

To: City Executive Board

Date: 10th. July 2013

Report of: The Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: YOUTH AMBITION STRATEGY

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To report the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee on the Youth Ambition Strategy.

Key decision: No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Mills

Executive Lead Member: Councillor Clack

Policy Framework: Strong and ambitious Communities

Recommendation(s): For the City Executive Board to say if it agrees or disagrees with the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1

To provide now a set of concrete outcome measures focused on the direct effects on the ambitions and pathways of the young people involved in this work.

Recommendation 2

To monitor and revisit regularly the type of activity provided to ensure that it is flexible, contemporary and engaging the right numbers, in the right place, at the right time.

Recommendation 3

To express the need for the provision of safe spaces for young people to express themselves as an overarching priority for all the schemes, actions and outcomes within this Strategy.

Introduction

1. The Scrutiny Committee considered the proposals for the Youth Ambition Strategy. They were supported in their debate by Ian Brooke and the Committee would like to thank him for his time and advice.
2. The Committee was please to see this Strategy taking shape and commend the Council for its investment in the young people of Oxford. A number of recommendations were made for the City Executive Board to consider.

Conclusions and Recommendations

3. The Strategy has been built around a needs analysis and consultation and this gives a sound base to move forward. The detail given in the Action Plan and Objective Setting focuses on process, finance, partnerships and schemes but gives little insight into the outcomes expected for young people to improve their chances and ambitions. The Committee want both the Council and young people to get good value for money from this investment and to be able to judge this in terms of the direct effects on individual young people.

Recommendation 1

To provide now a set of concrete outcome measures focused on the direct effects on the ambitions and pathways of the young people involved in this work.

4. The Committee discussed the range of activities preferred by young people and found the range and degree of support for some activities surprising. It was clear that the chart if produced area by area might look very different and the Committee was reassured to hear and read that doing what fits best area by area or even group by group was at the heart of the Strategy. Given that the provision of activities is an important tool for engagement and as a possible proxy to other support services this needs to be kept as flexible and contemporary as possible.

Recommendation 2

To monitor and revisit regularly the type of activity provided to ensure that it is flexible, contemporary and engaging the right numbers, in the right place, at the right time.

5. The recent revelations within the Bull Finch inquiry tell us that young people need safe spaces to express themselves. The Committee hope that this can be one of the priorities that threads through all the schemes, actions and outcomes within this Strategy.

Recommendation 3

To express the need for the provision of safe spaces for young people to express themselves as an overarching priority for all the schemes, actions and outcomes within this Strategy.

Comments from the Director and Board Member

6. We support the recommendations made by the Committee and will ensure that they are incorporated in the implementation stage.

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List of background papers: None

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