

INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN ARGYLL AND BUTE COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP.

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines existing youth democracy structures in Argyll and Bute and proposals to develop the engagement of young people in the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Partners are asked to note the existing youth democracy activities in Argyll and Bute.
- 2.2. Partners are asked to consider proposals to further develop the involvement of young people in the Community Planning Partnership.
- 2.3. Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership is invited to endorse the AB Award ceremony.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The implementation of new CLD Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships provides a timely opportunity to consider how young people are currently, and may be in the future, engaged in Community Planning and citizenship activities in Argyll and Bute.
- 3.2. There are many good reasons for meaningful involvement of young people in community planning as highlighted by the Scottish Government's advice note "Engaging Young People in Community Planning" :-
- § **Aspiration** – the Scottish Government has set out a high-level vision for children and young people in Scotland. Developing good engagement processes can help deliver this vision; in particular in relation to enabling children and young people to be effective contributors, responsible citizens and in demonstrating that they are included, respected and responsible.

- § **Service planning and Best Value** - Engagement with the community and partnership working are the two fundamental principles underpinning Community Planning. Dialogue with children, young people and families gives policy makers and service providers the information they need to improve the relevance of their policies and services.
 - § **The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** – It is current policy to reflect, where possible, the articles contained within the Convention when taking forward policy and introducing legislation that has an effect on the lives of children and young people.
 - § **Local Government in Scotland Act 2003** and other statutory duties - "Local Authorities, in their initiation and facilitation of the Community Planning process should consult and co-operate with a wide range of interests including... bodies such as: young people and youth work bodies who already make a valuable contribution to the planning and provision of services through their involvement in youth forums and their active citizenship."
 - § **The citizenship agenda** - Inclusion in the processes that shape society in a way that is appropriate to the young person's age and ability can contribute to their growth into mature, responsible, active members of society.
 - § **Scrutiny** - Audits of Best Value and Community Planning
 - § **Young people want to participate** - One of the most compelling reasons for engaging with young people is that they themselves tell us that they want more and better opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- 3.3. It's important to note that we are not starting from scratch and a range of youth citizenship activities are already in place throughout Argyll and Bute.
- 3.4. A number of young people are involved in local area based youth forums that give them the opportunity to identify issues, express their views and encourage changes in their community.
- 3.5. The Argyll and Bute Youth Forum brings together representatives from local based area forums to identify common issues, network with young people from across Argyll and take on authority wide projects.
- 3.6. Argyll and Bute has 3 seats for young people in the Scottish Youth Parliament.
- 3.7. Most of our secondary schools have active pupil councils.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1. Argyll and Bute Council's Youth Service provides support to Youth Forums currently operating in Bute, Helensburgh, Mid-Argyll and Oban. Following staff vacancies Campbeltown and Dunoon are being relaunched, whilst plans are underway to establish forums in Tarbert, Islay and Mull.
- 4.2. There is potential to develop formal links between Area Community Planning Groups and local youth forums. A relatively straight forward proposal could be the addition of a regular, perhaps twice yearly, "Youth Matters" agenda item to the Area Community Planning Group meetings. The local youth forums, supported by youth workers, would identify topics for discussion; presentations etc. and bring forward agenda items in an appropriate format. This would raise awareness of local issues impacting on young people as well as providing an opportunity to highlight positive developments.
- 4.3. The recent introduction of "Children's Champions" may also provide an opportunity to forge closer links.
- 4.4. Argyll and Bute Youth Forum is currently focusing on two major projects:-
 - § The development of Youth Banks
 - § The AB Awards

The concept of the AB Awards came from discussions with youth forum members who expressed a desire to celebrate positive achievements by young people in Argyll and Bute. There is a strong feeling that young people are generally portrayed in a negative light and they are keen to offer a different perspective.

The AB Awards will be held in Oban on Thursday 19th September 2013 and presentations will be made to young people in the following categories:-

- § Youth Entrepreneur Award
- § Unsung Hero Award
- § Youth Volunteer Award
- § Youth Sports Award
- § Youth Environment Award
- § Youth Citizenship Award
- § Youth Arts Award
- § Health and Well Being

Argyll and Bute Youth Forum has applied for funding to cover the main costs of the event and sponsors have been confirmed for most of the categories.

- 4.5. Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership is invited to endorse the AB Awards and consider sponsoring the Youth Citizenship Award.
- 4.6. As a further means of engaging with young people, Youth Services, in partnership with Argyll and Bute Youth Forum, will organise an annual Youth Conference, which will be similar to the CPP full partnership meeting but targeted specifically at 12 to 24 year olds. The agenda and focus of the Youth Conference will reflect that of the full partnership meeting and will provide a representation of young people's views and opinions.
- 4.7. Following elections in March 2013, three young people have been elected as MSYPs to represent Argyll and Bute at the Scottish Youth Parliament:-
 - § David McLaughlin (Bute)
 - § Fraser Stewart (Dunoon)
 - § Katie Burke (Helensburgh)

Argyll and Bute Council's Youth Service support the MSYPs to prepare for, attend and report back on sittings of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. Young people are involved in youth forums and other citizenship activities across Argyll and Bute; however there are no formal links with the Community Planning Partnership.
- 5.2. The CPP has a duty to consider how best to engage young people in Community Planning.
- 5.3. Clearer links with existing projects would be beneficial to all parties involved, representing the views of young people and informing the work of the Community Planning Partnership.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Policy: Links with National Outcomes, SOA and CLD Strategic Guidance
- 6.2. Financial: None
- 6.3. Legal: None
- 6.4. HR: None
- 6.5. Equalities: Focus on equalities and inclusion
- 6.6. Risk: None
- 6.7. Customer Service: The process should enhance the already wide range of consultation and engagement information available.

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