



Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee

8 May 2019

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Title | Annual Report on the work of the UK Youth Parliament members, Barnet Youth Assembly and other Youth Voice fora |
| Report of | Chairman of the Committee, Councillor David Longstaff |
| Wards | All |
| Status | Public |
| Urgent | No |
| Key | No |
| Enclosures | None |
| Officer Contact Details | Kerry Hodges- Voice of the Child Coordinator Kerry.hodges@barnet.gov.uk 0208 359 2202 |

Summary

This report updates the committee on:

- the work that has been done by the 2018-2019 UK Youth Parliament members, and
- other youth engagement delivered this year.

It also proposes changes to the current Barnet Youth Assembly.

Continued support from members and the committee is required to support young people as they share their hopes for Barnet and positively engage with the council.

Recommendations

- 1. That the Committee recognises the impact of the campaigns of the UK Youth Parliament members and thanks them for their hard work representing Barnet young people.**
- 2. That the Committee supports the proposed changes to the Barnet Youth Assembly as proposed in paragraphs 1.5.6 and 1.5.7. with a more detailed proposal to come to the Committee in November 2019.**
- 3. That the Committee agrees to receive further updates from its youth representatives every six months until May 2020, and on a quarterly basis from May 2020.**

□.1 WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1.1. This report provides an overview to the Children, Education and Safeguarding (CES) Committee on the work and campaigns carried out in 2018-19 on the following areas:

- the outgoing UK Youth Parliament members, and how they link into the overall UK campaigns;
- Make Your Mark Ballot;
- Work towards UNICEF recognition of Barnet as a Child Friendly Community;
- London Youth Assembly; and
- The Barnet Development Team Youth.

- 1.1.2 Some common themes have been raised by young people in all the different ways they have been involved in highlighting and debating issues that are relevant to them and their peers. Members are asked to review the themes highlighted in this report, and understand how they can be built into future policy decisions.
- 1.1.3 The report also contains proposals for changes to the current operation of the Barnet Youth Assembly. These have been proposed to further improve the opportunities for young people to be involved in decision making, and also to strengthen the relationship between the UK Youth Parliament, London Youth Assembly and the Barnet Youth Assembly.

□.2 **REVIEW OF THE 2018-2019 UK YOUTH PARLIAMENT**

- 1.2.1 The UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) provides a platform for children and young people to voice their opinions on issues affecting them and their peers across the UK to bring about social change. Barnet elects four young people each year to represent their peers within Barnet both at a local and a national level. Each Member of the Youth Parliament (MYP) has campaigned on an issue that is important to them. In 2018, we decided to extend the MYP's term of office to two years due to the current members voicing that the one-year term did not allow them time to learn the necessary key skills, network and plan their campaign.
- 1.2.2 During 2018, the four Barnet Members of Youth Parliament - Savan, Lara, Richard and Tarek - took an active role in local, regional and national campaigns. Our members have debated at a national level with the British Youth Council, and have undertaken their roles with dedication and diligence. They have sat as members on the Children and Young People's Partnership Board and presented at the 2018 CES Committee where they have been able to represent the views of young people in Barnet. Their presence at these meetings ensures children and young people have real influence in decision-making on matters affecting their lives, and enables decision makers to understand, consider and respond to young people's voices. The following paragraphs summarise the four campaigns that the MYPs have undertaken.
- 1.2.3 Savan – Promoting Mental Health awareness and signposting young people to seek Mental Health support
- Savan's approach focussed on using social media to communicate, as he felt many young people use social media as a platform to communicate with others and be informed.
 - He researched what support was available to young people around mental health and identified two main support platforms, CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health) and KOOTH. Savan met with CAMHS to

introduce his campaign and raised the concern shared by other young people about waiting times, and asked questions about what they are doing to ensure young people are receiving the support they need before their mental health deteriorates.

- Savan also found out about the transformation process taking place in CAMHS and the roll out of the Resilient Schools programme.
- Savan attends our other youth forums and informs young people of this service and programme to update them on the development of mental health support for young people in Barnet.
- Savan has built his own social media channel on YouTube, which aims to reach young people of Barnet to discuss mental health to break down stigma and raise awareness of support available such as KOOTH. It involves interviews with other young people to gather their views about what is happening currently for young people in Barnet. The channel has been successful, and Savan's next step will be to work with the Council's Communication's Team to launch a mental health campaign to raise awareness on mental health for support for young people in Barnet via the Council's communication platforms.

1.2.4 Lara – Reducing Tuition Fees and Reducing Financial Barriers to Higher Education

- Lara started her campaign by creating a survey to gather young people and current university students views on tuition fees. She is currently gathering responses to her survey.
- Lara proactively contacted her local MP and education providers for support. Lara also approached Stand Up Magazine who published an article on Lara's campaign, and also wrote a policy for the UKYP Annual Sitting which she presented to MYP's for selection to the Make Your Mark Ballot paper for 2018.
- Lara has also used other campaigns to provide opportunities to meet key decision makers and promote her own campaign. Lara has also taken part in a recent BBC London interview with other MYP's to discuss Brexit from a young person's perspective.

1.2.5 Tarek - Raising awareness of the dangers of knife crime for young people aged 11-14

- Tarek has been focusing on research and undertaken interviews with young people, a Police Constable, a Youth Services Manager and a Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher to understand the causes behind knife crime and how his campaign can educate young people on the destructive impact of knife crime.

- Tarek's aim would be to see a reduction in knife crime in the Barnet area, and has started by focused on targeting his school to deliver speeches to all year groups in order to raise awareness of the consequences.
- Tarek also wrote an article for the Barnet First Magazine outlining his UKYP experience and his campaign to share with residents and most importantly young people in Barnet.
- Tarek plans to use the work he has completed to work with UKYP members to deliver the national Make Your Mark Campaign '**Action Against Knife Crime**'.

1.2.6 Richard – Introducing workshops on mental health in school and raising awareness of available services for young people

- Richard has focused on piloting his workshop in his school and worked closely with other pupils to plan and deliver mental health workshops.
- He has successfully delivered a mental health awareness workshop and met with his Head Teacher to present pupil's views that identified a need for mental health support. The school have recently recruited a new wellbeing worker to support pupils with their emotional wellbeing.
- Richard would like to see how aware schools are about supporting young people's mental health, and aims to hold a mental health awareness day at all of the borough's schools.

1.2.7 The MYPs have fed back that being a UKYP member has taught them about current issues for children and young people within Barnet by learning about different subjects, such as mental health and Family Services, which in turn has supported them to make informed decisions when representing their peers. The MYPs have also enjoyed having the opportunity to meet professionals and presenting on important issues to them and their peers.

1.2.8 Both Richard and Tarek are currently focusing on their A levels and plan to attend University in September. They will continue to support UKYP until then. The Voice of the Child Team thank them for all their hard work and success on their campaigns, and wish them well for the future.

1.3 **MAKE YOUR MARK BALLOT 2018**

1.3.1 In October 2018, the national Make Your Mark campaign reached 4,783 young people in Barnet (14.61% of our 11-18-year olds living in Barnet) where they could vote on the ten top issues which the Members of Youth Parliament for the UK had previously selected. This demonstrates the reach and the impact upon

young people's participation in democratic processes and positive citizenship activity across our borough.

- 1.3.2 The top issue for 11-18-year olds who live, study or work in Barnet were '**Action Against Knife Crime**' (1,178 votes), with the second most popular issue being '**Mental Health – Mental health services should be improved with young people's help; and should be available in schools**' (650 votes). This year's Make Your Mark campaign has seen 1,106,788 young people take part, making it one of the largest youth consultations of its kind in UK history, with 1 in 5 of all young people aged 11-18 taking part.
- 1.3.3 Lara and Savan attended the House of Commons sitting in November 2018 where they represented the voice of young people across Barnet to debate in the House of Commons chamber. They debated the five issues chosen by the Make your Mark ballot of young people across the UK, and then voted and decided that '**Action Against Knife Crime**' and '**Votes at 16 and 17 in all elections**' will be the UK Youth Parliament's priority campaigns for 2018.
- 1.3.4 The MYPs will be supported to deliver their campaigns and already have met with MP Vicky Foxcroft to gain support and help drive the '**Action Against Knife Crime**' campaign. This meeting was a massive step forward for MYP's and the support from Vicky Foxcroft empowered them towards their vision.
- 1.3.5 The new Children and Young People's Communication Strategy focuses on supporting young people to deliver youth led campaigns. Resources have been agreed for this strategy and a new Campaigns Lead will support the MYPs and other young people with these campaigns. We aim for both campaigns to promote awareness of these issues and inform young people on where they can receive support or guidance in Barnet, as well as ensuring that young people are viewed as active participants and drivers of change alongside the Council. We will measure the impact of the strategy through the Youth Perception Survey in 2019 to see whether perceptions of gangs and youth violence have changed.

1.4 LONDON YOUTH ASSEMBLY

- 1.4.1 The London Youth Assembly (LYA) is a new body formed to bring together representatives from different youth forums across London to create positive change for young people. The LYA holds quarterly meetings in the Chamber at City Hall. These meetings will focus on matters of importance to young Londoners. Partnered with Assembly Members, the LYA will coordinate issues, promote campaigns and discuss key themes across London as they effect young people. LYA Members are aged between 11 to 19, and up to 25 if you have a disability.
- 1.4.2 The key role of a LYA Member is to represent their borough at LYA meetings,

provide updates on priorities and plans for their borough and to give feed back to their borough on the work being done by the LYA.

- 1.4.3 At the recent LYA meeting, all members agreed that the Youth Assembly's themes for the remainder of this Assembly year would be Violence and safety; and Mental health and wellbeing. The LYA share ideas of how this is being supported in their area and take ideas back to look at how we can implement change in Barnet.
- 1.4.4 One member commented that 'representing the Borough of Barnet as a London Youth Assembly member is an opportunity that is incredibly important for me, as it allows myself to be immersed in a cooperative and diligent environment whereby each member strives to implement a crucial objective of encouraging young Londoners to become engaged and involved in the running of their city'.
- 1.4.5 At their last LYA meeting they were greeted by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan who shared that he is in support of their work. The Mayor then met each member and took their questions. The members felt the meeting was a great experience to meet the Mayor of London and felt inspired to use their voice and influence the lives of young Londoners.
- 1.4.6 The themes for the LYA, Mark Your Mark and UKYP – particularly around '**Action Against Knife Crime**' and '**Mental Health Awareness**' – have been used to inform the Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2023, and its delivery. Work on addressing these themes are also being used in the work towards Barnet being recognised by UNICEF UK as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community (CFC) in 2020.

1.5 BARNET YOUTH ASSEMBLY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

- 1.5.1 On 18th November 2015, the committee approved the creation of the Barnet Youth Assembly as set out in a paper entitled Promoting British Values and Citizenship amongst Children and Young People in Barnet - Hearing the voices of children and young people.
- 1.5.2 The Youth Assembly was designed as a youth voice forum to enable young people to publicly debate issues that are important to them. It aimed to give young people the opportunity to make their voices heard within the decision-making process and to help them develop invaluable skills and confidence in public speaking, debating and critical thinking. The Governance Service and the Voice of the Child Team jointly coordinated the Youth Assembly, which was originally intended to operate as a sub-group of the Barnet Youth Board. The meetings would take place once a month at Hendon Town Hall, in the evenings from 6-8pm.

1.5.3 The Youth Assembly operated a system in which members were asked to submit motions on local issues which are important to them. The member was expected to introduce the motion and then the Youth Assembly debated it, querying information provided and discussing the merits of the motion, with the option to amend as they saw fit. Some of the themes discussed at the meetings included; crime, education, health, politics, Barnet and the community, Prevent and inter-faith cohesion. Once the motion had been debated thoroughly a vote was taken and those motions which received a majority of positive votes were taken forward to CES to highlight to Councillors the issues which the Youth Assembly would like the council to focus on.

1.5.4 The successful motions were reported to the May 2018 meeting of the CES Committee as part of an update report on the Youth Assembly. Officers were asked to provide a response to the motions which were included in the report. The young people were invited to attend the committee and answer questions from Members.

1.5.5 **Effectiveness, feedback and further improvements required**

Last year alongside young people we reviewed our youth voice offer as part of developing the Voice of the Child Strategy. The new Voice of the Child strategy currently outlines our vision for meaningful participation and is underpinned by Article 12 of the United National Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This provided an opportunity to develop the Youth Assembly and some of the themes highlighted from children and young people included:

- To include and listen to Young People within the democratic process
- Young people should be more involved in decisions that help improve services and lead to change
- Young people should be updated on issues that affect them and receive feedback on how motions raised at Youth Assembly are progressed
- Give young people an experience of how the council runs by replicating its structure to a degree, and giving them the opportunity to be included in these structures.

1.5.6 Listening to their views and to further improve the Youth Assembly, it was decided not to run it for the year 2018/19 and instead to focus on the changes that need to be made. Following consultation with a wide range of young people, the Voice of the Child Team are leading on the following changes, with support from the Governance Service:

Youth Boards:

- Expand the youth offer from 1 to 2 youth boards which will feed into the Youth Assembly (in a similar respect to committees feeding into Council).
- These will be locality-based (East-Central and West) and will be open to any young person who wants to join, it will meet monthly.
- Officers/Professionals will be invited to attend these meetings and will be encouraged to get the input of these boards in policies and decisions.

Youth Assembly:

- The Youth Assembly will meet bi-monthly. Any other young people can join and partake in the discussion.
- The Youth Assembly will be supported by the two London Youth Assembly members, who will be able to link between regional and local issues.
- UK Youth Parliament members will be encouraged to attend so they can feed in about campaigns at a national level.
- The Youth Assembly will take updates from the UK Youth Parliament and London Youth Assembly, as well as motions the young people bring forward on issues that are important to them.
- The motions will be debated and a vote taken and those motions which received, a majority of positive votes will be taken forward to CES.

Governance participation:

- Enabling and encouraging young people to lead the Youth Assembly
- Supporting Voice of the Child Team with the Youth Assembly (including recruitment, attending and supporting meetings, preparation for CES updates).

1.5.7 The Voice of the Child strategy aims to ensure our offer is meaningful and developed based on what our young people are telling us. One of our aims is for **'Children and young people to feel valued, empowered and listened to and can see an outcome as a result of their participation.'** Therefore, we propose:

- The changes are supported by the CES Committee
- Focus on developing the new West Youth Board and increasing engagement
- Launch the UKYP elections in October 2019
- Develop an induction programme for successful candidates who will be in office from April 2020
- Relaunch Barnet Youth Assembly in May 2020
- These updates to be reported as a standing item into the Children, Education and Safeguarding (CES) Committee every 6 months up until Youth Assembly is launched in May 2020, then moving towards every

quarter (consequently the Youth Assembly meetings will fit into this reporting cycle).

- 1.5.8 The Youth Assembly has proved to be a successful template for engaging with young people in Barnet and encouraging them to interact with the council and work for positive change in issues that affect them. The ambition is to ensure young people feel valued and listened to by the council, as well as building their skills and understanding of policy making and the work of the council. The continued support of Members and the committee is crucial to ensuring this is possible and that the Youth Assembly can develop into a nationally recognised model of how to successfully engage young people.

1.6 BARNET WORKING TOWARDS A UNICEF CHILD FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

- 1.6.1 Recognition of Barnet as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community is a key step towards Barnet being a Family Friendly Borough, which actively involves children and young people in shaping the place where they live. Over the past 18 months, the London Borough of Barnet, including all its delivery partners, has been working with UNICEF to progressively achieve a number of core outcomes. The overarching ambition is for the borough to be recognised by UNICEF UK as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community (CFC) in 2022. Participation of children and young people is essential to the partnership and that is why the UNICEF work is critical.
- 1.6.2 As part of the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities programme and the co-production of new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) – which was agreed by the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee in March 2019; we have engaged with over 1,900 children and young people across Barnet reaching out to a variety of different settings that young people attend. The children and young people which were involved in developing the plan will continue to be involved in delivering the key outcomes.
- 1.6.3 One key outcome focuses on improving how the Council communicates with children and young people. In the most recent Youth Perception Survey only 52% of CYP felt the Council kept them informed. As part of Takeover Day and UNICEF engagement with children and young people they have said they wanted the council to communicate through their schools, Youtube, and face to face contact. The key areas they wanted to hear about were careers, safety, events and council services. Their feedback has informed the new CYP communication strategy to start building our communication platforms and focusing on specific campaigns to address the issues they have raised, such as mental health and youth violence.

1.6.4 This partnership has provided an opportunity to promote consultation with children and young people, and as a result, Youth Board members will be consulted on; Barnet's Long-Term Transport Strategy and Barnet's Regeneration Housing and Homelessness strategies to ensure the rights, priorities and needs of children and young people are heard and included in decisions. This ensures services will have specifications designed around the wishes of these children and deliver services that reflect their needs.

1.7 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND

1.7.1 Children and Young People with SEND told us that they wanted to meet regularly and meet with decision makers and heads of services; attend meetings where decision makers work and with the people who deliver services.

1.7.2 Barnet Development Team Youth (BDTY) has been established for young people between the ages of 11 and 21 years, who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), who want to be part of a supportive group that enables them to have a voice, so that they can help shape the provision in Barnet. Currently there are eight regular members who represent young people with a range of special needs including; autism, Downs syndrome, physical disabilities, learning difficulties and medical needs.

1.7.3 The young people are supported by professionals from the Specialist Inclusion Team and the Voice of the Child Team. The group meets monthly and staff present to them on various topics the Children and Young People have chosen. Changes resulting from their input include:

- A transition booklet was created which the young people contributed to at every step of the process
- The young people were trained in interviewing and gave their feedback on a young people interviewing protocol. All young people involved in interviewing staff are trained using this procedure and protocol. All Senior Educational Psychologists are interviewed by young people
- Young people have presented at the Physical Disabilities Conference and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) Conference and prepared a PowerPoint for the SEND Conference
- The Local Offer development around the website. Reviewing leisure services and identifying gaps on the Local Offer such as driving lessons and information for people with SEND.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Barnet's youth representatives, including the Barnet's UK Youth Parliament members, the London Youth Assembly and the Barnet Development Team Youth have worked hard on their campaigns, co-development work and engaging their peers. Barnet Council should recognise their achievements in 2018-19.
- 2.2 Some themes have consistently been raised across the different youth fora in which Barnet young people participate. These include:
- Personal safety, particularly around fear of youth crime
 - Access to Mental Health services, and promoting positive Mental Health
 - Being better informed by the Council and its partners about things important to young people, such as careers, personal safety, events and council services.
 - Stronger involvement both in decision making on policies, and designing services which they will use in future.
- 2.3 To improve the opportunities for young people to do this, the changes to the Barnet Youth Assembly as outlined in paragraphs 1.5.6 and 1.5.7 are proposed. These should strengthen the links between the existing national and regional parliamentary bodies and Barnet, as well as introduce more local opportunities for Young People to be involved in decision making.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The continuation of support for children and young people's voices to be heard through the UK Youth Parliament within Barnet's Family Services.

5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Work by the UK Youth Parliament, London Youth Assembly and other youth representatives are incorporated into the decisions made by Barnet, which incorporates the views of young people across the borough and this feeds into the council's priorities, the Corporate Plan 2019-24, and the Children and Young People's Plan.
- 5.1.2 The Youth Assembly will enable young Barnet residents to take responsibility and engage with the council to highlight issue that are important to them. This resonates with the commitment in the Corporate Plan to help residents help themselves. It provides a platform for developing skills such as public speaking and critical thinking, which positively contribute to the future of these young people.

5.1.3 The Barnet Youth Assembly will enable young Barnet residents to take responsibility and engage with the council to highlight issues that are important to them. This resonates with the commitment in the Corporate Plan to help residents help themselves. It provides a platform for developing skills such as public speaking and critical thinking, which positively contribute to the future of these young people.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Funding for the UK Youth Parliament is contained within the existing budgets within Family Services.

5.3 Social Value

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 Council Constitution, Article 7 (Committees, Forums and Working Groups) states that the Children, Education & Safeguarding Committee is responsible for ‘...all matters relating to children, schools and education.’

5.4.2 The Council has a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area and, if this is consistent with the child’s safety and welfare, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing services appropriate to the child’s needs.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 Any risks relating to the reformulated Barnet Youth Assembly, or other Barnet youth representation network will be identified and managed by the Voice of the Child and Governance Teams.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public-Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and

other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

5.6.2 The Children's Communication Plan will consider how:

- Children and young people are encouraged to put themselves forward for the Youth Assembly, UKYP or London Youth Assembly, so that a range of young people from different backgrounds are represented.
- The best ways to communicate with all children and young people, to ensure that they are informed about what is happening, and the opportunities to contribute.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 UKYP candidate and election campaigns were promoted to our Children in Care through the Children in Care Council and Onwards & Upwards Team. We had two Children in Care Council members attend our information evening. However, they decided not to go forward as a candidate due to other commitments.

5.7.2 A member of the Children in Care Council attended the UKYP weekend residential – along with hundreds of other young people - as a Youth Representative with the British Youth Council in April. During the residential weekend, they commenced their 'Youth Leadership Programme'. The learning from the weekend has supported the young person to take on the role of leading the Children in Care Council.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 The proposal in this report for changing the Barnet Youth Assembly was directly informed by feedback from young people.

5.8.2 The different national, regional and local youth fora will be key bodies to engage the views of all children and young people, and to shape strategy on the issues that affect them. Youth representatives will have regular consultations and engagements with the Voice of the Child Participation Officer. The officer will support the development of their campaigns and projects while working closely with them throughout their term in office.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 Young people's feedback will be a key part of future insight into what children and young people think of living in Barnet, and shaping services that work for them.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 None