



Advice to Community and Town Councils on Working with Young People



Youth Representation, Creating a Successful Youth Council and Young Persons Initiatives

Working with Young People – Youth Representation, Creating a Successful Youth Council and Young Persons Initiatives

Introduction

The Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 introduced new legislation allowing the appointment of up to two individuals to act at any one time as community youth representatives. This piece of legislation has been the catalyst to a number of community and town councils asking for advice on how best to involve young people in the workings of their local council. Likewise across Wales young people have been approaching local councils asking how they could make a difference to their community.

Feedback from local councils indicated that they wanted to work more closely with young people but were not clear on the steps they needed to take. Consequently One Voice Wales sought funding from Welsh Government for the development of advice and guidance for local councils on working with young people, creating youth councils and importantly enabling youth representation on community and town councils.

What has the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced?

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 has enabled the appointment of community youth representatives by community councils:

- They may appoint no more than two individuals to act at any one time as community youth representatives
- Who are over the age of 15 but not attained the age of 26
- Whom the community council considers suitable to act as a community youth representative, that is to represent the interests of those living in the area who have not attained the age of 26
- A youth representative is to hold office and vacate office in accordance with the terms of the representative's appointment
- But a youth representative's appointment shall cease if the representative attains the age of 26.

A community council cannot appoint a youth representative if the above criteria are not met.

The council must give public notice of its intention to make a community youth representative appointment by:

- Giving notice to the head teacher and proprietor of any school any part of whose premises is situated within the area of the community or communities for which the community is established;
- By giving notice to the principal and governing body of any institution within the further or higher education sector any part of whose premises is situated within the area of the community or communities for which the community is established;

- In such a manner, if any, as appears to the community council to be desirable for ensuring that as many individuals as possible who may be eligible for appointment as community youth representatives are aware that the council intends to appoint such a representative.

A community youth representative however is not a member of the community council which appointed the representative.

Further details and guidance can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/part/7/chapter4/enacted>

Why involve Young People?

Other legislation and initiatives

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Convention (UNCRC) states that young people, under the age of 18 have the legal right to formally express their opinions and for those opinions to be taken seriously. It places a legal responsibility on the decision-makers to consult young people about the things that will affect them and recommends that this be done through establishing youth based groups such as youth councils. Furthermore the Welsh Government has legislated to adopt the UNCRC as a basis for all its work with children and young people. For more information, please visit www.unicef.org/crc

Furthermore with the introduction of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in Wales it means that public bodies should consider the people born and living at the same time and this includes children and young people as well as older persons. Whilst it is not a requirement under the Act, the Welsh Ministers would strongly encourage public bodies to apply:

- The National Principles for Public Engagement (see <http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles>)
- The National Participation Standards for Children and Young People (see <http://participationworkerswales.org.uk/wp-content/upload/2014/National-Participation-Standards.pdf>)

Additionally One Voice Wales has been involved in the Welsh Government Diversity in Democracy project which is working with a range of national public bodies and third sector organisation aiming to increase the representation of specific groups and individuals in democratic institutions and organisations. Encouraging young people to engage with the work of community and town councils will be directly supporting this project.

Current financial environment for public services

Additionally we are facing a future of tight financial times so making good decisions about what is needed within a community will become increasingly important and come under greater scrutiny in future. Local councils strive to make the local communities they serve great places to live and thrive in and in ways that meet peoples needs. Knowing what people think will be key to future decision making – and young people’s views are important as they are a vital part of any community’s future. Creating the right spaces for young people to have their say can enable local councils to take on fresh perspectives which may not have been previously considered – and local councils may well benefit from the different skills that young people can bring including information technology and social media.

Back in 1998 the Wales Youth Agency recognised the activities of young persons had been a concern for communities...

"Issues concerning young people are a constant theme for communities across Wales. Young people are viewed as either a problem, about which something must be done. Or they are viewed more positively as having a contribution to make to community life and should be supported to develop the skills, knowledge and personal qualities which will help them make that contribution. Communities also recognise the range of issues and problems faced by young people today. These include the dangers posed to young people, by their use of public spaces; a decline in the range of facilities available to young people or in the access to facilities; the stress posed by uncertain futures."

These challenges and issues are equally as relevant today as then. As Natasha Glendening, Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) explains "we're the young people of today but we are also, very importantly, the leaders of tomorrow. As soon as we turn 18 we're entitled to vote in elections, on a national and local scale and we have the power to influence policy change and change the lives of everyone living in our country. It is a daunting task, but preparation for this can begin now. As young people, we have a similar amount of influence on policy change in our local communities as an entitled voter – its just that everyone is not always aware of the opportunities available to them."

Some of the benefits of having youth representatives and engagement include:

- Opening up a dialogue between young people in the area and elected members / those in authority.
- Begin to develop skills related to financial responsibilities
- Opportunity for the council to gain an insight into the world of young people
- Opportunity for young people to become aware of the democratic process, and the way in which words develop into actions
- Develop new interests – an opportunity for them to offer opinions on developments
- Giving a clear focus to young people's needs gives them more responsibility when new projects are being developed – they can see what their contribution has led to.
- Need to ensure that communication techniques that are part of young people's lives are used e.g. mobile phones, information technology.
- Develop a sense of pride in their locality
- Develop a relationship between the Community Council and the Youth Council.
- Opportunity for young people to volunteer in the community
- Confidence for young people
- Opportunity to improve facilities
- Opportunity for young people to develop group working and meeting skills.
- Opportunity for them to contribute and discuss ideas
- Positive attitude by Youth Council members – need to attend meetings etc.
- Important that Councillors and the Community Council support and offer guidance, but that the young people themselves organise and run their meetings.
- Ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to contribute to meetings
- Give young people self respect – they feel that their views are listened to
- Young people have to take responsibility for facilities in the area – less vandalism?
- Members of the Youth Council take pride in their local environment
- Members of the Youth Council are more aware of the costs of providing and running services, and are able to raise awareness amongst others

- Raise awareness of the work and the value of the Council amongst friends
- They can undertake a range of various activities – e.g. Children in Need fundraising event.
- Good idea to give other young people an opportunity to sit in on Youth Council meetings – in order to generate interest

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (formerly Criminal Records Bureau checks)

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority was merged in December 2012. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was created in place of the two bodies. CRB checks are now referred to as DBS checks.

As the appointment of youth representatives and their role is at the discretion of the individual community or town council, it will be for the council itself to determine whether they are entitled to ask for a DBS check, and at what level, for councillors, clerks and staff working with youth representatives, given the individual circumstances of the council. If the role of the youth representatives changes, the council would need to reconsider its position regarding DBS checks.

There are three types of checks:

Standard – this checks for spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings

Enhanced – this includes the same as the standard check plus any additional information held by local police that is reasonably considered relevant to the role being applied for.

Enhanced with list checks – this is like the enhanced check, but includes a check of the DBS barred list.

The Disclosure and Barring Service state that employers are not entitled to complete an application for a DBS check for staff who may only have incidental contact with young people under the age of 18.

The Disclosure and Barring Service specify that only those councillors employed, as part of normal duties, to supervise young people under the age of 18, could be considered to be undertaking “regulated activity” relating to children. The activity of training, supervising or instructing the young person must be carried out weekly or at least 4 times in a 30 day period in order for the role to meet the criteria. If a specific role meets these requirements, then the council acting as an “employer” is entitled to apply for an enhanced level check of the DBS children’s barred list.

It is an offence to employ an individual in “regulated activity” with children if that individual appears on the barred list. Similarly, an individual who is barred from working with children should not apply to work in regulated activity.

Community and town councils can obtain further information about DBS checks from One Voice Wales at www.onevoicewales.org.uk in the member services section; or <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>

Community and Town Council Initiatives with Young People – Case Study Examples

In the main Community and Town Councils can support initiatives with young people through the implementation of seven themes:

- The establishment of community youth representatives (Pontardawe Town Council)
- The establishment of shadow youth councils (Llantwit Major Town Council)
- The employment of youth workers (Cwmaman Town Council)
- The implementation of time specific projects (Penarth Town Council)
- Creating facilities for young people and children (Carmarthen Town Council)
- By providing financial assistance for youth groups or organisations (Colwyn Bay Town Council)
- By contributing to multi agency initiatives (Cwmbran CC)

1. The establishment of community youth representatives

Pontardawe Town Council

Pontardawe Town Council embraced the appointment of Youth Representatives wholeheartedly and we are now in our third year. The inclusion of the Youth within Council has revolutionised the Town Councils ability to both interact with the young people and to hear their voice. It is vitally important for the future that Young people form part of today's decision making process as of course the decisions made today will affect them as adults in the future.

The Town Council initially created policy and procedure to advertise the posts, identify, and appoint candidates to the posts and makes a point of asking the Youth Representatives their opinions during Council meetings to ensure that their views are fully understood. They also discuss issues with their peers and obtain feedback that can be brought to Council during future meetings.

The Youth Representatives have also taken a major part in the development of projects. It was identified that many local residents were unaware of the many activities available in the area for children and young people so the Town Council in partnership with two other Community Council's created an 'Out of School' Activities brochure. One of the representatives took a major part in the creation of the brochure, liaising with his school to develop original art work and actually creating the draft brochure for printing.

The Youth Representatives also provided feedback on how to engage with the young people which led to the project being expanded to a web site which provides an ongoing resource for both children and parents in the area. The web site itself was created by one of the youth representatives during his school work placement at the Town Council office. This year the Town Council hope to expand the project even further by linking the web site to the local

schools and authority's intranet and also introducing social media links.

Our aim is to provide a one point hub for information that is easy to update that can be used by children and parents alike. Without youth representation and input the direction of the project created for young people would not have reached its target audience and would not have been in a format that appealed to young people.

As to the representatives themselves, both have stated the benefits they have had individually by acting as a representative and how they gained confidence by being able to participate in meetings.

The Town Council is currently involved with the Children's Rights Unit to promote Youth Representation to Councils and give a first hand account of the benefits of this form of representation.

For further details please contact: **Deborah Phillips, Town Clerk, Pontardawe Town Council, 4 Herbert Street, Pontardawe, SA8 4EB tel. 01792 863422** or email pontardawetc@aol.co.uk

2. Youth Councils

Why set up a Youth Council?

A number of community and town councils in Wales have set up a youth council as a way of engaging young people in the community life, enabling them to experience the democratic processes, advise the council on issues concerning young people and how the council may resolve them and to provide young people with a platform to express their collective views. Young people are the future of our communities and it is important that we, as community and town councils, invest in them. Developing youth councils can act as a real means of incorporating young people into our communities and can lead to a more safer, vibrant and sustainable community for all residents.

Who Benefits?

Not only do young people benefit from setting up a youth council but your community or town council and the local community as a whole benefits.

Youth Councils enable Young People to;

Voice their concern

Participate in local government

Be empowered to take decisions and action to improve their local community.

Youth Councils enable Local Councils to;

Truly represent the whole of the community they live in

Become more vibrant, modern and dynamic

Encourage young people to vote and become councillors when they are old enough

Improve services to young people

Youth Councils enables the Local Community to;
Become safer and more sustainable
Be more vibrant and progressive
Improve services and be more representative

Setting Up a Youth Council

The following sections give some step-by-step advice to setting up, developing and maintaining a successful youth council in your **area**.

Representation and Membership

There is no set age range for youth councils. However, most encompass an age range of around 11-18 or 13- 18 year-olds and these are both appropriate age ranges for local youth councils to adopt.

Tips: The 11-18 age range is very large and you may want to consider developing some sort of mentoring system between the older and younger members, or indeed between the adult councillors and the youth councillors, to ensure that everyone develops their roles and does not lose interest.

It is important to have an inclusive membership whilst retaining some structure. You may want to develop some core membership through schools, youth clubs etc while still allowing for young people to turn up and become involved in the youth council.

You will need to establish how many youth councillors you feel would be suitable for the size of your community, whilst bearing in mind the number of people who would be interested in standing. It can be difficult to get young people to stand for election which is why it may be a good idea to get at least some of your representation directly through schools etc.

Ownership

It is essential that the young people themselves choose who they wish to be represented by (and not the council or school teachers). It may be useful, therefore, to draw up nomination forms along the lines used by the community/town council themselves, and make them available to young people wishing to become youth councillors (most likely through schools). It is then up to the people concerned to get themselves nominated by their peer group

Age and geographical considerations

It may be useful to aim for a certain number of youth councillors per age group and ensure that these are spread across the geographical area you represent, in order to ensure fair representation. If you are having an election you may want to have different colour nomination forms for different age groups in order to make any nomination process simpler.

Do we have an election?

Having an election ensures that the young people know that the community/town council has not just selected young people to be youth councillors. However, many councils find that it is difficult to get enough young people to stand. Therefore, it might be useful to have nominations from certain schools, youth clubs etc.

However, if it is done through the latter it is important that the nominations are made through other young people and not by teachers. Although this may not be as desirable as having a direct election it will ensure that there is a core membership.

Tips: If you do decide to hold an election you may want to start by creating A Youth Electoral Register. This can be created by contacting all the local schools, community groups etc in your area. It is important to contact your Local Education Authority (LEA) to make sure that they are happy for you to collect this information (although there is unlikely to be a problem providing you guarantee that the register will not be given to any other source).

Renewing membership

It is essential that mechanisms are put in place to ensure that membership is renewed and new young faces appear frequently. You may want to target membership on a yearly basis with core groups to ensure that new faces come through the ranks. This is where it may be useful to get school teachers and youth workers involved to ensure that the profile of the youth council is maintained.

Tips: You may want to advertise your youth council on the local notice board, libraries, press, website etc in order to ensure maximum participation. It is also advisable to run the youth council in accordance to the school year - perhaps launching the council in the autumn (not during exam time) Remember that young people are not apathetic but rather they feel that institutions do not represent them and they are powerless - make them feel that they can make a difference and your council will be a success!

Structure

Most youth councils mirror the local government structure. The most popular type of youth councils are based around current community or town council structures. You can have a formalised structure that may mirror your actual community or town council's structure or you may wish to adopt a more informal and flexible approach to meetings and communications etc. It is perhaps useful to consult the young people involved in what they would prefer their council to look like before you impose a structure on them. However, a mixture of formal and informal may be the best way forward. It is important that there is some formal structure so that the youth council can feed into the general workings of the council as a whole and is taken seriously as a component part of that local council with some real power and influence. At the same time some informal workings with regard to communication and style of meetings may be more appropriate and will keep young people more interested, informed and engaged.

Tips: A Youth Council should work in a similar way to a community or town council Committee and should be considered a valuable component part of the council that is integrated into the formal decision making structure. Agendas and minutes should therefore be prepared by the council's administration in consultation with the chair-person of the Youth council or any other leading representative. An officer should be there to provide support, if requested, and providing all decisions made by the youth council are legal and within budget there should be no reason for the local council to intervene. All youth councils, like any other council meeting, should be open to the public and the minutes made publicly available. The minutes may contain recommendations and proposals that will need to be given due consideration, otherwise there is little point in having a youth council at all. It is also useful if councillors take an interest in the youth council and therefore ensure that there is a two way contact between the youth council and the actual council (but without being too intrusive).

Meetings

It is important that there are enough meetings to ensure that decisions are agreed and the youth council is active but at the same time there should not be so many meetings that people lose interest and focus. Many local councils meet once every two weeks or once every month. It is useful to have each meeting on the same day and at the same time so that people do not become confused or forget.

Tips: If your Youth Council decide to meet monthly to make decisions it would be useful to have some kind of communications means for the youth council between meetings (possibly via a web based group). It may also be useful to have the meetings in a more informal setting, if appropriate, such as a youth centre, where the maximum number of young people will be encouraged to attend.

A Youth Council Constitution

As with any organisation, it is essential that there is a clear aim and focus in order for the youth council to be successful. Therefore, councils may find it useful to set out some terms of reference, set of mission statements or youth council constitution. This will enable the youth council to work efficiently and achieve real results. The constitution can be similar to that of the actual council. By giving the youth council a real set of structures it will enable them to act as a properly functioning organisation with real power and responsibility over its own affairs.

A youth council constitution should include;

A mission statement and set of aims

The youth council structure

Members of the council (including the executive committee or any other committees and their roles)

How the youth council will operate (including how often it will meet etc)

Llantwit Youth Council



Llantwit Youth Council is a partnership project between Llantwit Major Town Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service. Young people from Llantwit Major School and youth organisations across the town are elected by their peers onto the youth council as their representatives to ensure young people's views and ideas are listened to by local decision-makers. The youth council also take action to improve services and facilities for young people within Llantwit Major.

The youth council meets one evening a month to discuss the news, views, issues and ideas of young people across the town and decide what action to take. Youth councillors discuss issues such as employment and volunteering opportunities for young people; services and

facilities such as parks and youth services; police issues and personal safety; and local public transport and road safety. Young people take a variety of action including attending town council meetings twice a term to discuss issues and ideas with councillors; writing to local decision-makers; developing and participating in consultations, surveys and petitions; inviting local decision-makers to their meetings; writing to local newspapers; and utilising social media. Youth councillors also fundraise for the Town Mayor's charities each year to help improve the lives of people within the Llantwit Major and attend civic events on behalf of the town's young people.

The Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service provides accredited training for all members of the youth council that is recognised by colleges, universities and employers. Additionally, all youth councillors are registered for either Millennium Volunteers or Star Awards to enable them to receive recognition for their volunteering hours. Being a member of the youth council enables young people to make a valuable contribution to their local community, grow in confidence and develop a range of transferable skills including teamwork; communication skills; organising and running projects; meeting and working with the public; problem solving; time management; accepting responsibility; planning; achieving results; and meeting deadlines.

If you are interested in learning or joining the Youth Council please contact Geraint Evans , the Youth Action Worker, Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service on 02920 701254 or email valeyouthaction@gmail.com. Alternatively **contact Mrs Ruth Quinn, Town Hall, Llantwit Major, CF61 1SD or tel. 01446 793707 / email lm.pc@btconnect.com**

3. Employment of Youth Workers

Cwmaman Town Council - Cwmaman Youth service

Cwmaman Youth Service was established as a project between young people and the youth service. Young people can become involved as and when they are able to and want to. This has some benefits for young people as they can vary their commitment according to the effect of other pressures on their lives. The Youth Council have been successful in securing substantial lottery funding to develop a young person's resource centre in Cwmaman and members of the council are currently responsible for spending those resources and overseeing the building and development of the centre.

Recently Cwmaman Town Council have appointed a Community Development Officer with part of their remit to work closely with the Youth Council in supporting their future ambitions.

For further details please contact the Clerk David Davies on **07971026493** or alternatively email: daidoc@yahoo.co.uk or write to David Davies, Clerk Cwmaman Town Council, Cwmffrwd Farm, Llandeilo Road, Glanamman, Ammanford, SA18 2DZ

Detail of the Youth Council can be found via their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/cwmammanyouthclub?fref=ts>

4. Implementing New Projects

Cwmbran Centre for Young People

Cwmbran Community Council funds the Cwmbran Young Peoples Centre each year. Members of the council sit on the Management Committee.

Cwmbran Centre for Young People (CYPP) provides a range of services to young persons aged upto 25 years of age such as weekly healthy cooking classes, a free to use open access supervised gym and counselling and mentoring for help with mental health. CCYP also helps with life skills, training and development opportunities and many other activities. It is a great example of how a local council can work with partners to improve the well-being in the local community.

For further details please contact: **David Collins, Clerk to the Council, Cwmbran Community Council, The Council House, Ventnor Road, Cwmbran, Torfaen, NP44 3JY tel. 01633 624152 or 07742 825044 or email david @cwmbran.gov.uk**

5. Creating Facilities for Young People and Children

DR. M'Z – CARMARTHEN YOUTH PROJECT



The Carmarthen Youth Project began in 1997 from the enthusiasm of the Youth Town Council and has grown in strength and numbers since.

SUMMARY

The roots of the Carmarthen Youth Project started in 1994/5 when the Youth Town Council wrote a letter to the Carmarthen Journal about the lack of activities available for young people in the area, which was contributing to problems such as alcohol abuse and antisocial behavior. From this people began to talk about what the community could provide for young people in Carmarthen with a group of people including Town/County Councillor Dr. Margaret Evans, whom the project was named after in commemoration of her contribution to the project, as well as others. In 1997 the project was provided with a place to socialize and participate in activities for over 100 people aged between 11 and 15. Since then the project has grown in popularity, resulting in a bigger building being needed to accommodate the increase in numbers. This became a reality in 2009 when the project moved to the former clubhouse of Carmarthen Athletic RFC and renovated the building in time for its re-opening in the summer of 2010. From its inception the project has helped many disadvantaged children and young people become mature, integrated members of the community with many going on to study in university, gain employment and/or become responsible parents.

STRATEGY

Dr. M'z is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, therefore relies on grant funding and donations to operate. Funding is provided from a range of sources such as the Big Lottery Fund, Children in Need, Carmarthenshire County Council, Awards for All Wales, and Carmarthen Town Council. As well as this many of the young people involved with Dr. M'z are encouraged to do their own fundraising in aid of the project, all of which contributes to the rough cost of £150,000 a year to run the project. The project is delivered by a mixture of paid staff and volunteers, which are run by a voluntary committee, as well as people who work on training scheme placements and student placements by the County Council and the University of Wales Trinity St. David. The project also raises money by renting out the clubhouse to various organizations such as the Merlin Youth Theatre, a disabled young people's group and an education service for home-schooled children.

IMPLEMENTATION

There are many projects within the Youth Project itself, one being the Digilab which provides young people with a free to use computer suite and runs sessions on activities such as digital storytelling, t-shirt making, poster design and DJ workshops. There is also a new café in the clubhouse building, run by a young person, which provides reasonably priced food and drinks as well as a drop-in facility which is equipped with facilities on various nights of the week including games consoles, a TV, a pool table and an area for band rehearsals and gigs. The building also runs an Info Shop where young people can access free information and support for young people on topics including education, employment and training, health, and family and relationships. Information and support is delivered to young people in various ways such as one to one support and issue-based workshops. The Info Shop also provides services such as free access to the internet, free distribution of condoms to young people of a certain age, and use of a phone. Dr. M'z were also involved with the development of a skate park located in Carmarthen.

For further details please contact: **Mr Alun Harris, Town Clerk, St Peters Civic Hall, Notts Square Carmarthen SA31 3PQ or tel. 01267 235199. Email – alun@carmarthentowncouncil.gov.uk**

6. Providing financial assistance for Youth Groups or organisations

Bay of Colwyn Town Council - Sir John Henry Morris Jones Trust Fund



able to meet the criteria of the Trustees. The total amount of funds for distribution to the

The Trustees of the Fund seek applications annually from young persons under the age of 19 years on the 31st March (the closing date for applications), and who are residents of the area of the former Borough of Colwyn Bay as it was on 31st March 1974 i.e. Colwyn Bay, Rhos on Sea, Old Colwyn, Mochdre and Llysfaen, with a view to making an award or awards, to eligible persons who are

applicants will vary from year to year. This is due to the variation of interest received on the Capital Balance. Applicants will have to satisfy the Trustees at a personal interview, of their degree of excellence in one of the following fields:

- Arts, Crafts and Music
- Sport
- Academic and Research
- Commerce and Business
- Science and Technology
- Any other field that the applicants may feel would meet the requirements of the Trustees

The Trust was set up under the terms of the Will of the Late Sir John Henry Morris Jones M.C., D.L., J.P, who was a Doctor of Medicine, practising for many years in the Town. He was also the Member of Parliament for the seat of Denbigh from 1929 to 1950, and was made an Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Colwyn Bay in 1956. It was Sir Henry's wish that the proceeds of his bequest should be used for the benefit of the young people of the old Borough of Colwyn Bay. This includes persons who are undertaking full time education or employment outside the Borough, but whose normal place of residence is within the area of the former Borough of Colwyn Bay. Under the terms of the Trust Deed, the Trustees will not consider applications for courses at Higher or Further Education levels. Interviews will take place during May, and the results will be announced at a suitable ceremony, usually held in June.

For further details contact: **Tina Earley, Town Clerk, Colwyn Bay Town Council, No. 7 Rhiw Road, Colwyn Bay LL29 7TE tel 01492 532248 or email clerk@colwyn-tc.gov.uk**

7. Multi-agency Working

PENARTH TOWN COUNCIL - PENARTH YOUTH ACTION

Set up in 2008, Penarth Youth Action has represented the voice of young people in Penarth and has helped organize many events.



SUMMARY

Since the late 1990's there have been partnerships in Penarth to support young people in the area, an example being the former youth information shop run by volunteers and a board of trustees consisting of the local AM and town councillors. The shop gave young people in Penarth a place to socialize and relax and also held events, such as youth festivals, that were funded by the town council and supported by the Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service. In 2008 the Youth Service, as well as

dynamic new young town councillors, were keen on having a youth council in Penarth in order to find out what young people in the area wanted, rather than 'dictate' what they should have. Since then Penarth Youth Action (PYA) has provided young people in the area the chance to engage with councillors on matters that relate to them, which has ultimately led to a good relationship being fostered between both parties, as well as better services and activities being made available for young people in Penarth.

STRATEGY

In order to recruit members for PYA, the Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service provided youth workers to go to youth clubs and local secondary schools to promote it. In order to fund the council and their activities Penarth Town Council provided £2000 funding from their precept for the year, and following its success the next three years as well. The youth workers work closely with young people in PYA and two town councillors are on the PYA board. Around the second or third year of the council's operation two representatives from PYA were invited to present a youth matters agenda at the town council meeting, which occurs every six weeks, giving them a means of representing the views and needs of young people in the area. As well as this there have been joint team-building exercises involving both the town council and PYA which has enabled a good strong relationship to form between both groups. In addition to this, the youth workers supplied by the Vale of Glamorgan Youth Service have provided members of PYA with necessary training needed for the youth council and other activities.

IMPLEMENTATION

The PYA is actively involved in many aspects of decision making in Penarth, one of these being consultations where the town council asks them if they would like to participate. Examples of this include collaborating with the town council to send a consultation report to the Welsh Government a few years ago when they were looking at safe places to live in Wales, and more recently a local street consultation to find out where young people were going after many local youth provisions were closed. The PYA also organized an open day fair called Activate in the Paget Rooms theatre where local youth services and organizations contributed to show young people in Penarth what activities and groups were available in the area. This was particularly important to some groups, such as the Penarth Air Cadets and Sea Cadets, who had seen a drop in membership in recent times. Each year the PYA also contributes to the Christmas lights and the Penarth Festival Christmas Parade and Christmas lights in both the decision making and delivery. The PYA will also be involved with proposals for a new youth café in the town centre, looking into issues such as funding.

Further details are available from : **Emma Smith, Town Clerk, Penarth Town Council, West House, Stanwell Road, Penarth, CF64 2YG tel. 02920 700721 or email esmith@penarthtowncouncil.gov.uk**

Further sources of information and support:

Youth Cymru – www.youthcymru.org.uk

UK Youth – www.ukyouth.org

National Youth Agency – www.nya.org.uk

Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services – www.cwvys.org.uk

British Youth Council - www.byc.org.uk

UK Youth Parliament – www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk

Directgov – [www.direct.gov.uk/en/Young People](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Young%20People)

The Electoral Commission – www.electoralcommission.org.uk

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