

Report of: The West North West Area Leader (Citizens and Communities)

Report to: Inner West Community Committee (Armley, Bramley & Stanningley and Kirkstall)

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Date: 8th October 2014 To note

Engaging & Increasing the Influence of Children & Young People

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to launch the 'engaging and increasing the influence of Children & Young People' Community Committee topic to investigate how to improve engagement with Children & Young People in the area and make their voices heard at Community Committee level.

Main issues

2. Community Committees have been designed to engage with residents around topics of local interest. The second topic chosen is on engaging and increasing the influence of Children & Young People.
3. A children and young people friendly summary of key issues is appended to this report.

Options

Background information

4. The Community Committees have delegated responsibility to spend Youth Activities Fund monies in the area. The monies are to be spent on activities that are open to all young people and that are consulted on with young people.

5. Over the past 12 months work has been carried out to try and establish a Children & Young People Board that would be made up of young people from the area and that would operate as a group that the Committee can work and consult with on a variety of subjects, in particular the youth activities fund. To date, there has not been any regular group of young people established and therefore the Committee must look at a variety of means of engaging with young people.

Main issues

6. The Committee would like to establish its own children and young people's board but would also like to work much more closely with existing groups that give voice and influence to young people. Most schools in the area operate a school council, there are third sector organisations that have significant 'participation' structures in place and there are a variety of informal arrangements through local sports groups and uniformed organisations. The Police are also interested in establishing a young people's forum for West North West linking with Safer Schools Officers.

Corporate considerations

- a. **Consultation and engagement** - A wide range of consultation and engagement will take place as part of this Committee theme with children and young people across the area. A consultation plan will be drawn up following the meeting.
- b. **Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration** - All Children and young people should be able to express their opinions and have their voices heard on issues that affect them.
- c. **Council policies and city priorities** - The Children & Young Peoples plan for Leeds has as one of its outcomes 'All Children & Young People are active citizens who feel they have voice and influence'.
- d. **Resources and value for money** - Consulting with young people in particular on Youth Activities Fund projects will ensure that money is spent on the activities that young people want and will access.
- e. **Risk management** - Appropriate risk analysis and management is carried out in all work with young people.

Conclusion

7. The topic of Engaging & Increasing the Influence of Children & Young People was chosen in recognition of the important role young people play in our community and the need to engage with them from a young age to shape services and encourage active citizenship.

Recommendations

8. The Community Committee is asked to consider the questions on the Children and young person friendly appendix and recommend key lines of enquiry to further explore and identify opportunities for improving its engagement with children and young people.

Background information

- None