

# Report on the progress made against the Power of Youth Charter Action Plan

November 2021

## Introduction

Brighton & Hove City Council agreed to sign up to the Power of Youth Charter in January 2021. Actions that would deliver on the Charter commitments were agreed and the Council publicised the adoption of the Charter through the Communication Team.

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.

The Charter underpins 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

This will have a wider positive impact on young people's ability to make a difference and achieve with higher levels of confidence in themselves and their abilities. This will also be an opportunity to celebrate young people as positive and powerful change-makers.

The structure for developing actions for the Charter is defined below:

- P** Prioritise supporting young people to take social action
- O** Open up decision making structures
- W** Work collaboratively with other organisations
- E** Evidence benefits of youth social action
- R** Recognise and celebrate young people's impact

This report defines the agreed actions and progress made towards each of the sections outlined above.

## Progress made

<b>P</b> rioritise supporting young people to take social action	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress</b>
We will give young people opportunities to get involved	<u>Youth Council</u> A very successful induction day was held in October with 16 young people attending, 13 of whom were new members. The membership has now increased to over 25 with nearly all schools in the city being represented. They are currently working on their environment campaign to reduce plastic use in the city.

The Youth Council are working with Council Officers on the next Make Your Mark campaign and are optimistic in achieving significantly increased numbers of young people participating in this than previous years.

#### Children in Care Council

This group are meeting regularly and attended a two-day residential in August. They supported the National Care Review Survey and 22% of young people in care completed the survey. In June children in care aged 13-17 were asked their views on how the Council are doing on delivering on the Reach for the Stars – 10 promises (agreed in 2019), including, *'we will always involve YOU in decisions made about YOU'*. 20% of young people in care within this age group responded to the survey. The findings of this survey were presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in November by a young person and as a result an action plan will be agreed with progress on delivering on these actions monitored regularly. The survey will be repeated in 2023 and consideration will be given to increasing the numbers of young people contributing to the survey.

#### Care Leavers Forum

Representatives from the Care Leavers Forum are attending the Corporate Parenting Board. Young people co-chaired and shared a presentation of the Care Leavers Local Offer consultation findings in June, resulting in a revised Offer being taken back to the young people to consider. There are plans to elect a member of the Care Leavers Forum to regularly co-chair the Corporate Parenting Board.

Care Leavers Forum have been involved with Foundations for Our Future, looking to help improve young people's mental health and common issues they face.

#### YouthWise

YouthWise has continued to meet quarterly, hosted by different youth organisations. The agenda is set by young people on issues that are important to them. The last meeting was very successful with 23 young people in attendance. Youth providers are very active in promoting the meetings.

#### Via Youth Providers

All youth providers are working with young people to ensure they have a voice. Many have young people on their management boards or youth presidents that collect feedback from other members to influence change in their projects.

	<p>Young people have put applications into the Youth Led Grants Programme, for projects and activities they want to organise.</p> <p>Young people are encouraged and supported to become a volunteer, assisting or leading on youth sessions.</p> <p><u>Young Ambassadors</u>  Young Ambassadors are recruited, trained, and supported to participate in Families, Children and Learning's recruitment process. In the year 2020-21 young people participated in 16 interviews over the year. This year they have already been involved in 26 and this is likely to reach over 30 by the end of March 2022.</p>
We will fund programmes that support young people where we can	<p>The Youth Service Grants Programme recommissioning process was concluded in July 2021. £416,800 was available with all areas and equality groups receiving an increase. There were four people on the evaluation panel, two of which were young people from the Youth Council who were fully involved in the decision-making process.</p> <p>The Youth Participation Team, funded by the Council provide opportunities for young people's voices to be heard via the Children in Care Council, Care Leavers Forum (recently established), Young Ambassadors, Youth Advocacy, Youth Council and supporting YouthWise</p>
We will continue to provide a youth-led grants programme for young people to have a say on what projects we should fund	<p>£110k was available to distribute as part of the Youth Led Grants Programme. Young people agreed the priorities for the and this year added an extra criterion for projects to assist with the impact of covid. The projects focussed on the most disadvantaged. All applications were required to have young people be part of the application process.</p> <p>Eight young people from different youth organisations across the city made up the evaluation panel. They marked all the applications forms which resulted in 28 different projects being successfully awarded funding.</p>

### **O**pen up decision making structures

Action	Progress
We will implement changes in the Youth Participation action plan agreed in November	<p>The Wheretogoforwebsite has been widely publicised.</p> <p>Youth providers are meeting regularly to share their programmes with each other, so young people have a better awareness of what projects and activities are open to them.</p>

	<p>The Youth Council is meeting with the Communication Team to plan how to better promote youth council activities. Both the beach clean and induction day received publicity. They are currently putting a proposal forward for a Youth Council Instagram account. The increase in membership means better communication with schools.</p> <p>We are working with the web team to improve the Councils youth web pages. Young people will give feedback on the design.</p> <p><i>Progress against other actions is noted in other sections in this report.</i></p>
<p>Green Councillors will offer mentoring to any young people interested in learning more</p>	<p>Guidance to support a mentoring programme is being agreed and will be finalised very soon.</p>
<p>We will work to continue to involve the Youth Council and Children in Care Council in decisions</p>	<p>The Youth Council has voted on positions of responsibility. Youth Councillors, who they represent and their responsibilities, along with agendas and minutes of meetings will be published on the Brighton and Hove Youth Council webpage in the new year.</p> <p>The Youth Council have set up three subgroups. One to move the environment campaign forward, one to organise the next Youthwise meeting, a celebration event, in partnership with Brighton Youth Centre and one to organise the next Make Your Mark campaign.</p> <p>The Children, Young People and Skills Committee now has a permanent Youth Council representative, supported by the FCL Director. Youth Council members are keen to have representation on other Committees.</p> <p>The Care Leavers Forum are active on the Corporate Parenting Board.</p>

### **Work collaboratively with other organisations**

Action	Progress
<p>Continue to work with youth services in the city to implement change</p>	<p>Commissioned youth providers are required to work to achieve particular outcomes including working with young people to 'improve decision making, voice and advocacy and democratic engagement. Providers report on participation opportunities 6 monthly and performance monitored regularly.</p>
<p>Arrange meetings to help youth services collaborate</p>	<p>Youth providers have met four times to discuss progressing youth participation in the city. It was agreed that their strategies needed to be different to reflect the needs of the young people in their projects. All providers recognise the importance of enabling young people to</p>

	participate at a level the young people are comfortable with and have plans to increase youth participation.
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<b>Evidence benefits of youth social action</b>	
Action	Progress
We will report yearly on youth engagement at Children, Young People and Skills	This report will be presented to the Children, Young People and Skills Committee in January 2022. Progress will continue to be monitored.

<b>Recognise and celebrate young people's impact</b>	
Action	Progress
We will continually publicise the work of young people	There have been several events publicising the work of young people over the year via social media, Council website and local media.
Support youth services to offer digital badge of participation	Two youth providers currently offer digital badges to recognise young people's achievements. There are plans to extend this to all projects.
Celebrate the achievements on our young people in care via our annual child in care awards	The next Child in Care Award Ceremony is planned for 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2022 at the i360. There was not an event in 2021 due to Covid.

**Summary**

This has been a positive experience for young people involved in the participation opportunities outlined in this report, empowering, and enabling them to have a say on the things that impact them directly. This process has also given young people opportunities to grow and achieve whilst making significant contributions.

This report identifies the key areas for celebration and improvement and highlights the commitment already made by young people, the Council and community and voluntary sector youth providers.

Although this report highlights evidence of progress made, there is still more to be done and actions need to be regularly monitored to ensure there is further development in providing opportunities to hear the voices of young people living in the city.

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