

## **Report of the Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017**

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**Subject:**

**Youth Voice in the District**

**Summary statement:**

This report informs the Committee of work to deliver the Bradford Youth Voice Strategy. The Strategy is led by the Council's Commissioner for Youth Provisions, coordinated through the Youth offer working Group and delivered by a range of statutory and non statutory organisations across the district. The report provides examples that contribute to the delivery of the strategy, demonstrating the diversity of the work undertaken by a wide number of organisations within the partnership. The strategy includes youth voice work within communities; for specific groups of young people (e.g. the work with transgender young people); work to influence strategy and policy, and the district wider Youth Survey and Takeover Day.

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**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**  
**Children's Services**

## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report informs the Committee of work to deliver the Bradford Youth Voice Strategy. The Strategy is led by the Council's Commissioner for Youth Provisions, coordinated through the Youth offer working Group and delivered by a range of statutory and non statutory organisations across the district. The report provides examples that contribute to the delivery of the strategy, demonstrating the diversity of the work undertaken by a wide number of organisations within the partnership. The strategy includes youth voice work within communities; for specific groups of young people (e.g. the work with transgender young people); work to influence strategy and policy, and the district wider Youth Survey and Takeover Day.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The strategy for Youth Voice in Bradford is delivered by the Council and a wide range of community based partners, working together to ensure that young people's voices are heard in the development of the district, and that young people participate in decision making around services. This strategy is led and coordinated by the Council's Commissioner for Youth Provisions, working with the wider youth sector both the statutory and increasingly importantly, the non statutory sector through the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector. Within the strategy there are area based commitments to young people within the ward plans which are supported by a number of funding streams available at local level. At a district wide level, the Youth Offer Working Group works to identify gaps and to support district wide consultation and participation in the political and decision making process. Through this mechanism, young people are active participants in the development of district wide strategies and plans that shape the future of Bradford District. The Youth Offer also links Bradford's young people to wider opportunities both regionally and nationally through activities such as children in care taking over Whitehall; the regional children in foster care hub development, and the Growing Up North project. The Youth Offer group is also developing the Youth Voice Standards through an DCLG funded, Voluntary, Community Sector led project to establish shared standards for youth participation across the district.
- 2.2 The Assistant Director for Neighbourhood and Customer Services presented a report to the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016. This report outlined the plans for establishing this strategy through for the Youth Offer for the Bradford District in response to the recommendations made in the Youth Offer Review Report produced in November 2014, and in line with the "Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being" :
- 2.3 Options for change and recommendations were presented to the Committee which resolved:  
"That the service encourages young people's voices to continue to be heard in influencing the provision of Youth Services"
- 2.4 Since this report was presented a Youth Offer Working Group has been established to drive forward the work across the youth sector under the 5 key elements. The Youth Offer Working Group has representation from the local authority youth services, the Voluntary Sector, the Council, the Police, Community and Faith sector,

working together to develop and lead the Youth Offer Action Plan. This working group feeds into the core strategic group of the Young Lives Bradford Network and the Safer and Stronger Communities – Active Communities Group.

- 2.5 The Youth Offer for the district comprises of 5 key elements, one of which is “voice and influence”. This key element, where by local authorities and partners take steps to ascertain the views of young people and to take them into account in making decisions about services and activities for them aligns with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 2.6 The “Bradford Children, Young People and Families Plan 2017-2020” identified a key priority for the district was “Listening to the voice of children, young people and families and working with them to shape services and promote active citizenship”. This plan, overseen by the Children’s Trust Board gives strategic support to ensure the Voice of children and young people is maintained and influential across the wider Partnerships in the district. The Board also provides critical challenge to organisations to improve and develop creative ways to hear the voice of children and to evidence the impact their voices have had in the in development of their services.
- 2.7 The Council’s Commissioner (Youth Provisions) has a key role in the development of youth voice opportunities that bring together young people from across the district to ensure their voices are influential in the future of the district. Our growing youth population means we have to be ever more creative in ensuring we reach the diverse range of young people in the district and that their voices and listened to, heard and respected so they can influence change. We also need to find better ways to include the voice of younger children, and to create and increase opportunities for young people to be part of the solutions.

### **3. Overview of Youth Voice and influence**

#### **3.1) The Youth Voice Framework**

We have worked with young people to develop a Youth Voice Framework as part of the Children, Young People and families’ Plan. This can be seen in Appendix A

#### **3.2) District Wide Youth Voice Events**

Using the Youth Voice Framework over the last 12 months we have run 12 district wide cross sector Youth Voice events which have influenced key plans around services for young people. This has included consultation around the Youth App development, Aspirations events and development of the districts Economic Strategy.

Young people have been active participants in Public Forums, particularly the Education forum which has given young people opportunity to take an active role in shaping outcomes from these events. Across the district the youth sector has routinely stepped into the role of supporting young people to have their voices heard and for these to be influential in service design – the recent Early Help consultation being one such example where young people from across the youth sector were encouraged to share their thoughts and needs in relation to Early Help developments.

#### **3.3) West Yorkshire Police**

West Yorkshire Police have used the district Youth Voice to undertake consultation around an awareness raising poster campaign that is now rolled out into key transportation hubs across West Yorkshire. This campaign is aimed to support more vulnerable young people in the identifying signs of abuse and CSE, and to signpost towards help and support services.

3.4) **The voice of transgendered young people**

The Youth Service has maintained the partnership working with voluntary sector provisions that has enabled the continuation of provision for LGBT young people. More recently the Youth Service has made significant steps in developing provision specifically to meet the needs of Transgender young people. This has seen the local authority Youth Service, partner with the national organisation Gender Identity, and through sharing of resources we have shared knowledge and expertise that has enabled supportive work to be established in the district for transgendered young people and in return 24 staff and volunteers have received introduction training for working with young people.

3.5) **Growing up North**

Working with young people from across the District Bradford has played a pivotal role working alongside the Children's Commissioners Office to explore the impact on where you live on your aspirations and successes. As part of this work we have facilitated the visits to more vulnerable young people, including those who were living in Care, in supported housing or who were homeless.

3.6) The findings of the Commissioners visit was presented back to young people and the strategic director for Children's Services, and was a key in shaping the District Plan and the Children and Young People's Plan. This was followed up with further work and the creation of a film which has been used in December 2016 to launch the project. The launch at the BBC in Salford was the start of the voice and influence by Bradford's young people on the Northern Powerhouse developments. Young people who made the film had opportunity to attend the launch and chat to decision makers about their aspirations for Bradford and its future. The Northern Powerhouse developments continue to be influenced by young people with the establishment of a regional group supported by the Regional Youth Work Unit for Yorkshire and Humber with an active recruitment currently underway to take up the invitation for young people from Bradford to join this group.

3.7) **The Takeover Challenge**

This was an opportunity for young people to "takeover" adult roles for the day, and during that takeover to have their voices heard. Professionals agree to a young person taking on their role for the day. Working with a steering group of young people we saw a diverse range of opportunities including through health, the Council, Housing and voluntary sector providers, with 82 young people and 17 schools offering "Takeovers" in 2016. Takeover Challenge is due to take place on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November with a wide range of "takeover" opportunities that will support young people into decision making roles at local and strategic levels. For young people this is an empowering experience with a team of roving reporters working alongside the Takeovers to capture and record the day. This years Takeover will also see 3 young people having their voices heard when they represent Bradford Children in Care Council at the Takeover of Whitehall, which is being run in partnership with the Commissioners Office.

3.8) **Young people's mental health services**

Young people attending the 2016 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Youth Offer report raised their concerns around services to support their mental health. Following this a further Committee meeting was established bringing the Health and Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committees together to hear what young people had to say. Young People presented a report with recommendations called "Help today's youth to help tomorrows Bradford". The joint Committee agreed that a sub group would be established to receive a response to the young people's paper. This response was heard on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Since then there have been a number of developments in particular the "Youth in Mind – Buddies" project which is a direct response to the paper produced by young people. This has seen a significant change in service delivery in response to what young people told us around support young people needed when accessing CAMHS services. Further details on this specific project will be included in the report, due to be presented to the joint Children's and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

3.9) **The Youth Survey**

Across the Youth Sector a survey has been undertaken to identify and inform the future direction of Youth Work in the District. This survey saw 1,700 young people taking part in the survey and this has given some clear directions in terms of the needs and priorities for young people. Highlighted from this survey is how young people feel people from different backgrounds generally get on with each other, how adults respect young people, how safe they feel when it's late and dark and during the daytime and the pride they feel about the area in which they live. The Youth Survey results and locality responses to what young people have said have already been shared with the 3 of the Area Committees and dates are scheduled for the remaining 2 committees. Details of what young people told us during this survey can be seen in Appendix B

3.10) **#iWill Fund**

The Big Lottery Fund and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have invested seed funding to create the #iwill fund. This has been boosted by a match funder and Leeds Community Foundation were asked to lead the grant process on behalf of the #iwill fund in Bradford and Leeds. Young people from the Bradford district have taken an active role in the decision making panel for the allocation of this fund for the first round of what is planned to be a 4 year programme. This funding has the key theme of Youth social action, recognising the huge potential to create enjoyable opportunities and skills development for young people and of the potential benefits to local people and places. One of the key aims of this grant scheme is to raise the level and quality of youth social action and increasing this by 50% by 2020 taking the percentage of young people that volunteer from 40% to 60% across Leeds and Bradford. Young people as part of this process had the demanding task of reading all the applications for both Leeds and Bradford, making their own notes and thoughts on the applications before attending the main awarding Panel and taking an active part in the discussions around the applications to decide the projects most beneficial to fund.

3.11) **Interview Panels**

We continue to ensure that recruitment to key strategic posts within the Children's Services Department have active participation by young people. Youth Panels have worked with the Senior Management Team to support their interviews for key

strategic positions including the Safeguarding Children's Board Manager and the Head of Social Work Service. This has seen a unique opportunity for young people from different organisations to come together to be key contributors and to influence decision making at a high level in being part of a process of appointing lead officers for services for children and young people.

### 3.12) **Youth Work Grants**

Working with the Youth Offer Working Group and Young Lives Bradford we have in the last 12 months undertaken a radical overhaul of the grants allocated to the Voluntary Sector for the delivery of youth work. The budget of £311K had been retained for delivery in 2017-18 but realigned to the priorities of the Youth Offer Review, with an emphasis on the work meeting gaps in services and contributing to the wider district wide youth offer, including the priority of youth voice and influence. There are 2 strands to this funding with one strand identified for the delivery of sessional youth work (week in week out type provision) and one strand for seed funding developmental youth work. This funding was allocated through a evaluation panel approach over 2 rounds, both of which have had a active and independent youth panel to scrutinise and influence grant allocations. We are currently funding 36 voluntary, community and faith led initiatives from this funding, some examples of which are detailed in sections 3.13-3.25

### 3.13) **E:merge Youth Provision**

E:merge currently operate an organisation wise Youth Council which enables young people to have a voice in the decision making within the organisation and within their communities. This group has recently gained some funding to improve the safety of a Wakefield Road roundabout with support from the Area Coordinators Office. E:merge run a series of Young leader sessions that enable young people from East Bowling to contribute towards the wider Youth Council Group in a structured way that is representative of the community. These sessions are led by young people themselves with support of youth workers.

### 3.14) **The Life Centre, Bierley**

The Life Centre works with young people who are LGBT, Young parents, young people with physical disabilities, those affected by drug problems, have mental health issues or are from new migrant communities. As part of their work they currently operate a Youth Council which supports and encourages young people from the area to put their views and opinions across. Young people are given opportunity to influence the delivery of future sessions operated by the centre.

### 3.15) **Keighley Asian Women's and Children's Centre (KAWACC)**

The current Youth Work Grant is to fund a project that has been designed by young girls from the Keighley area. They have initiated this project so they are able to have conversations in a safe space and to challenge people in strategic positions. During recent months the young girls have taken part in workshops and really focussed on what they would wish to contribute when they attend the Daughters of Eve Conference hosted by the Muslim Women's Council. This conference has a focus on resilience, faith and unity. Girls have worked on key areas of interest and concern, devising questions they would like to ask the panel members at the event.

### 3.16) **People First – Keighley and Craven**

People First have been working with a core team of young people who all have learning disabilities and who are already experienced self-advocates. These

individual young people are now taking a lead role as peer mentors and trainers within the funded projects work. The young people have become much more active in leading the project having confidence in their voices being heard and working with parents and carers to begin enabling young people to be involved in the arrangements as part of their training in advocacy skills.

### 3.17) **Healthy Life Cycles – Active Leaders Project**

The active leaders project offers opportunity for young people to take part in creative sessions where they have chance to talk about their lives, experiences and feelings. Breaking down barriers between peers is a key element of the sessions that are delivered. Young people are given safe space in which to have their voices heard, and to talk about issues that affect them, which often relates to their country of origin. The Active Leaders project is actively targeting young Slovak males, Congolese females and young people who are Somali origin. The young leaders have identified their interests and learning needs and determined the issues and activities which they wish to prioritise during the residential, increasing their 'voice and influence'. This continues to promote the notion of young people as active citizens and encourages them to be involved in the running and planning of provision. During the planned residential experience, we hope to capture the 'collective voice' of the young people from New Migrant communities to share with other young people. This will be done via the use of creative media such as photos and videos known as 'Photo Voice', a participatory monitoring and evaluation method. The project is developing positive and active role models through this process, who, in turn, will disseminate their skills, learning and experience throughout their community.

### 3.18) **Freedom Studios**

Freedom Studios uses performing arts as a tool for young people to explore and express their own views and voices. Young people from the Canterbury area used their voices to create a short film, based on a story they wrote for themselves of a girl whose father was taken to fight in World War 1, tackling themes of war and bereavement. This film is due to be screened at a Youth Theatre event at Kala Sangam in December.

Using the medium of the arts young people are encouraged and have increased confidence to speak out, there is active encouragement of peer feedback with young people learning constructive critiques with shared pieces of work. The theme of 'revolution' was used to explore with young people the things they would like to see changed / improved in the world. They talked of issues that affect them, such as racism and sexism and how they can speak out about these issues.

### 3.19) **MAPA Youth Project**

The MAPA group are currently using their youth voice work within a piece of work with a partner organisation – CentrePoint. This is to ensure youth voice is influential in the development of the MAPA 'POD' which a space intended to be free to use to community members. The young people are actively seeking funding to support their idea, and have set up and are running a coffee bar, using profits from sales to help subsidise other activities and provisions they would like to see develop at the centre.

### 3.20) **Equity Partnership**

The work at the Equity Partnership is funded to target particularly LGBT young people, those who have physical disabilities, are affected by drug problems or have

or have had mental health issues and those who are homeless or have been reported missing or who have run away. Particularly the Equity Partnership in partnership with the Youth Service has led the developments of the Phoenix youth provision, which is enabling the voice of trans young people to be heard. Young people from Phoenix have taken an active role in work with the Childrens Commissioner in the development of a national information app for young people. They have spoken at the Overview and Scrutiny committee and have shared their voices through a presentation to professionals, and speaking at the IDOHOBIT event about their experiences of being Trans.

There are increasing support needs for Trans young people from BME communities to have their voices heard and a safe space has been created with the Youth Service to support this with regular facilitated meet ups and an annual residential.

### 3.21) **BCB Radio**

Young people working with BCB radio have been encouraged to vocalise and share their opinions and experiences on a range of issues. A key focus of their work has been centred on employment and career aspirations, which has allowed young people to share their vision for their futures and organise practical steps to take action. Young people have also interviewed a range of professionals to identify their career and employment routes. Young people have produced and presented radio programmes that we have broadcast on BCB programmes that have reflected their experiences and enabled them to have had their voice heard.

### 3.22) **16-25 Young Adviser's Project**

The young adviser's project is a joint initiative to train young people in the basic skills of generalist advice work, covering housing, homelessness, welfare benefits and debt work. Young people are trained in interview skills and safe guarding, with the intention of giving them the confidence and skills to go back to their communities, colleges and youth clubs with an increased set of skills and knowledge, and to be more able to have their voices heard, but also to advise other young people in a way that is accessible and immediately useful.

### 3.23) **Hindu Cultural Society**

Using the youth work grant the Society have targeted young people, particularly those with poor mental health and those from new migrant communities to develop a youth committee at the temple. The Youth Committee are now working with the main temple committee, and is leading on developments of a health hub where by the community can access dance, sport and fun exercise sessions.

### 3.24) **Prism**

Funded by the Youth Work Grant the Prism Youth Group targets deaf young people into their provision. They are developing the voice of deaf young people within their provision, establishing their views on the activities they want, which informs the session plans. In small group sessions and one-to-one identify what issues are important to them and to support developing work around those issues.

### 3.25) **The School of Rock and Media (SORM Studios)**

SORM studios were successful in being awarded a grant from the Youth Work Grants and have used this to target young people from new migrant communities and those affected by drug misuse. The young people have taken part in the Hope not hate Music festival in the town centre as well as taking part in the Bradford Music festival and more recently the open access event. The young people have



used these events to show case their talents and moreover have their voices heard in their music and feel a part of Bradford. The young people continue to support “The White Ribbon Campaign” and “Love Bradford” and continue to work on their “Bystander Project” which encourages young people to speak out where they see hate crime, bullying and violence.

### 3.26) **Bradford Youth Development Partnership (BYDP)**

The Bradford Youth Development Partnership has a strong track record of listening to young people. Young people are active in shaping the provision in terms of identifying activities that would engage and interest them, what their needs are and this is used to shape funding applications. Young People influence the summer holiday and afterschool programmes and help us to improve the quality of the services they are offered. BYDP captures young people’s views at the end of every session, activity, trip and programme, and identifies that our best listening takes place during one to one sessions. BYDP takes on-board young people’s feedback in order to evaluate and plan the next steps so that the best progress can be made and demonstrated.

BYDP have recently undertaken a online survey across the BD3,BD5,BD8 areas which saw 249 young people taking part, this feedback has shaped Youth Ambitions – our programme training young volunteers. Young volunteers help plan and deliver youth club and holiday activities. Young people in our survey identified their unmet needs, which we aim to meet through a newly formed partnership of VCS providers in Bradford.

### 3.27) **Bradford Young Carers**

Bradford Young Carers run a Carers Committee, consisting of young people who have been users of the Young Carers Service, and those who are currently service users. This group has an active role to play in the design and delivery of services for Carers, giving valuable insight about the needs. Service users are active in evaluating sessions, with youth voice influencing the development of future sessions.

The Young Carers host a radio show, giving young carers their voice across the networks. Recruitment events include young people’s panels and there are many examples of how young people’s feedback has changed the minds of adult and panels of professionals.

Young Carers have played an active Youth voice role in the development of a Carers Hub at Horton Park, ensuring the needs of young carers are heard and influential in its design. Young carers have taken part in Barnardos national research around the needs of young carers, actively contributing to the research around needs and support services for young carers. Young Carers have attended and had their voices heard at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to Young Carers.

### 3.28) **Children in Care Council (CiCC)**

The role of the Children in Care Council (CiCC) is to ensure that every child has an opportunity to air their views, and is a mechanism to allow children and young people to put there experiences of the care system directly to those responsible for corporate parenting. The Bradford CiCC currently has approximately 8 to 10 active members. It meets weekly at culture fusion on a Wednesday evening. The participation of children in care and care leavers reflects broader public policy emphasis on public service providers facilitating increased local determination by local citizens. There has been growing evidence that decisions about the services

produce better outcomes when made closer to the individuals and groups who are users of those services. Children in Care Council's provide an effective mechanism for children in care and care leavers as a distinct user group with niche needs to shape the services they receive. The Bradford CiCC are currently involved in Young people interview panels; Foster training; University training and Social Work inductions.

### 3.29) **Build a Girl Project**

The Build a Girl Project is a small and developing social enterprise project, founded by a survivor of sexual exploitation that works with girls and young women. There are 3 strands to their work which includes an empowerment project targeting girls in years 5 and 6, provision of community groups and safe space for girls and young women and a survivor's project for girls and young women who have been exploited or who are vulnerable to exploitation. Young women from this project have taken a positive and active role within the district wide youth voice events and young women from this project have worked alongside others to become a youth panel for interviews within the Children's Services Department. Their Youth Voice has extended beyond Bradford with recent attendance by young women at the conference "Feminism in London (Filia) Event" where by young women were able to articulate their views and make positive representation of the needs and concerns of vulnerable or exploited girls and young women. This was a huge step in the lives of those young women to be heard and respected and for their voices to have made a difference to national work in this area.

### 3.30) **The Youth Service**

The Youth Service runs a wide variety of programmes through their open access provisions based in ward areas which are focused on ensuring local young people have opportunity to influence the weekly sessions within their areas, and to develop their own programmes of activity. Youth Voice has always been a key priority for the Youth Service and the service has been key to ensuring opportunities are created in communities that support youth voice ensuring this influences the development of ward plan and creates opportunities for young people to be more active as citizens in their communities. They have actively engaged young people in consultations across the district including the Annual Youth Survey (Appendix B) and the budget consultations. They have also actively promoted and encouraged young people to register to vote giving real voice to young people as active citizens in the district. Attendance at the Area Committees by young people has given young people opportunity to have their voices heard and for them to be heard by members at Area Committees about things that are important to them, and for them to be more active in finding solutions to local issues.

**Bradford West** - In Bradford West young people have worked with young people to develop a youth council in the Allerton and Thornton ward area. They have also developed a Clayton Junior Parish Council who are working in partnership with the Clayton Parish Council, showing a commitment from the Parish Council to hearing the voice and working with young people as active citizens in their community. Young people from the West Constituency have been active in providing feedback around the development of new sports facilities in the area and in wider community forums.

**Bradford East** – in Bradford East there has been young people's voice and influence with the development of projects in the Springfield Centre, in a new

information and advice session in Canterbury and in the revamping of the sessions at the Karmand Centre. Youth voice has been active in the setting up of new provisions – Girl Power Project was established with young women from the Carlton Bolling School, and a second session at Greenwood Centre has been developed in response to young people’s feedback. The Library development in Holmewood has been led by young people and is designed reach out to their peers. The Ravenscliffe Youth Association has formed and they have used their voice and influence to access funding to enhance and support additional activities identified by young people in that area. The District wide Sound group gives support to LGBT young people, with increased participation by Trans young people, and supports their active participation in wider youth voice events both within the constituency and in the District.

**Bradford South** – Within the Bradford South area there have been a number of young people who have taken a lead in influencing key decisions in relation to their areas. A number of young people have been directly involved in the Grants Advisory Group linked to the Area Committee in the area which has led to over £10,000 been allocated to fund local community groups and events in the South area.

Young people were active in their participation in the Youth Survey with many using this opportunity to have their voices heard on key issues as they saw them. Many of these young people are now actively working with the youth work team around solutions to the issues they identified

**Keighley** - Young people attend a number of meetings in the Keighley area including the Area Committee Meetings, and on an ad-hoc basis they are supported to meeting with their local Ward and Parish / Town Councillors. This gives young people a direct link to their local councillors and opportunity for their voices to be heard.

The Young Advisors’ Project has provided a unique opportunity for youth voice to be heard – a partnership between the Youth Service, the national Young Advisors’ Charity and Keighley Youth Co-op Ltd, allowed young people from the area to volunteer their time and attended training provided by the Young Advisors’ Charity. This training developed young people’s confidence and ability to look their community in a new light and, in turn, take on a range of Youth Action projects. As a result of this they have gone on to use their voices to promote the participation of other young people and to raise awareness around issues such as emotional health and well-being, CSE, drug use and Voter Registration. Currently they are working towards promoting re-cycling.

Within the Keighley East area young people have played an active role in influencing the development of the Big Local Initiative, this will see young people actively involved by identify and visiting groups / organisations interested in applying for the funding and playing a key role in the decision making around the allocation of funding.

The Ilkley ward has seen young people shaping and designing the youth club activity and they have been lead advocates for the Community Alcohol Partnership. Young people have worked with the Ilkley Youth and Community Association to make a funding application to further the youth voice work across the ward with the plan to deliver additional youth work session, which will be led by young people. The Ilkley Parish Council are in early discussions with young people to explore how they can have greater representation in the decisions of the parish council

**Shipley** – Young people in Shipley area have developed a Constituency wide Youth Voice Group. This group identifies key issues and needs of young people to be addressed next year. They have also attended a residential weekend to explore what it means to be a Shipley Voice member and to develop ideas on how to consult with other young people in the Shipley Constituency.

Young people have 2 places on Baildon Town Council's Community Committee, and have established a Baildon Youth Council. Young people play an active role in steering groups within all youth service run provisions ensuring a strong youth voice and influence over service development.

**3.31) Social Care – Viewpoint**

Viewpoint is a tool that is used particular to hear the voice of children who are in care or who are on plans with Children's Social Care. This tool supports young people taking an active role in articulating their wishes, how happy they are in placements and what they wish to see going forward. It provides a strong influence in the developing of plans to support individual young people and ensures their voices are heard, often at times when it would be easy to listen and be overridden by adults and professionals voices. This tool also allows a clear evidence of difference made or where plans have been developed in response to what children and young people have told us.

**3.32) School Councils**

One area of youth voice is within the education systems. Many of the schools in the district have school council arrangements giving a strong pupil voice to the school. This enables young people to be consulted and for them to influence the direction and update of policies including school uniform, behaviour and extra curricular activity. There are some very active school councils with a growing number of these taking a more active role in the wider community in which their school is based.

**3.33) Youth Voice within Health**

Health services have a number of youth voice initiatives, particularly around design of services for young people. They have one off consultation events, youth led initiatives, and an active district wide peer group who take a lead within health services.

There is a strong evidenced track record of services being developed and changed in response to feedback from young people, more recently this has been evident in the development of support services for young people using CAMHS and wider mental health support services in the development of the pilot Youth In Mind. This area of work will be further reported to the Joint Children's and Health overview and scrutiny meeting later this month.

**3.34) The Guide Association**

Within the Bradford area there are significant numbers of girls and young women aged 5–25 years taking part in Guiding activities and accessing a diverse range of youth led activities. Guiding units in the district are supported by the national organisation, the Guide Association boasts itself to be the largest organisation for girls and young women in the UK. This presents young women in the Bradford groups with some unique opportunities to have their voices heard on a regional and national stage with campaigns that give girls a platform to influence policy, to be active campaigners and to influence positive change for girls everywhere. Key to this has been their advocate panel for members aged 14 - 25 years, their British Youth Council delegations and their peer education programmes.

**3.35) The Scout Association**

Within the district offers young people aged 6-25 years opportunity to take part in fun and challenging activities. As part of their offer to young people they have a strong commitment to young people's development through activities that include team work, leadership, communication and self motivation. They have youth led programmes within the local units and pathways for young people who may wish to become more active in terms of youth voice and influence within their Districts.

**3.36) Bradford District Police**

The Police in Bradford are looking to initiate a youth Independent Advisory Group (IAG), which will target young people from across the Bradford district. The IAG group will be used to hear the voice of young people and to advise and support the police on powers, policies and processes, playing a key role in as a critical friend of the Police. The Police Cadet Scheme is also being established within Bradford District that is designed to give a stronger voice to young people. This is targeting young people who may not otherwise consider engagement with the Police either due to vulnerabilities or from more harder to reach communities. It is intended that this scheme will give young people a stronger voice and pathways into policing as a profession

**3.37) National Citizenship Service (NCS)**

This part residential government backed personal development programme has seen 1400 young people aged 16 and 17 years from the district taking part. This has seen individuals give up their free time to take on personal and team challenges during the summer delivery period. An element of the programme is developing a social action project and delivering this in the district. young people designing, pitching and delivering social action projects in response to briefs from community partners; public speaking training and delivering speeches on their NCS experiences during Showcase and Graduation events; peer reflections, appreciations and nominations for awards and leadership positions. Young people's voice within this part of the programme development is key to its success. Every NCS participant completes 3 surveys, one at the end of each stage of the programme, in which they are asked to give feedback on a range of programme aspects including: activities and the curriculum, the level of challenge, NCS staff, community understanding, and the level of control they have over their social action projects. These local findings feed into a local Quality Improvement Plan. From this year's Yorkshire survey responses, we have identified that scores for evening sessions, campaign days and fundraising days have decreased, and as a result we are doing work to make those more engaging. We are holding consultation meetings with the Bradford Youth Board, a group of NCS graduates who were elected by their peers during the programme, to get their input on how to improve these parts of the programme<sup>52</sup> young people have gone on to be trained and are now volunteering as Associate Mentors working to support and mentor NCS teams through the social action project design and delivery.

**3.38) One Britain, One Nation**

One Britain, One Nation hosted a "Day of Pride and Unity" offering opportunity to children and young people from Bradford schools to showcase their love, pride and passion for our great nation. The Bradford day gave hundreds of young people confidence to speak out about their hopes and inspirations for their future, their district and for Great Britain. One Britain, One Nation aims to build a society of

compassion, tolerance and harmony based on mutual respect. Following the success of the Bradford day, plans are now well developed for the 2018 Day of Pride and Unity which will give hundreds more of young people from across Bradford and the wider West Yorkshire opportunity to speak out.

### 3.39) **People Can**

The district wide “People can” initiative has been warmly embraced by young people from across the youth sector with increased numbers taking part in locality based activity. This has created opportunity and pathway for young people to identify concerns, issues and areas of interest, to have their voices heard and to be active in the solutions and responses to the things they have identified.

### 3.40) **Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee has been supportive and encouraging of youth voice within the Committee. A number of young people have attended Committee meetings over the last 12 months, and have had their voices heard, with regular attendance by a small number. Work is now being developed to ensure those in regular attendance are representative of a wider youth voice and representative of the diversity of the district.

## 4. **OTHER CONSIDERATION**

No other considerations.

## 5. **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

5.1 Currently the Youth Voice work is undertaken within existing budgets of the Youth Service. The Youth Service budget whilst devolved to the respective Area Committees also supports aspects of District Wide Youth Voice work and coordination of district wide consultations events.

5.2 There are increasing numbers of voluntary and community providers of youth services who are contributing towards the districts youth voice work through delivery of services that are funded from external resources or that are run within the voluntary and faith youth sector.

## 6. **RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

The Youth Offer Working Group is chaired by the Commissioner (Youth Provisions) and includes the Area Co-ordinator with lead responsibility for the Youth Service. Other members of the Working group are representatives from Young Lives Bradford, Voluntary, Community and Faith Groups and the Police. Youth Voice is a key element of the Youth Offer and is a priority in the Childrens Trust Children, young people and families plan.

## 7. **LEGAL APPRAISAL**

7.1 The Council has a responsibility to co-ordinate and offer support for the Health and Well-being of Young People set down by Statutory Guidance issued in 2012.

The duty is to secure equality of access for all young people to the positive, preventative and early help they need to improve their well-being.

This includes:

- Ascertaining their views when making decisions about services or activities

- They should be involved in service design, delivery and governance.
- Young people should receive the support they need in order to participate
- Local authorities should ensure representation of the full diversity of local young people, and those who may not otherwise have a voice.

## **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

The Youth Sector has a responsibility to ensure that the services are accessible to all young people and that participation in their service reflects this approach. Specific targeted work takes place to encourage participation from under represented groups.

### **8.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Youth Service delivery enables local initiatives to be supported, encouraging groups and individuals to undertake activities that improve the social, economic and environmental well being of their communities, this includes supporting young people to have their voices heard and for opportunities for active citizenship .

The Youth Work Developmental Grants have key requirements for funded projects to hear and respond to the voice of young people with inbuilt sustainability plans, activated from the offset of the grant in an attempt to reduce dependency on Council funding and grants in future years.

### **8.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

No Greenhouse gas emissions apparent within the context of this report.

### **8.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

There are a number of youth work projects who are concerned and driven to improve Community Safety within local communities. The increased opportunities for young people's voices to be heard and for them to feel part of their communities and be active citizens in local decision making has the potential to improve Community Safety. The Youth Sector provides safe spaces for young people to speak out about community and personal safety and can support their voices being heard by those who can influence positive change. The work undertaken within the Youth Sector is a key contributor in the building of safer and stronger communities.

### **8.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

There are no direct Human Rights implications.

### **8.6 TRADE UNION**

There are no implications for Trade Unions arising from this report.

### **8.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

The work of the Youth Service and activities support young people and communities within all the Wards in the Bradford District.

### **8.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

Youth Voice Work and youth voice projects and activities support priorities within each Constituencies Area Committee Action Plan.

## **9. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **10. OPTIONS**

10.1 That the Committee considers and comments on the shared direction of travel and of the continued commitment from the Youth Sector to raise the profile of Youth Voice in the District.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 That the work undertaken by the Youth Sector in terms of Youth Voice is welcomed.

11.2 That the Committee commits to formalising Youth Voice arrangements in respect of Overview and Scrutiny work going forward, recognising the need for the districts diverse range of young people to be properly represented.

11.3 That the Committee provides critical challenge and commitment to hearing youth voice in terms of other reports presented to this committee.

11.4 That the Committee receives a further update in respect of the work in 12 months time.

## **12. APPENDICES**

12.1 Appendix A - The Youth Voice Framework

12.2 Appendix B – The Youth Survey

## **13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

13.1 Bradford Youth Offer Review, Document 'BQ', Council Executive, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015

13.2 Delivering a new Youth Offer for Bradford, Document 'BH', Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016

13.3 The Youth Offer Report, Document 'AO', Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017