

1. **Introduction**

This report offers a summary of activities of the Wiltshire Assembly of Youth (WAY) during the period September – October 2017.

2. **Meetings**

WAY has met twice since the last report. One meeting was joint with the Youth Safeguarding Board (YSB) on 20 September, the other was an online meeting on 17 October.

At the joint meeting with the YSB, members discussed the function of both groups and engaged in discussions on child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse; it was felt that both issues are best supported through Personal, Social, Health and Economic education. Members also discussed concerns relating to safeguarding and public transport, including travel by taxi.

It was shared that in some areas cameras are used to protect both passenger and driver. WAY and YSB discussed how taxi legislation needs to be updated to safeguard passengers, and how the Local Government Association (LGA) are calling for the government to introduce new legislation to [strengthen safeguarding](#). Highway infrastructure concerns (e.g. crossings and safe cycle routes) were also raised and members were advised to lobby Community Area Boards locally. Members of WAY may meet members of the Salisbury Quality Bus Partnership in November – to be confirmed.

Members engaged in discussion relating to child poverty and the forthcoming Child Poverty Summit on 21 November at Devizes School. Headlines from the discussions within the group were that child poverty:

- can be a barrier to getting on in life
- can be invisible – we don't necessary know who is living in poverty
- has stigma attached to it – we should tackle that - PSHE, PSHE, PSHE
- is a cycle – it's hard to get out of
- can limit aspiration and 'what's possible'
- is gender-biased (e.g. more taxes on female products)
- causes strained relationships in homes – family breakdown
- limits life expectancy
- is linked to Child Sexual Exploitation, bullying and drug use

There was a strong emphasis on the invisibility of poverty, i.e. that it is not talked about. Four members expressed an interest to be involved in any future work on child poverty and this was relayed to the Public Health team who are leading on this work.

3. **Progress on the Agenda for Action**

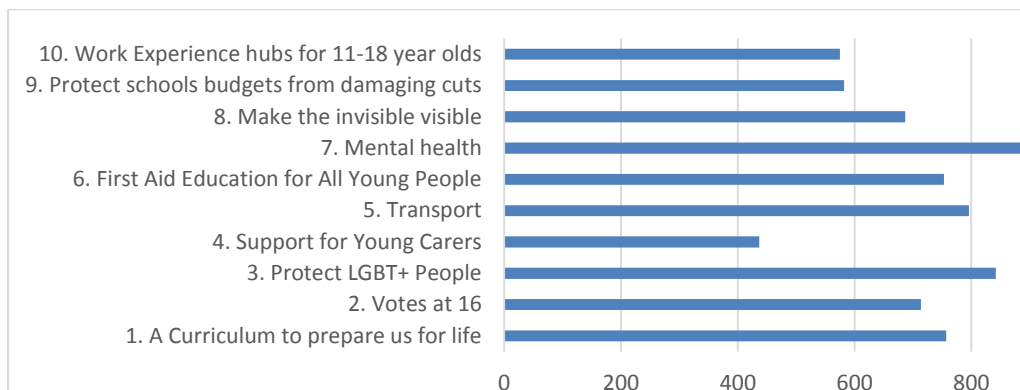
Historically, WAY has striven to work to a broad Agenda for Action. To be more focused, WAY has now decided to limit its activities to one priority at any time. It will also take greater notice of the outcomes of the annual British Youth Council's Make Your Mark (MYM) Campaign, and how Wiltshire young people have responded. Therefore, for the foreseeable future WAY will focus its attention on **priority 1:** improving emotional wellbeing and mental health support for young people and **priority 2:** protect LGBT+ people.

WAY members continue to working on the development of podcasts to be aired during [Anti-Bullying Week 2017](#) (13-17 November). These audio recordings will consider specific themes and areas of concern. Two podcasts have now been recorded that cover several themes and messages; they will be edited to create a series of short clips. WAY would like to promote the podcasts alongside [Wiltshire's Anti-Bullying Charter](#) (launched in 2016) during Anti-Bullying week. The group is being supported by the communications team and interest is expected from BBC Radio Wiltshire.

4. Other activities

Matthew Jameison and Cecilia George attended the Regional UK Youth Parliament Convention in Plymouth on 7 October. They heard about an opportunity to influence how Ofsted involves young people in its inspection framework, and were encouraged to liaise with Wiltshire’s MPs to encourage attendance at a Private Members Bill debate on 3 November on Votes at 16.

WAY members have worked hard to engage secondary schools in [Make Your Mark](#), the UK’s largest youth consultation. Over 7,000 of Wiltshire’s 11-18 year olds took part in 2017 with the following results:



Top five issues – Wiltshire results	Top five issues – national results
1. Mental health	1. A curriculum to prepare us for life
2. Protect LGBT+ people	2. Transport
3. Transport	3. Work experience hubs
4. A curriculum to prepare us for life	4. Votes at 16
5. First Aid education for all young people	5. Protect LGBT+ people

The top five national issues will be debated by young people in the House of Commons on 10 November, which will include the three Members Youth Parliament for Wiltshire.

Two members of WAY joined a Young People’s Panel to appoint the Corporate Director, Children’s Services, creating and asking the following questions:

- (1) Please tell us what you know about young people in Wiltshire today.
- (2) What do you think are the key issues facing today’s young people?
- (3) What are your priorities for making change in Children’s Services? How will you go about making this change?
- (4) Please give examples of work you have done that has made a difference to young people’s lives, and some things that have not worked well. What have you learned as a result?
- (5) Within the current economic climate, how will you make sure that services for all children and young people are maintained and developed?
- (6) What skills would you require your staff to have to would effectively with young people?
- (7) In this role, how will you meet and get to know children and young people to understand what we and our families need?
- (8) How will you prioritise spending within children’s services to make sure that the money makes the biggest difference?
- (9) Why are you the right person for this job?

5. Future plans

WAY will be promoting [elections](#) to the UK Youth Parliament in February. The closing date for applications is 20 November and elections will take place between 29 January and 11 February 2018.

Judy Edwards, Senior Commissioning Officer, Children’s Services