

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Power of Youth Charter</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> January 2021</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director for Families, Children &amp; Learning</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Debbie Corbridge</b>	<b>Tel: 01273 292953</b>
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Power of Youth Charter and put forward a proposal to adopt this Charter so that more young people can be empowered to shape decisions, take social action and make a positive difference to their lives, their communities and broader society.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That this Committee notes the purpose of the Charter and agrees to sign up to this on behalf of the Council
- 2.2 That this Committee agrees to regularly monitor progress made towards actions it will take to deliver on the Charter commitments
- 2.3 That the Committee agrees to councillors being invited to mentor young people wanting to learn how to be more involved in local politics and offer opportunities to shadow them where

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Power of Youth Charter is based on insights gathered from #iwill campaign partners and #iwill Ambassadors; it provides a framework for organisations to empower more young people to shape decisions, take social action and make a positive difference.
- 3.2 The #iwill campaign was launched in November 2013 by HRH The Prince of Wales and the leaders of the three main political parties. Its launch followed an independent review into what action different sectors could take to support more young people to participate in social action.
- 3.3 The charity Step Up to Serve currently coordinates the #iwill campaign. It does so by connecting campaign partners, communicating data and evidence about the benefits of youth social action and challenging organisations to do more.

3.4 The #iwill campaign, comprised of over 1000 organisations from across the UK, aims to make participation in social action the norm for young people aged 10 to 20.

3.5 The Power of Youth Charter invites organisations to commit to growing the power of youth in the following areas:

- Prioritise supporting young people to take social action  
We will create opportunities that empower more young people, particularly from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds, to be positive change makers
- Open up our decision-making structures  
We will offer opportunities for young people, particularly from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds, to participate in decision-making, leading and shaping both the activities they are involved in and wider organisational decisions
- Work collaboratively with other organisations  
We will work collaboratively with other organisations to create more high-quality opportunities, reach young people from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds to take part, share learning and achieve shared goals
- Evidence the benefits of youth social action  
We will capture and share insights, stories and data on how we are working with young people, and the positive impact this has on them, their communities and our organisation
- Recognise and celebrate young people's impact  
We will use our communication channels to advocate for and celebrate young people as positive and powerful change makers.

3.6 The values underpinning the Charter are as follows:

- Empowering: Young people are treated as equal partners in tackling common challenges. We listen to them, work with them and give them the space to create and lead change.
- Collaborative: To achieve our shared vision and goals, we need to work together. #iwill stimulates collective action by connecting organisations, policymakers and young people to collaborate and co-create change.
- Challenging: We push for meaningful change to culture, policy and practice so that more young people, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds, are supported and empowered to make a positive difference.
- Inclusive: We embrace, champion and celebrate young people, individuals and organisations from a diverse range of backgrounds and beliefs to create solutions and access benefits of youth social action. We stand united against all forms of discrimination based on an individual's race, ethnicity, class, beliefs, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, health or other any status.
- Independent: #iwill belongs to everybody. It remains independent of the interests of any single organisation, political party, funding source, form of youth social action or cause.

3.7 The Charter will underpin collaboration towards four collective impact goals:

1. More children and young people are making a positive difference across the UK
2. More children and young people are shaping decisions in the public, private and voluntary sectors
3. More organisations are demonstrably taking action to grow the power of youth

4. A positive shift in public perception on the role children and young people can play in society
- 3.8 The Youth Participation report was presented to the Children, Young People and Skills Committee in November 2020. This noted the current youth participation opportunities in the city and agreed the action plan developed by young people that will further increase young people's involvement in making decisions that impact on them. This highlights the commitment already made by young people, community and voluntary sector youth providers and the Council to empower young people to shape decisions, take social action and make a positive difference to their lives, their communities and broader society.
- 3.9 It is suggested that, if the Council agree to sign up to the Charter; our commitment would be the following:
- P** – Prioritise supporting young people to take social action
- We will give young people opportunities to get involved
  - We will fund programmes that support young people where we can
  - We will continue to provide a youth-led grants programme for young people to have a say on what projects we should fund
- O** – Open up decision making structures
- We will implement changes in our youth action plan agreed in November.
  - All councillors will offer mentoring to any young people interested in learning more
  - We will work to continue to involve the youth council and children in care council in decisions
- W** – Work collaboratively with other orgs
- Continue to work with youth services in the city to implement change
  - Arrange meetings to help youth services collaborate
- E**- Evidence benefits of youth social action
- We will report yearly on youth engagement at Children, Young People and Skills
- R** – Recognise and celebrate young people's impact
- We will continually publicise the work of young people
  - Support youth services to offer digital badge of participation
  - Celebrate the achievements on our young people in care via our annual child in care awards
- 3.10 The next steps, if the Council agreed to sign-up to the Power of Youth Charter, would be the following:
1. A senior leader from the Council; ideally the Chief Executive and/or Chair - will sign-up to the Charter on behalf of the organisation and outline specific actions it will take to deliver on the Charter commitments.
  2. The Council will publicise adoption of the Charter through the Communication Team

3. The Council will hold itself accountable to young people and track its development by sharing annually with #iwill Ambassadors and our networks on how we are delivering the Charter commitments

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The Council has recently endorsed the Youth Participation Plan that aims to further the work to engage young people in decision making opportunities; this Charter's values, priorities and goals are in line with this plan and therefore could realistically be achieved.
- 4.2 An alternative could be to coproduce a localised charter with youth providers and the Council signing up to it along with committing to agree actions.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Consultation events, including young people's and stakeholders focus groups were held as part of the Youth Review that included consulting on young people's participation opportunities and gaining views on how this could be improved. A Youth Wise meeting focused on developing a Youth Participation Plan.

#### **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 Signing up to this Charter would confirm that the Council is committed to building on positive participation opportunities for young people; empowering them to have a voice in decisions that impact on their lives, their community and broader society.

#### **7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no financial implications as a direct result of the recommendations of this report

*Finance Officer Consulted: Name David Ellis*

*Date: 15/12/20*

##### Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There is a duty within Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 sometimes described as the "sufficiency duty" that the council "*must, so far as reasonably practicable, secure for qualifying young persons in the authority's area access to (a)sufficient educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities; and(b)sufficient recreational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities.*" Statutory guidance is also explicit that local authorities must take steps to ascertain the views of young people and to take them into account in making decisions about services and

activities for them. The Charter will assist the authority in ensuring this is the case.

*Lawyer Consulted:*

*Name Natasha Watson*

*Date: 29/12/20*

