

Children & Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

27 February 2017

Summary of Minutes from Children and Families Partnership

16 January 2017



**County Durham Children
and Families Partnership**

Student Voice Survey 2017

Following the success of the student voice survey of secondary schools in 2015, the Children and Families Partnership agreed to repeat the survey in 2017 with 22 secondary schools and 138 primary schools.

Actions from the 2015 include schools providing extra time to do homework, and the Carers Card being developed to provide discounts in more relevant shops and restaurants as a response to young carers saying that they would like more support.

The 2017 survey will be undertaken between the end of January and 31st March 2017 to fit in with school requirements and to avoid examination periods. Work will also take place with Durham Community Action to undertake the survey in community settings with 'hard to reach groups' including Young Carers. These results will be clearly identified in the subsequent survey analysis.

Upon completion of the survey each school will receive a set of confidential reports including, school-specific overall results, a breakdown for each participating year group, free-text comments received from students, and County-wide results, covering all year-groups and each participating year group for benchmarking purposes. Individual school results will not be shared with other stakeholders without their consent.

It is anticipated results from the survey will be shared with the Children and Families Partnership in summer 2017. Partners will then be able to use the valuable aggregated information to inform service developments, planning and commissioning.

Further work is taking place with special schools in assessing the feasibility of them undertaking a Student Voice survey.

Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge

Partners received an update on the range of activities which took place as part of the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge in 2016, including young people becoming commissioners for the day, and taking over a college's senior leadership team. Activities include:

- Durham County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee hosting a meeting at a school, providing an opportunity for children and young people to take part in the meeting.
- Police Cadets from across County Durham and Darlington elected a year 7 pupil who is also Deputy Head Boy at Parkside Academy to take over the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner role for the day.
- The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) worked with young people in local schools to design a young person's LSCB Annual Report. The annual report was launched by the Young Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner on 15th November 2016. <http://www.durham-lscb.org.uk/children-young-people/>
- The Interim Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services and the Senior Councillor with specific responsibilities for Children and Young People's Services met with young people on 16th November, to provide young people an overview of their roles and responsibilities. This opportunity was very well received by the young people who all had a positive experience. Feedback from young people included the importance of being healthy and having services easily accessible to young people (e.g. school nurses, counselling), having a job, good transport links, and accessing age-specific activities.
- A set of 10 voting priorities have been agreed for all 14 [Area Action Partnerships](#). Voting on these priorities took place with young people in County Durham secondary schools during September and October 2016, providing an opportunity for over 3,000 young people to influence priorities for their local area. The top three issues for young people in their local areas were identified as Children, Young People and Families, Older People and Community Safety.
- Durham County Council's Commissioning Team gave a small group of young people the opportunity to become commissioners for the day, learning about the commissioning cycle by fulfilling a lunch order, considering value for money, availability, preferences and the nutritional and dietary needs of their 'service users'. The young people enjoyed their experience and were praised for completing their 'commission' on time and within budget.
- Durham County Council health colleagues met young parents who have engaged with the teenage parent support programme for their input to help shape, and improve the programme for the next wave. They also held a focus group on how breast feeding rates can be increased in County Durham.
- The Policy, Planning and Partnership Team worked with Health Trainers to host a family fun day in August 2016 with the Gypsy Roma Traveller community,

including children and young people, to ensure the voice of this hard to reach group is heard.

- The Senior Leadership Team at East Durham College, was taken over by the Student Union. Five students from the Peter Jones Enterprise course were given the opportunity to take over major roles for the day: Principal of the college, Vice principal of curriculum and performance, Vice principal of finance, and Assistant principal for curriculum operations.
- Durham County Council Staff worked with a group of children and young people who attended a Family Group Conference to review a range of resources suitable to gain their wishes and feelings prior to a conference and to enhance their understanding of the process. A Family Group Conference is a meeting between family members and professionals such as social workers who work together to make plans in the best interests of a child. A booklet has been devised by the children to give them the opportunity to put forward their views prior to a Family Group Conference, which includes their graphics.
- Young people from Wolsingham School became Team Around the School (TAS) worker for the day. TAS is a mechanism for professionals to pool their resources to provide support to families where there is concern about a child. The young people planned and delivered a TAS meeting in school to their friends and workers. The young people gained new skills and experience, and suggested ways in which the TAS programmes can be delivered in the future.
- Durham Constabulary made a short crime prevention film, where young people recruited from the mini police/drama groups in schools were the actors. The film covered the topic of drink driving, and was launched on Durham Constabulary's Facebook page on 18th November. The film can be viewed on the following link: [Durham Constabulary Takeover Challenge](#)
- County Durham Youth Offending Service work with a group of young people who have been victims of crime, looking at how work with young victims can be improved. Young people lead the group and its work, which includes how to increase young people's understanding of, and engagement in, communication friendly restorative justice processes; how young people can be better supported through the process; and identifying areas for development for 2017/18. Further details of the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge can be found at <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/learn-more/takeover-challenge>

Following the success of the Takeover, the Children and Families Partnership are championing this initiative and encouraging partners to consider how engagement with children and young people can take place throughout the year. To help facilitate this, a SharePoint engagement database is in development which will be shared amongst partners across the county to ensure engagement opportunities are maximised and outcomes from engagement are captured. This will ensure the best use of resources, and will reduce duplication of engagement requests to children and young people;

All Children and Families Partnership representatives agreed to actively promote the Takeover Challenge and opportunities for children's engagement within their organisations;

The Children and Families Partnership will submit evidence to support an application for the Takeover Challenge commendation scheme *Up for the Challenge*. A successful bid would involve the Partnership being awarded a bronze, silver or gold certificate signed by the Children's Commissioner.

Supporting the Ambition of Young People

The Institute for Local Governance, will undertake a project to measure the ambition of young people in County Durham.

This is the first longitudinal research project of its kind, with completion anticipated in July 2018. Findings will be provided to the Children and Families Partnership on completion, with an interim report provided to partners. Timescales for the research project have been designed to align with the development of DurhamWorks.

Area Action Partnership Priorities 2017/18

An AAP Coordinator provided the Children and Families Partnership with a summary of the headline results from the first Countywide Priority survey, where over 3346 young people voted for their top 3 priorities for their AAP area. There are 14 Area Action Partnerships across County Durham, which are in place to identify and tackle issues in local communities. You can find out more about AAP's [here](#)

The Top 3 priorities identified were:

- Children, young people and families
- Older people
- Community safety

AAP Coordinators will analyse the survey results and consider next steps around how this information will be used.

A young people's group gave an overview of a project they are developing with an AAP as a result of voting for their AAP priorities in a previous survey. The project is for a Youth Café, run by young people and is an example of how involvement in priority voting can lead to young people developing solutions to issues and concerns they have raised, and improving outcomes.

The aim of the project is to provide somewhere safe for young people to meet, and to provide work experience opportunities for example, managing money, people skills, food hygiene and preparation etc.

Arts Council funding bid

Culture and Sport, Public Health, Children's Services and Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust submitted a bid for Arts Council funding to support a creative approach to literacy for children aged 2-4. If the bid is successful, the service will be delivered in community settings such as libraries and it is anticipated the programme would work with 2,500 children across a year. The outcome of the bid will be known by 31st March 2017.

Beat the Street

Beat the Street is a place based initiative which turns a town into a game where people earn points as they walk, cycle and run around. In 2016 300,000 people got involved in various areas of the country where the initiative was implemented, increasing physical activity in these communities. Some areas have introduced prizes to encourage team and individual performance.

In County Durham the programme is being piloted in Chester-le-Street and Fishburn with schools in these areas competing against each other to achieve the highest levels of activity. Children and young people will be encouraged to get everyone they know involved in the initiative.

If successful, consideration will be given to rolling the initiative out across the County.