

## **DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Policy & Resources Committee - 12 December 2011

**REPORT ON:** Involving Young People in Decision Making

**REPORT BY:** Director, Leisure and Communities

**REPORT NO:** 514-2011

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Council about the current arrangements and improvement priorities for involving young people in decision making at different levels in Dundee.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 Acknowledge and continue to support the range and breadth of opportunities that already exist in Dundee for young people to get involved in decision making. Examples are described in Appendix 1.

2.2 Endorse the improvement actions contained in Appendix 2. The key actions are :

- Agree the model for engaging Children, Young People and Families in identifying the key priorities for the next Integrated Children's Services (ICS) plan.
- Finalise Youth Council proposals for how they will represent views to decision makers and agree these proposals with Council and the Dundee Partnership.
- Develop Youth Action Groups across Dundee in response to issues which are of concern to young people, as they arise.
- Support young people to take the lead on priorities from the Local Community Plans as appropriate.
- Facilitate structured opportunities for Local Community Planning Partnership members to meet with young people to hear their issues/ideas.
- Deliver training for young people to build their capacity.
- Develop, with young people, a communication strategy that incorporates a range of methods, including the use of developing technology such as social networking.
- Work with Dundee Youth Council to ensure that young people are fully represented on Local Community Planning Partnerships.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 All costs associated with the developments described in this report can be contained within the CLD budget.

### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children and young people have the right to have their views taken into account in decisions made about matters that affect them and that, adults in a position to help them have a duty to provide them with support.

- 4.2 Committee Report Number 576/2010 concerning Dundee's Integrated Children's Services 'Engagement with Children and their Families Strategy' for 2010/2012, states that Dundee's vision and commitment is that children and young people are engaged in shaping policy and service delivery in areas of concern to them as a matter of principle and that these opportunities are embedded in everyday practice.
- 4.3 The Scottish Government advice note "Involving Young People in Community Planning" published in 2006, states that "engagement with the community and partnership working are the two fundamental principles underpinning Community Planning. Dialogue with Children, Young People and Families gives policy makers and service providers the information they need to improve the relevance of policies and services". Local Community Planning Partnerships and Community Regeneration Forums are committed to being proactive in relation to involving young people in decision making.
- 4.4 It has been recognised that CLD has a major role to play in Local Community Planning and the development of Local Community Engagement Plans in Dundee. This work features as a cross cutting theme in Dundee's Single Outcome Agreement and is acknowledged in Dundee's Community Plan. Community Engagement Plans have been developed in each multi-member Ward. It is intended that they will be updated once the new Local Community Plans are confirmed. Extensive Community Engagement, including with young people, has been vital in the production of the new Plans.
- 4.5 The National Standards for Community Engagement provide a quality framework for engaging young people and are referred to in the ICS Engagement Framework. It is important to recognise that levels of engagement with young people can range from simply providing relevant information and consulting on particular issues to involvement in partnership approaches where those involved are empowered to have responsibility for funding decisions, monitoring and evaluation.
- 4.6 The results of engagement are very important. Children and young people need to see changes as a result of their efforts. However, the experience of being involved is also important in supporting the personal development, enjoyment and sense of well-being of those involved. Accredited training is a valuable form of support for personal development. Involvement in decision making can help to develop a strong sense of empowerment and local identity among young people, and a desire to have ownership of their own future.

## **5.0 MAIN TEXT**

- 5.1 This report is concerned with improving the opportunities for young people to get involved in decision making concerning their communities and their lives as members of those communities both local and city. It is intended that, as a result of this report, more young people will have more opportunities to influence decisions about their communities and they will be able to demonstrate the valuable contribution young people can make as active and responsible citizens of Dundee. The opportunities described in this report should be open to all young people and not just those engaged through the local authority Youth Work programme.
- 5.2 In CLD Youth Work young people are involved in the day to day planning and organisation of the activities throughout the programmes. This is fundamental to CLD Youth Work. There are many examples where young people have progressed to the stage where they are leading the activity and making all the decisions, advised and supported by CLD Youth Workers. This is enabled by the positive and productive relationships that youth workers and others develop with young people and which can be instrumental in facilitating the development, with young people, of skills, knowledge and confidence so that they can participate in decision making and be heard.

Appendix 1 provides some examples of the type of involvement young people have in CLD Youth Work programmes.

- 5.3 Young people have informed the development of this report through a number of processes. These include discussion with the Youth Council, consultation with groups across Dundee and input from professional CLD Youth Work staff with knowledge of the interests of young people. Through these discussions young people have made it clear that they want to have a say in decisions affecting them. For instance 653 young people were consulted about the development of the Dundee Youth Council.
- 5.4 A central part of this report is the commitment to supporting young people to create their own groups and structures on their own terms, through which they can get involved and be heard. Examples of this include the Youth Council and proposed Youth Action Groups. It is important that there is a two way relationship between these groups and Local Community Planning Partnerships/Community Regeneration Forums. CLD staff need to explore with community representatives and officers the most effective way of achieving this.
- 5.5 The Action Plan attached (appendix 2) refers to developments designed to ensure that there are opportunities across Dundee through which young people can get involved in decision-making. It needs to be recognised that some developments will be dependant on local circumstances. For instance, the intention is to develop Youth Action Groups which will be supported to take the lead on priorities for young people. These are not intended to be standing groups, ever present in every area but, rather, to come and go as the priorities of young people evolve.
- 5.6 A key recommendation in the Action Plan (appendix 2) is to develop links between the Youth Council and the LCPPs; to facilitate participation in LCPPs by local representatives to the Youth Council. CLD Youth Workers and Communities Officers will work together to achieve this position. The LCPPs will want to consider how they will organise meetings to enable young people to get fully involved. Consideration needs to be given to the timing of meetings, the location and how the meetings are conducted. LCPPs will extend their membership to make provision for two youth representatives to attend each meeting.
- 5.7 The core commitment across Dundee is that in every area there will be an annual programme encompassing :
- A programme of capacity building for young people which will include raising awareness of decision making structures in their community, how to influence them and the role of Communities Officers.
  - Direct links between Dundee Youth Council representatives and Communities Officers, facilitated by Youth Workers, in order to open up representation on existing decision making groupings.
  - The use of existing contact with young people through the Youth Work programme to consult and engage in the process of decision making when issues and questions arise.
  - A programme of structured opportunities for LCPP members to meet with young people to hear their issues and their ideas.

## **6.0 PROPOSALS**

- 6.1 The main focus of our improvement priorities is on the involvement of young people in decision making in their local community or in the city, over and above the involvement they already have in the youth work programme in which they are engaged.

6.2 The key areas for improvement and the actions to be taken are contained in the Action Plan which is attached as Appendix Two.

6.3 The Action Plan will be evaluated by monitoring the number of young people involved in decision making, the number of Youth Action Groups, the outcomes achieved by young people as a result of their involvement and the development of case study material.

## **7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. No major issues have been identified.

7.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and will be made available on the Council website at <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equimpact>.

## **8.0 CONSULTATION**

8.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Directors of Finance, Education and Social Work, Dundee Youth Council and the Dundee Youth Work Partnership have been consulted on this report.

## **9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 Committee Report No. 576/2010

9.2 Involving Young People in Community Planning, Scottish Government Advice Note 2006

9.3 Equality Impact Assessment

**Stewart Murdoch**  
**Director, Leisure and Communities**  
**29 November 2011**

## Appendix 1

### Practice Examples

These are some examples of current work through which young people are involved in decision making. This is not an exhaustive list but is illustrative of the type of opportunities that are available. The examples chosen provide a useful snapshot of these opportunities, the process of engagement and the impact.

- **Disc Target Project Advisory Group**

Young people who have been involved over a few years with the DISC Target Project have formed an Advisory Group. They plan and lead the weekly activities and in so doing have developed skills in leadership and decision making. They are supported throughout by CLD Youth Workers. DISC is currently scheduled to close for 14 weeks over the winter, for refurbishment. This will be a significant loss to young people and the local community. The DISC Advisory Group have been involved in making alternative arrangements and have secured access to the facility at Gussie Park through dialogue with Dundee Utd FC. They will present their plan to the next meeting of the LCPP.

- **Health Buddies**

Health Buddies is a peer led sexual health and relationships programme delivered in four secondary schools. Health Buddies are recruited from S3 to deliver classes to S1 pupils. They receive 14 weeks of training for 2 hours per week after school. The Health Buddies are involved in the development of materials to be used in the programme, regular review of classes and the programme and the overall evaluation. All of their input influences decisions about how future programmes will run. Health Buddies and the S1 participants report increased knowledge about sexual health and relationships and available support services. Health Buddies report that their confidence has increased and that they have developed new skills

- **The HistShorey Project**

The HistShorey Project was a peer led initiative to give young people opportunities to learn about their heritage. The 14-month project was conceived by The Shore's Young Suits, a group of 13-16 year-olds involved in the venue's decision-making process. Interest in The Shore's past developed after they helped with public tours around the centre. Funding was secured from the Young Roots Heritage Lottery Fund.

The young people involved in the Project developed a range of transferable skills including planning, verbal and written communication, team work, goal setting, research, archiving, film-making, script-writing and exhibition design. In 2011, the grand finale 'Show of the Century' saw 30 young people producing and starring in three performances of promenade theatre productions in the style of traditional music hall.

Participants commented that they were more informed about the city's environment, gained a sense of their own heritage, learned about history, enjoyed working with people of all ages, had a greater understanding of community and respect for others, had increased confidence and acquired new skills.

- **The LAC Champions Board**

The Champions Board meets quarterly and brings together Chief Officers, Elected Members and Young People to discuss and make decisions on an agenda set by the young people. The agenda is agreed by the Young People's Participation Group supported by members of the Champions Advisory Group.

The process of engagement has led to significant improvement in self-esteem and confidence for many of the young people involved. It has also led to a better understanding, by all, of some of the issues of concern to children and young people who are, or who have been, looked after.

The two current priorities are the development of a Youth Engagement Strategy and the establishment of a Peer Mentoring Programme.

Other agenda items to be considered over the next few months include issues around health and housing.

The members of the Participation Group will be visiting Young Peoples' Units to raise awareness of the Champions Board. A social event is being organised for children in foster and kinship care to raise their awareness of the Champions Board.

Involving Young People in Decision Making Action Plan

Appendix 2

Improvement Priority	Progress	Actions	Lead Officer	Timeline
<b>Implementing the ICS Engagement Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ICS Communication and Engagement Group is meeting to develop the engagement of children, young people and families in Integrated Children's Services and specifically their involvement in the next ICS Plan</li> <li>• A mapping of the impact of existing processes is almost complete</li> <li>• Parents are involved with the ICS Group.</li> <li>• The model for the involvement of children, young people and families in the next ICS Plan is developing.</li> <li>• The Youth Work Partnership is represented at this group to ensure connection to YWP actions in this area.</li> <li>• A Champions Board involving senior officers and elected members meets regularly with a representative group of Looked After Young people (see Appendix One)</li> <li>• Children 1st have been commissioned to employ an Engagement Officer to develop engagement with children, young people and families involved in child protection processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the impact mapping and report to ICS SMG/IMG</li> <li>• Develop the involvement of parents and young people in the planning and delivery of public services</li> <li>• Agree the model for engaging children, young people and families in identifying the key priorities for the next ICS Plan.</li> <li>• Engage with children, young people and families to agree priorities that should feature in the next ICS Plan.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out consultation with children, young people and families to get feedback about their experiences of Child Protection support services</li> </ul>	<p>ICS Communication and Engagement Group</p> <p>Child Protection Engagement Officer</p>	<p>Dec 11</p> <p>Dec 11</p> <p>Jan - June 12</p> <p>To Be Confirmed</p>
<b>Involvement in Representative Structures</b>  1 Scottish Youth Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 MSYPs were elected in March 2011. More young people participated in this election than any previous SYP elections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support MSYPs to attend the SYP and represent Dundee.</li> <li>• MSYPs will attend Youth Council meetings to enable them to represent the views of their peers.</li> </ul>	CLD Youth Work	Four General Meetings per Year

2 Dundee Youth Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dundee Youth Council was launched in March 2011.</li> <li>A Steering Group is moving it on to the first Youth Council elections</li> <li>The Youth Council have a presence on Facebook and are developing a communication strategy.</li> <li>The Youth Council are refining the ways in which they will represent the views of young people. They have held an initial meeting with elected members and senior officers to open up this discussion.</li> <li>The Youth Council have started drop in sessions in The Shore which it is hoped will facilitate greater contact with their peers</li> <li>The Youth Council has launched a consultation with young people to establish the main priorities that the Youth Council should take forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a Network Group for staff working with the Youth Council and those working in local settings to ensure ongoing connection.</li> <li>Support Youth Councillors to attend LCPPs</li> <li>Finalise Youth Council proposals about how they will gather and represent views to decision-makers</li> <li>Bring a Committee Report to Policy and Resources in order to agree these proposals with Council</li> <li>Bring a report to the Dundee Partnership in order to agree these proposals.</li> <li>The consultation is being carried out across schools, college/universities and community groups</li> </ul>	<p>CLD Youth Work</p> <p>CLD Youth Work</p> <p>Youth Council/CLD Youth Work</p> <p>Youth Council</p>	<p>Nov 11</p> <p>Review annually</p> <p>Feb 12</p> <p>Mar 12</p> <p>Mar 12</p> <p>Dec 11</p>
3 Youth Action Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have been working with some Pupil Representative Councils in an effort to establish them as a Youth Forum that might consider issues and actions on a wider community basis. This has not been successful across all schools.</li> <li>Young people have shown willingness to get involved in taking action to influence service provision when it is of interest to them. See examples in Appendix 1.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where there is an active PRC, and joint work to develop it has been successful, we will continue to support this wider role</li> <li>For all other schools there should be an assessment of the potential for this development to take place. This requires discussion between local Youth Work Teams and senior staff from the Secondary School</li> <li>We will support young people to form Youth Action Groups to take forward concerns and ideas that are of interest to them as and when these arise</li> </ul>	<p>CLD Youth Work</p> <p>CLD Youth Work</p> <p>CLD Youth Work</p>	<p>As per agreed programme</p> <p>March 12</p> <p>Review Annually</p>
<b>Involvement in Community Planning processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Workers and Communities Officers have engaged young people in discussion about the priorities that should appear in the Local Community Plan.</li> <li>In the past young people have been supported to present their ideas and proposals about services for young people to LCPPs e.g. Broughty Ferry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify, with young people, priorities within each Local Community Plan, that they have influenced and, which they can lead on.</li> <li>If there is sufficient interest we will establish a group of young people in community regeneration areas that can advise about applications for Diversionary Activity funding.</li> <li>Facilitate structured opportunities for LCPP members to meet with young people to raise awareness of young</li> </ul>	<p>CLD Youth Work</p> <p>CLD Youth Work</p> <p>Communities Officers</p>	<p>March 12</p> <p>Review annually</p> <p>Annually</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where there is an issue that young people have been concerned about they have been supported to make representations to LCPPs e.g. DISC Advisory Group, Broughty Ferry Group</li> <li>In 2010/11 184 young people were supported to participate in local decision-making opportunities through the Youth Work programme</li> <li>Young people have participated in two Community Conferences</li> </ul>	<p>peoples' views.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore with LCPPs the possibility of extending membership to include youth representatives</li> <li>Support young people to participate in LCPPs</li> <li>Ensure that young people are informed about the key decision-making groups and community engagement events in their area</li> <li>Support young people to engage and to understand how community planning processes work</li> </ul>	<p>Communities Officers CLD Youth Work Communities Officers CLD Youth Work</p>	<p>March 12  Annually  Review annually</p>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people are increasingly taking on volunteer roles within the CLD Youth Work programme. In 2010/11 there were 273 young people.</li> <li>Young people are increasingly taking on leadership roles in the organisation of activities within the CLD Youth Work programme.</li> <li>Young people act in a Peer Support capacity throughout the CLD Youth Work programme.</li> <li>Young people play important roles in planning local events.</li> <li>There is a gap in the support we give young people to use the skills, knowledge and confidence they are developing, through involvement with the CLD Youth Work programme, and the opportunities to do so in the wider arena of involvement with community groups and representative structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure young people are informed about the key decision-making groups and community engagement events in their area</li> <li>Support young people to engage and to understand how community planning processes work</li> <li>Support young people to develop the skills to work together to take action on issues of concern to them.</li> <li>Ensure that opportunities to get involved in planning Gala Days and other community events are open to young people</li> <li>Ensure young people are aware of representative structures in their community through eg Young Scot website</li> <li>Explore appropriate accreditation opportunities including YouthLink Scotland's Involvement in Decision Making certificate</li> </ul>	<p>Communities Officers  CLD Youth Work  CLD Youth Work Communities Officers Communities Officers  CLD Youth Work</p>	<p>Annually  Ongoing  Ongoing For each event March 12  March 12</p>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The local pages of the Young Scot website is a key resource used to communicate information about local opportunities and undertake low level consultations.</li> <li>The Youth Council have produced a draft</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop with young people a communication strategy that incorporates a range of methods, including the use of developing technology such as social networking.</li> </ul>	<p>CLD Youth Work</p>	<p>March 12</p>

	<p>Communication Strategy which includes establishing a presence on Facebook and the potential use of Twitter and Dundee University Campus Radio.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grove Academy PRC have been supported to develop Facebook for their school to facilitate dialogue about the Community Plan.</li></ul>			
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