

Minute of Meeting Children & Young People Thematic Board

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 31 August 2015	13:30	Staff Room, Gleniffer High School, Amochrie Road, Paisley, PA2 0AG,

PRESENT

Councillors Henry, Bibby and McCartin (Renfrewshire Council); L O'Brien, Director, Barnardos; R Ritchie, Service Manager, Children 1st; F MacKay, Head of Planning & Health Improvement, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership; A Lowe, Chair, Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee; J Melrose, Renfrewshire Children's Panel; L King, Authority Reporter, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration; P MacLeod, Director of Children's Services; D Hawthorn, Head of Child Care & Community Justice; G McKinlay, Head of Resource Services; and S Glasgow, Senior Officer (GIRFEC) (all Renfrewshire Council); P Nelis, Group Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services; K Miller, Volunteer Development Officer, Engage Renfrewshire; M Gilligan, Area Manager West, Skills Development Scotland; S Graham, Vice Principal, Education & Leadership, West College Scotland; and R Deucher, Assistant Dean, School for Education, University of the West of Scotland.

CHAIR

Councillor J Henry presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

J Stott, S Flockhart, L McMinn, D Smiley, S McMeekin, J McKinnon, Z McKinnon, J Martin, S McCorrisken, K Allan, K Nesbitt, B Muir, J Gilmour, R McCormick, R Parnis, A Chalmers, R Urquhart, J Gunn, F Boyd, T Logan, E Barbour, and M Wilson (S6 Pupils from Gleniffer High School); L McAllister, Education Manager; Y Farquhar, Senior Policy Officer; R Cooper, Economent Development Manager; A Curruthers, Housing Advice & Homelessness Services Manager; A Conboy, Education Manager; and C MacDonald, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Renfrewshire Council); DCI C Henderson, Police Scotland; E Finlay, Team Leader (Children & Families); and L Daniels, Service Manager (Children's Services) (both Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership); and J Binning, Principal Policy Officer, SPT.

APOLOGIES

B Davidson (Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce); E McLean, J Trainer and S Bell (all Renfrewshire Council); N Burns, Police Scotland.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Children & Young People Thematic Board held on Tuesday 12 May, 2015.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 ROLLING ACTION LOG

The Rolling Action Log was submitted for approval.

C&YP.21.05.13(4) - Strategy for Engagement of Young People; **C&YP.26.11.13(4)** - GIRFEC Implementation; and **C&YP.24.02.15(6)** - Single Outcome Agreement - It was agreed that these actions were now complete and would be removed from the action log.

DECIDED: That the Action Log be approved.

3 UPDATE ON TACKLING POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Annabelle Armstrong-Walter, Policy Lead (Tackling Poverty, Welfare Reform & Equalities) delivered a presentation setting out proposals to deliver the recommendations made by the Tackling Poverty Commission as set out in the Council's Action Plan. Renfrewshire Council had committed £6M towards the delivery of the Action Plan. Both the Scottish Government and national media were taking a keen interest in progress to deliver positive outcomes.

The presentation gave the background to the development of the strategy and the launch of the report; outlined the timeline that was being followed; highlighted the key messages of the strategy and the priorities; summarised the key principles; and outlined some of the projects that were being developed.

After discussion Councillor Henry thanked Annabelle for her presentation.

DECIDED: That the presentation be noted.

4 YOUTH VOICE - HAVING YOUR SAY

The S6 students gave a presentation relating to Youth Voice.

The following key points were made:

- Students felt that they were not listened to and this led them to be discouraged; students asked for a Board Member to come to the school to update them and

feedback their views, comments and suggestions; and students intimated that they would be keen to engage with the younger pupils in the school and to cascade information to them.

After questions and discussion both Councillor Henry and Peter MacLeod thanked the students for their presentation and intimated that they would look at the points raised and develop an action plan for the items discussed.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted; and
- (b) That the Board examine the points raised and develop an action plan to deliver improvements.

5 HEALTH & WELLBEING

The S6 pupils gave a presentation relating to Health & Wellbeing.

The following key points were made:

- Students felt too much pressure was being put on them to do well at school by staff and parents which led to unnecessary stress and had a negative impact on their performance; teachers and other people in authority did not understand how they felt and there was not enough information on how to deal with the situation; all the exams came at the one time and this caused them to feel overwhelmed. They asked for exams to be timetabled better and the workload spread out more evenly. F MacKay advised that a new counselling service would be developed as part of the Tackling Poverty Commission action plan and that this could be something the pupils could help to develop.
- Drugs were often considered socially acceptable within certain social groups; were easily accessible and low prices attracted young people; and not enough was being done by law enforcement to counter drug use in young people. Discussion took place with DCI Henderson relating to the stigma of talking to the Police. She advised that if any pupil had any concerns they could report incidents anonymously.
- Exam stress meant that students did not have any time to exercise; there was not enough emphasis to do exercise by parents and teachers; leisure facilities and clubs were too expensive and not accessible enough for certain people; and the cost of transport to get to these locations was too expensive as child fares stopped at 16 and they had to pay full fare. A Conboy advised that the Council was committed to making physical activity accessible to all young people and had lowered the cost of access to leisure facilities. J Binning intimated that deregulation of buses meant that local bus companies were responsible for their own fare prices however he advised that the Young Scot Card meant that the pupils could save on the cost of transport.

After questions and further discussion both Councillor Henry and Peter MacLeod thanked the students for their presentation and intimated that they would look at the points raised and develop an action plan for improvement.

DECIDED:

(a) That the presented be noted; and

(b) That the Board examine the points raised and develop an action plan to deliver improvements.

6 EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

The S6 students gave a presentation relating to Jobs and Employment.

The following key points were made:

- No support offered to 6th year students for work experience; would like additional information about workshops and new jobs; would like job shadowing opportunities; would like an opportunity talk to people in careers.
- Sanctions for employment benefits were too severe; they would like to see more communication relating to jobs through social media.
- Students wanted a better relationship with Career Advisors; they felt that the information they wanted was not always available; they would like an opportunity to speak to university students regarding courses. M Gilligan advised he would feedback the points raised in relation to Career Advisors. He indicated that he would ensure that the Career Management Service was promoted through the school and was keen to hear suggestions from the students at any time.
- Students wanted basic understanding of skills required for employment ie. working on tills or filling out tax forms would be a great benefit.

K Miller advised that a summer programme of volunteering opportunities had been circulated to the school however if any pupil was interested in volunteering they should contact her directly.

After questions and further discussion both Councillor Henry and Peter MacLeod thanked the students for their presentation and intimated that they would examine the points raised and develop an action plan for improvement.

DECIDED:

(a) That the presented be noted; and

(b) That the Board the points raised and develop an action plan to address these.

7 MISCELLANEOUS - OTHER ISSUES

The S6 Students gave a presentation on the topic of Other Issues Facing Young People.

The following key points were made:

- Lack of communication skills due to increased use of technology; lack of good shops, cafes and facilities for young people which led to a lack of opportunity to socialise safely causing anxiety/lack of confidence and had a negative

emotional impact.

- If Paisley's facilities were to improve it would raise the issue of transport prices and frequency/lack of bus routes in more rural villages; teenagers over the age of 16 had to pay full fare even while they were still at school and the price difference was significant.
- Single parents did not receive enough support from the Council for grants (clothing, food etc) which led to single parents feeling stressed and anxious and it affected family life. Discussion took place on the cost of school uniforms (especially blazers); the price of branded items and peer pressure to wear these items; and the cost of school trips.

After questions and further discussion both Councillor Henry and Peter MacLeod thanked the students for their presentation and intimated that they would look at the points raised and develop an action plan for improvement.

DECIDED:

(a) That the presented be noted; and

(b) That the Board examine the points raised and develop an action plan to address these.

8 **THANKS AND CLOSE**

Peter MacLeod thanked everyone for their input and advised the students that the Board would look at the points raised; develop an action plan; and respond to the students within two weeks.

Councillor Henry thanked the students for their comprehensive and impressive presentations. She also thanked everyone who had been involved in organising the meeting, especially the Youth Workers, and the teaching staff for giving up their staff room for the meeting. She also thanked the Members of the Board and other Partners for their attendance and participation.

DECIDED:

(a) To note the thanks to everyone for their participation; and

(b) That it be agreed that within two weeks an action plan to deliver improvements be developed and shared with the students.