, a full scrutiny review was commissioned from School Improvement and Integrated Youth Services. This saw a financial contribution from schools of £30k. The BADYF and the CSSC asked that all school councils be visited by a trained School Improvement Officer. They wanted an objective view of every school council so that each could have an individual snapshot of itself to see how it compared with others across the Borough. This work would also provide helpful evidence for schools as it would contribute to the student voice strand of the schools' own self-evaluation evidence. The CSSC was extremely pleased that the Schools' Forum agreed to set aside funding to allow all schools to have a student voice evidence gathering visit.

Evidence from visits to 50 of the 58 schools was included in School Improvement's report. The schools visited comprised of nine secondary schools, 39 primary schools, one special school, and one specialist alternative provision. The resulting final report and action plan is being monitored by the CSSC and includes actions for schools, governors and local authorities. The existence of the report also provided a framework for the School Council summit held by the Youth Forum in November 2013.

3. Options Appraisal - N/A

4. Consultation - See section 2 above

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Patricia Harvey Interim Group Manager – Children's Services Finance

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications for future years arising from this report. It is highly probable that the work of the Youth Forum will have a positive financial impact for the Council (and other public sector organisations) through improving the effectiveness of services, but this cannot be quantified robustly.
- 5.2 Resources for the period of January to December 2013 have been contributions directly from schools and indirect support utilised from current existing resources.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Dawn Pelle

- 6.1 No specific legal implications arise from this report.

7. Other Implications

7.1 **Risk Management - No implications**

7.2 **Contractual Issues - No implications**

7.3 **Staffing Issues - No implications**

7.4 **Customer Impact**

The Council supports the BAD Youth Forum to provide a key channel for consultation and engagement with young people in the borough. Services across the borough are encouraged to bring relevant draft policies and strategies to the Forum to seek the views of young people, so that service design is informed by their feedback.

The Education sub-group has designed and delivered an entirely youth lead student voice conference. Young people facilitated the day and lead all four of the workshops. The work supports the recent CSSC review into student voice that called for greater collaboration between schools councils and the BAD Youth Forum. The recent study they undertook regarding PSHE lessons will strengthen the delivery of the subject.

Through the commissioned inspection with London and Quadrant (L&Q) Housing Association, Young Inspectors will be trained L&Q residents to carry out inspections. As a result of this process L&Q young people are able to assess services, have a greater influence on some of the future policies and procedures of the Housing Association and develop links with the Housing Association which will prove useful whilst a resident and a potential tenancy holder in the future.

The various inspections carried out by the Young Inspectors' group have had an impact on each of the services which have been inspected. The pharmacies have been able to identify training needs for staff, based on the young people's experience and

comprehensive feedback including recommendations. The Subwise staff team are currently reviewing their operational hours to address the issues raised in the Young Inspectors' report and will be formally responding to the report young people completed as well as feeding back to the group the service changes that have been made.

The BAD Youth Forum held a development day to review its own practices and evaluate its impact amongst young people. As a result, a development plan has been created that will aid the Youth Forum in its engagement of all young people, and not just those that get elected on to the forum, extending the work of the Forum.

7.5 Safeguarding Children

The Young Inspectors' work in improving drug and alcohol services for young people has impacted on young people's ability to access safe, impartial and comprehensive advice on issues relating to substance misuse.

The Forum continues to work closely with Skittlz (our Children in Care Council) and the Progress Project (Disabled Children's Parliament), which raised safeguarding issues faced by these groups of vulnerable young people. In addition, Skittlz presented to Council members at a pre-assembly briefing on their experiences of coming in to care and how Barking and Dagenham can improve its role as corporate parents.

7.6 Health Issues - N/A

7.7 Crime and Disorder Issues

The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum has maintained its positive relationship with the Police and continue to participate in the Stop and Search Monitoring Group.

The Media sub-group created a stereotyping awareness video, based on their own realisation of stop and search stereotypes regarding young ethnic minority males.

7.8 Property / Asset Issues - No implications

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices: None