

## Youth Service Update

### Introduction

The following information covers the work delivered by the Councils youth work team with and for young people and their communities. New staff were introduced in the previous Members Information Sheet circulated in July 2018. This update subsequently covers the period from July 2018 to February 2019, relating to current SDC youth work strategy (2017-2020). It refers to young people (as our client base), who act as voluntary participants in their role as youth voice representatives.

### Progress since August 2018

The youth work team, comprising of Jemma Grieve, Rachael Hill and myself have developed significant partnerships, working with various community stakeholders, including; schools, colleges, parish and town councils and other youth work agencies providing different types of youth provision. Our consistency and presence across the larger youth populated areas have enabled a 'joining up' approach to result in greater cohesion amongst community partners, whilst helping develop young people.

Some youth voice groups have required intensive work to rebuild relationships. Our wider client base is very diverse and includes those that have particular difficulties, disabilities and personal and social challenges that could be considered by some observers, as them being disadvantaged. However our inclusive approach to youth work, means that whilst we consider the aforementioned aspects, we focus on their abilities and their potential to further develop skills and attributes - both as individuals and as groups in their community.

Outcomes for young people: The 'cluster of capabilities' from the Catalyst Outcomes Framework are used to ensure outcomes for young peoples are central to programme development. They are: *Communication; Manage Feelings; Resilience & Determination; Creativity; Relationships & Leadership; Planning & Problem Solving; Confidence & Agency*. We have recently begun to consider with young people, how this framework can be tailored to enable them to self-assess how they feel their development is progressing – this will continue during 2019/20.

Engagement with young people and recruitment to locality groups: Increasingly positive profiles of our work have emerged since the summer in schools, colleges and communities, resulting in recruitment to our local youth forum groups.

Data on engagement with young people (prior to active involvement) is a new feature of our monitoring and compliments the data captured on volunteer hours of those who

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are actively involved – the latest data will be shown at the forthcoming Community Services and Licensing Committee meeting.

Projects and programmes led by local youth forum groups: A range of issues and community based projects and programmes have emerged over the last 8 months, as follows:

**Research and consultancy work'** typically relating to community buildings and spaces including: *promoting and using Stroud Subscription Rooms; acting as young consultants on plans to redevelop the Miles Marling Recreation Field at Forest Green.*

**Environmental issues'** mostly relating to young people gaining more knowledge on specific aspects of environmental education, whilst also exploring their own values and expressing opinions towards their local environment and wider world.

**Anti-social behaviour and community safety'** leading to work with Neighbourhood Wardens and Police Officers, resulting in two-way learning and occasionally obtaining vital intelligence on matters of concern.

Projects and programmes led by Stroud District Youth Council: Our established youth voice vehicle enables representatives with the extra responsibility of being a district youth councillor, to be actively involved in a huge range of issue based projects. As such, these have been focused upon under the following themes: *young people and local democracy; young people's health and wellbeing;* and, *specific projects* in the case of *anti-bullying and young peoples consultancy work.* All projects and programmes have enabled a light to be shone on specific issues which have subsequently led to youth voice representatives being part of the solution or the making of a difference, which has then influenced positive changes.

Child/Youth Friendly Gloucestershire initiative: To help the county's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) kick-start consultations with young people about this initiative, a workshop was co-designed between us and the PCC office, resulting in SDYC members being the first set of youth voices to be heard. The findings were formally presented by SDYC members – a report was sent to all District Councillors on 3 December 2018.

Training and development of youth voice representatives: Since last summer, the youth work team have designed and delivered bespoke training for students in schools, introductory workshops for new youth voice representatives and recently an intensive youth voice training residential event. This was complimented by specialist mental health first aid training and community activities that have increased cohesion.

Youth Voice Newsletters: These have been produced and circulated to a wide range of community stakeholders including parish, town, district and county councillors. The feedback has been very positive. Next edition is due out soon. Previous editions available at: [www.stroud.gov.uk/community-and-living/youth-and-community-work](http://www.stroud.gov.uk/community-and-living/youth-and-community-work)

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