



Subject:	Belfast City Youth Council Special Committee meeting
Date:	21st June 2022
Reporting Officer:	Cate Taggart, Neighbourhood Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Áine Hargey, Young People's Coordinator

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Some time in the future

Never

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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an agenda for the meeting between the Belfast City Youth Council (BCYC) and P&C Committee which takes place on 21 st June 2022 and outlines progress since the last meeting.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Note the update on BCYC campaign areas;ii. Note the partnership between BCC and QUB for the 'RADICAL' research project;iii. Note the update on nominations of Youth Champions from each Political Party in BCC.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Meeting Agenda</p> <p>Introductions and purpose of meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To hear a presentation from Unison on the Free School Meals programme. ii. To provide an update on the latest campaign areas for the Belfast Youth Council which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Covid recovery for young people. • The impact of prejudice on young people. iii. To provide an update on the partnership between the BCYC, BCC and Queens University Belfast for the 'RADICAL' research project. iv. To provide an update on the recommendation that each Political Party in Belfast City Council nominate a 'Youth Champion' who can liaise with Belfast Youth Forum on motions and matters relating to youth in the city as a mechanism to aid communication between Elected Members and BCYC members.
3.2	Item 1: Unison presentation on free school meals
3.3	<p>Item 2: Youth Council campaigns update</p> <p>Members will recall that with each new cohort of Youth Council members, young people choose two to three campaigns areas to explore throughout their two year term with BCC. Our current cohort of young people have now chosen their new campaign areas and brief outlines of both will follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post Covid recovery and ways to support young people through this This campaign will consist of two parts. The first will look at tackling the isolation young people experienced through Covid by connecting them into volunteering opportunities within the city. BCYC will organise a young people's event that showcases volunteering opportunities in Belfast, highlight the benefit of volunteering and encourage young people to sign up. As a part of this work our Youth Council wish to map out young people's current contribution to volunteering in Belfast and then build on this. There are early plans to connect with Volunteer NI for this project as well as internal Council departments to see what opportunities exist internally. <p>The second phase of our young people's Covid campaign will explore how the pandemic impacted on young people's education, mental and physical health, family life and social life. In particular the Youth Council wishes to focus in on specific groups such as minority ethnic young people, young people with disabilities and young carers for example (this list is not exhaustive). This stage of the campaign is still in its infancy, but our young people plan to carry out a research project that will engage with young people on the issue and identify youth focused solutions to any issues that are highlighted. Before this project begins, a scoping exercise of current research projects on young people and the pandemic will be carried out to ensure our project is unique and has merit.</p> 2. The impact of prejudice on young people The Youth Council wish to explore the impact that prejudice has on young people's lives in Belfast in particular around race, religion and gender. This project is still in its early stages and ideas are less well developed than the young people's post Covid recovery campaign. Our young people would therefore welcome a conversation with Members at this early stage to seek their input into project ideas and to help our young people shape their campaign moving forward. BCYC is also aware that a huge amount of research work has been conducted in relation to sectarianism and racism in Belfast and our young people have decided to carry out a scoping exercise of projects and campaigns that already exist before determining what their own will look like.

3.4	<p>Item 3: Queens University Belfast ‘RADICAL’ research project</p> <p>Members will recall that at the December 2019 People and Communities Committee meeting, permission was granted for BCC to act as a stakeholder in the Queens University ‘RADICAL’ research project and be named as the official city partner organisation in the grant application. For Members who may be new to Committee, ‘RADICAL’ stands for Belfast: Respect and Disrespect in Children and Adolescents Lives. The project, facilitated by QUB, seeks to understand how respect, lack of respect, and disrespect are theorised, understood and experienced by children and young people in the city of Belfast. The overall aim is to generate a rich understanding of the concept and experiences of respect and disrespect from children and young people’s perspectives with a view to generating better relationships among children and their peers and the adults whom they encounter. The research further seeks to inform the delivery of public and community-based services which children and young people engage with on a daily basis in the city.</p> <p>A distinctive feature of the research will be a child rights-based methodology which requires the participation of CYP as stakeholders to assist in the planning and design of the project through to the impact strategy and dissemination. The BCYC are acting as the Children and Young People’s Advisory Group (CYPAG) on this project and QUB have already held pre grant application consultations with them. They have helped shape the study and informed on areas and issues of importance to them and their peers.</p> <p>As well as the BCYC, researchers from QUB seek to work collaboratively with key adult stakeholders from across Belfast including members of Belfast City Council, the Children’s Commissioner, representatives from various government departments and state agencies such as transport, health, education, leisure, social care, justice, and members of the business community, NGOs and other charitable organisations. A number of activities will facilitate discussion across the stakeholder groups on research aims, focus, methods and dissemination. In addition, it is hoped that engaging adult stakeholders in the design phase will maximise the potential impact of the research findings as they will act as ‘champions’ for the research in their related areas of expertise.</p> <p>The Covid pandemic halted the application process in early 2020, but QUB have now resumed this and are engaging with our staff and young people to shape the final stages of the application. Members are asked to note the ongoing work and partnership for the ‘RADICAL’ project and updates will continue to be provided to Committee over the coming months.</p>
3.5	<p>Item 4: Youth Champions</p> <p>Members will recall that at June 2021’s meeting, it was agreed that there was potential to improve communications and co-operation between Councillors, Officers and Belfast City Youth Council and that this could be done via the nomination of one representative from each political party to take a leadership role in working and engaging with the Youth Forum on issues and/or motions which relate to young people.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Services Manager has progressed this through the Party Leader group and we have now received nominations as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Caoimhin McCann, Sinn Fein • Cllr Billy Hutchinson, PUP • Cllr Mal O’Hara, Green Party <p>The NSM will write to Party Leaders to remind them of outstanding nominations.</p>
3.5	<p>Item 6: Any Other Business</p> <p>Several members of BCYC wish to highlight issues relevant to local young people in their DEA’s.</p>

3.6	Financial & Resource Implications There are no financial or resource implications.
3.7	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment There are no equality or good relations implications. No rural needs assessment is needed.
4.0	Appendices
4.1	N/A