

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Youth Cabinet Report Summer Term 2015-16		
<b>Report to:</b>	Children’s Partnership Board		
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> July 2016		
<b>Relevant Director:</b>	Alison Michalska, Corporate Director for Children and Adults	<b>Wards affected:</b> ALL	
<b>Contact Officer(s) and contact details:</b>	Jon Rea, Engagement & Participation Lead jon.rea@nottinghamcity.gov.uk		
<b>Other officers who have provided input:</b>	Rachel Armitage, Electoral Services Engagement Officer rachel.armitage@nottinghamcity.gov.uk		
<b>Relevant Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) priority or priorities:</b>			
<b>Safeguarding and supporting children and families:</b> Children, young people and families will benefit from early and effective support and protection to empower them to overcome difficulties and provide a safe environment in which to thrive.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Promoting the health and wellbeing of babies, children and young people:</b> From pregnancy and throughout life, babies, children, young people and families will be healthier, more emotionally resilient and better able to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Supporting achievement and academic attainment:</b> All children and young people will leave school with the best skills and qualifications they can achieve and will be ready for independence, work or further learning.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Empowering families to be strong and achieve economic wellbeing:</b> More families will be empowered and able to deal with family issues and child poverty will be significantly reduced.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):</b>			
Update on work of the Youth Cabinet and associated Participation in Governance programme groups and activities in Summer Term 2015-16. It includes a report on work being done by the Electoral Services Engagement Officer to improve civic engagement of young people including a summary of voter registration activity.			
<b>Recommendations:</b>			
<b>1</b>	The Board acknowledges and supports the achievements of children and young people engaging in participation and active citizenship work through the Participation in Governance programme and the work of the Youth Cabinet.		
<b>2</b>	The Board recognises the importance of encouraging civic engagement and voter registration in helping children and young people become active and informed citizens who can confidently take part in civic life and make a contribution to democratic society.		
<b>3</b>	Each member organisation of the Board is asked to support this work and promote, wherever possible, voter registration amongst its 16+ service users; and provide a lead contact for civic engagement and voter registration who can liaise with the Electoral Services Engagement Officer.		

## 1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

### a) Children and Young People's Participation in Governance programme update

Summer Term has seen a range of activity conducted through the Participation in Governance programme.

- Monthly Youth Cabinet meetings in this period have focused on the subject of engaging young people on education improvement issues. Working with the Portfolio Holder for Schools a proposal has been developed by the Youth Cabinet to help the Education Improvement Board listen to the voice of children and young people. It includes doing work on EIB priorities with the existing Primary Parliament network and also initiating a new annual Student Conference to involve student representatives from all city schools.
- A Youth Council event entitled 'Your Voice Counts' was co-produced by young people from Central Locality. Themed around the Early Help priority of A Resilient City, the event was held at Forest Fields Community Centre. It included three workshops designed and delivered by young people exploring community safety, cleanliness and personal contribution. The workshops used art, conversation and sports activities to engage participants and were very well planned and run by the young leaders. A group discussion about issues arising from the workshops resulted in a rich conversation about social media, cyber bullying, the importance of things to do and places to go in the community and the role of schools in educating students about staying safe online. Actions around these themes were taken back to youth projects to develop further. The afternoon session featured sports activities for participants and their younger siblings. In all around 40 young people took part in the day.
- The next Youth council event is scheduled for August 5<sup>th</sup> at Oliver Hind Youth Club in Sneinton and will be on Early Help theme of 'A Healthy City'. Planning is currently underway with young people from South and Central localities.
- Two Primary Parliament meetings in June engaged over 150 year 5 and 6 children from 34 city schools. The theme of the meetings was 'Building a Whole and Healthy You' with workshops delivered through partners including Healthy Schools Team, Opportunity Notts, the Clinical Commissioning Group (for the NHS CCG Commissioning Strategy consultation) and the Institute of Mental Health at UoN.
- A delegation of six Youth Cabinet members will represent Nottingham at the Debate Science! Final European Conference in Manchester July 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>. Trinity School students Theresa Jennings, Emily Spray, Klaudia Cander and Tiarnan Giles will be joined by Chelsea Owen and Lottie Sawford from Nottingham City Council for the three day conference, which forms part of the prestigious European Science Open Forum programme. Around 100 students from 16 countries will take part in the event which follows up on local science parliaments held across Europe in February and focuses on the 'Future Human'.
- A new Participation in Governance programme calendar for the academic year 2016-17 is currently being prepared by the Engagement Lead and Youth Cabinet and will be circulated prior to the next Board meeting.

## **b) Civic engagement and voter registration**

*The Youth Cabinet has been acting as a reference group for the work of the Council's Electoral Services Engagement Officer, Rachel Armitage, around the development and delivery of her civic engagement and voter registration programme. This reference group activity helps 'youth-proof' Rachel's work and enables the development of more impactful plans and activities.*

The role of Electoral Services Engagement Officer (hereafter referred to as the ESEO) has been in place at the Council since the start of 2015-16 albeit under a different name. It was previously funded by national voter registration campaign Bite the Ballot but is now funded and managed as a permanent post through Electoral Services.

The work of the ESEO is focused predominantly on young people aged 16 - 25 and includes the following activities:

- Awareness raising and sign-up workshops delivered in schools and colleges
- Voter registration stalls at universities and community centres
- Presentations delivered during conferences, assemblies and partner events
- "Democracy cafe" engagement events staged in local venues

Examples of work include:

- "DeDay" event at the National Videogame Arcade in advance of the 2015 general election
- Tailored workshops to National Citizen Service participants from Summer 2015 to Spring 2016 NCS programmes
- Intensive voter registration activities for National Voter Registration Drive, February 2016
- Public panel and targeted media appearances to promote voter registration

## **Impact**

These efforts have delivered approximately 2000 direct registrations and pledges to register between March 2015 and February 2016; leading to likely engagement in voting at elections.

The impact in terms of wider influence is harder to measure but would include:

- Deciding to register at a later date
- Influencing others to register or become involved in p
- Engaging in and/or building networks around political activity and civic engagement

Providing education about voting, politics and civic engagement to our younger citizens encourages and increases democratic engagement. It removes some of the barriers to participation, such as apathy or lack of understanding, and empowers people by encouraging them to become informed and to use their votes. Political education levels the playing field: it gives people access to the tools necessary for real democratic participation; it is essential in helping Nottingham's children and young people become active and informed citizens who can confidently take part in democratic society.

## Development of programme and partnership working

The ESEO currently works with a number of internal and external partners including Engagement and Participation Lead, Youth Cabinet, Early Help team, Action for Young Carers, city schools and colleges and the National Citizenship Programme.

In 2016-17 the intention is to:

- extend the range of partners and through them increase the reach of civic engagement activities to include new groups/communities
- do more co-creation with young people of the resources for civic engagement
- expand the work to under include more 16s, looking at what it means to be a citizen at primary and secondary school age
- do more work with specific and targeted groups of children and young people e.g. young carers, disabled young people, children in traveller communities

Reaching out to new communities is one of the hardest and most time consuming aspects of this role so establishing and maintaining connections through partner organisations is vital. Building capacity in partners to support the work is crucial to increasing engagement.

To support this where possible organisations of the Children's Partnership Board are encouraged to promote voter registration amongst young people aged 16+ as part of their engagement and communication with young service users and their families.

## **2. RISKS**

Risk of not doing: Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to spend money on increasing political participation.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The engagement programme requires resources for delivery, e.g. for room hire, materials, refreshments etc. It is proposed that these modest resource needs are found from the existing CYP Engagement and Participation budget held by the Engagement and Participation Lead.

Children's Partnership Board partners would be expected to contribute to some or all of the costs of any significant additional engagement activity undertaken with the ESEO, not including time costs.

There is potential for commercialisation of the resource/approach.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None. Legal Services manage the protocol for civic engagement during election periods.

## **5. CLIENT GROUP**

Young people and young adults aged 16 - 25; younger children engaged through school.

## **6. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES**

Work contributes to active citizenship and community engagement.

## **7. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED**

All CYPP strategic priority and CYPP cross-cutting theme of Children and Young People's participation in decision making.

## **8. CONTACT DETAILS**

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