

1. **Introduction**

This report offers a summary of activities of the Wiltshire Assembly of Youth (WAY), Youth Safeguarding Board (YSB) and the Children in Care Council (CiCC) during the period September – October 2018.

2. **Meetings**

On 26 September both WAY and YSB came together again and held a joint meeting.

Within the meeting discussions were had by existing group members on their thoughts around the option of joining WAY and YSB into a new group. Members spoke about the function of both groups and engaged in positive discussions on how much more could be achieved as a single group.

Ideas were brought forward by members regarding frequency of the group meetings, where they could be held, with external venues a popular choice, such as youth groups, clubs and schools. The use of technology, such as social media and a specific website for the new 'Forum/Union' was high in their thoughts. This would support direct contact with a wider range of young people, keeping young people in Wiltshire updated and engaged in what is happening across the county. It would also enable young people to participate in online consultations and questionnaires.

Members engaged in discussion on areas of work they would like to take forward within a new group. The topic of personal, social and emotional education in Wiltshire schools remains high on the agenda for these young people.

Members were asked to suggest a name for a combined forum, and took this to a ballot after which two options were chosen to be taken forward for a final decision:

- Wiltshire Youth Union
- Wiltshire Youth Forum

Eight members expressed their interest in attending a sub-group meeting to work through both WAY and YSB Terms of Reference (ToR), to review and create a combined ToR for the new group. The meeting took place on 10 October and a draft ToR is now in the editing stage. It is the intention to create a completed draft and circulate to key staff and elected members for consideration and agreement by the end of November.

3. **Working in Partnership**

Wiltshire Police continue to support youth voice activities. At the last meeting, PCSO Alan Byrne (Schools and Youth Liaison Supervisor) was in attendance and engaged young people in a discussion about 'sextortion', a key priority for the service. Members of WAY/YSB have been invited to attend Police HQ in Devizes on 14 November 2018 and will have the opportunity to pose some questions and concerns to Chief Constable Kier Pritchard.

4. **CiCC**

Work continues to engage and capture the voice of our young people in care with activities reporting to the Corporate Parenting Panel. Opportunities to link with WAY and YSB will continue and CiCC members will be invited to be part of the new arrangements for youth voice, as well continuing as a distinct forum.

## 5. **Care Leavers Promise Launch Event**

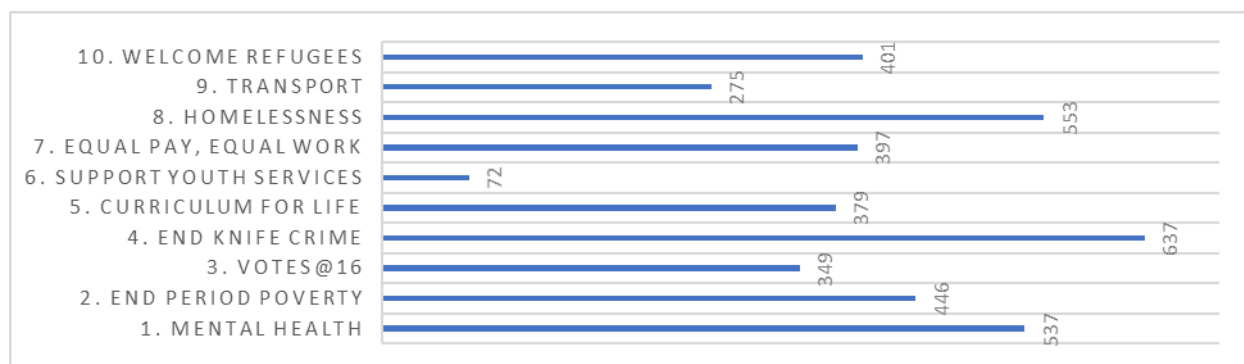
To coincide with the 2018 National Care Leaver's Week, 25 October sees the launch of Wiltshire Council's Care Leavers Promise. As part of the event an update will be given on proposals to co-produce a new Care Leavers' Forum. Expressions of interest will be gathered from those care leavers attending the event who wish to participate in developing the forum. Updates will be offered via the Corporate Parenting Panel.

## 6. **Make Your Mark**

Group members have worked hard to engage secondary schools in Make Your Mark, the UK's largest youth consultation, delivered by U Youth Parliament. 10 issues were included on the ballot papers:

1. **Mental health** – Mental health services should be improved with young people's help: and should be available in schools
2. **End period poverty** – Sanitary products are an essential item. The Government and the NHS should make them free and accessible for all who need it
3. **Votes at 16** – Give 16 and 17 year olds the right to vote in all elections/referendums
4. **Put an end to Knife Crime** – Too many young people's lives are lost to knife crime: The Government need to do more to help end the knife crime epidemic
5. **Curriculum For Life** – Schools should cover topics like finance, sex and relationship education and politics
6. **Support Youth Services** – Youth services help young people but in recent years they have been cut. Youth services need better financial support and security
7. **Equal Pay for Equal Work** – Give young people the same amount of pay, if they are doing the same work as adults in the same job
8. **Homelessness** – Every person should have a place to live and the opportunity to live comfortably. Let's make it happen and put a stop to homelessness
9. **Transport** – Make public transport cheaper, better and accessible for all
10. **Welcome Refugees** – Everyone deserves the right to live without fear of death and persecution, so we believe that refugees should be welcomed into communities in the UK

Over 4,000 of Wiltshire's 11-18 year olds took part in Make Your Mark in 2018 with the following results:



### Top five issues – Wiltshire

1. End knife crime
2. Homelessness
3. Mental health
4. End period poverty
5. Welcome refugees

Given the concerns that Wiltshire's young people have over these issues, they will be taken to the new youth forum for discussion and action, and reported to partners agencies via the Families and Children's Transformation Board.

The top five national issues will be announced on 25 October 2018 and will be available at the [UK Youth Parliament website](#).

## 7. **Your Voice Survey**

Work is underway to deliver this year's Your Voice Survey, which is planned to take place over the last two weeks of November. Your Voice is an annual survey of young people who have been subject to Child in Need or Child Protection procedures. The purpose of these annual consultations is to find out directly from children and young people:

- a) Whether they felt things were explained to them;
- b) If they felt involved in decisions about their lives;
- c) If children's services had made a positive difference for them and their families;
- d) If they had received a good quality service;
- e) What improvements they felt children's social care services needed to make.

Findings will be reported to Children's Select Committee and Corporate Parenting Panel in the new year.

## 8. **Wiltshire's Members of the Youth Parliament (MYP)**

Our MYP's continue to be active regionally and nationally with highlighted representation as below:

- **Convention 2** – 13 October in Exeter. A chance for MYP's to share what's happening around the region. Keynote speakers were present from 'The Red Box Project' and 'Countering Coulston'. There was a briefing on the House of Commons debate coming up on 9 November. Karl Smithson, Wiltshire MYP participated and spoke in front of the group during the debate lead elections and did a great job!
- **House of Commons / Youth Parliament Sitting** – will this year be taking place on 9 November. The top five national issues when identified in this year's Make Your Mark consultation results will be debated by young people in the House of Commons.
- MYPs have also been invited to engage with Local Youth Networks, youth town councils, Area Boards and schools.

## 9. **Elections to the UK Youth Parliament - 2019**

Wiltshire has three elected seats on the United Kingdom Youth Parliament, to which annual elections are held. For 2019, the election process has been launched and the closing date for applications is 26 November. Elections will take place between 29 January and 10 February 2019 and results announced shortly after. The new term of office commences on 1 March 2019.