FOREWORD FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

So once again it is both an honour and a privilege to write a few words by way of introduction to the Rotherham Youth Cabinet 2019 Manifesto.

2018 was a year of making a difference. In Scotland, 2018 was the ‘Year of Young People.’ The Scottish government facilitated a platform for young people to come together to create a stronger voice on issues which affect their lives, showcase their ideas and talents and ultimately, aim to challenge the status quo and create a more positive perception of them in society. In addition, more than 500 Ambassadors are promoting local activities and creating opportunities in their communities to challenge negative stereotypes of young people.

Over in America, on 17 February 2018, 18 year old Emma González gave a heartfelt 11 minute speech in front of the Broward County Courthouse at a gun control rally in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The speech was a reaction to the horrific Stoneman Douglas High School shooting that had taken place three days previously, where a gunman had killed seventeen students and severely injured many more. If you have yet to see the speech I would urge you to look this up on YouTube and watch one of the most articulate and impassioned speeches I have witnessed in a very long time.

A month later, Emma and her student friends organised March for Our Lives and the Enough! National School Walkout. This involved students walking out from their classrooms for exactly 17 minutes (one for each of the victims of the massacre) and involved more than 3,000 schools across the United States and over one million students participating in the peaceful protest.

Here in Rotherham, members of the Youth Cabinet worked tirelessly throughout 2018 to meet their objectives and you can read more about this in their achievements a few pages on.

So please read this Manifesto, think about what you and your organisation can do to support the fantastic young people who make up Rotherham’s Youth Cabinet and let’s work together to do something truly amazing and inspirational in 2019.
THE YOUTH CABINET’S OBJECTIVES

- To ensure young people’s voices influence decisions made within Rotherham.
- To make opportunities for young people’s views to be canvassed and listened to across Rotherham.
- To publicise and promote the Youth Cabinet to ensure people are aware of the opportunities it presents.
- To target wider groups, for example young people from our diverse communities, so that all views are represented.
- Undertake research in order to improve facilities and services for young people and the community.
- To continuously work to develop links with Elected Members, local Councillors, Members of Parliament, RMBC officers and other organisations to ensure that young people’s views are heard.
- To meet with other regional and national youth voice groups to strengthen our voice.
- To help young people in Rotherham to have an understanding of the lives and needs of all people from within our diverse communities through the activities of Youth Cabinet members. This includes work around oppression and anti-fascism, which we do every year.
- To convert words into action.
KEY AIMS FOR 2018/2019

1. By working alongside professionals, we want to address and reduce the fear experienced by young people regarding feeling safe in the community due to recent knife crime incidents across the country and work together to prevent knife crime incidents in our own community.

2. We want to raise awareness about different cultures to help people understand the lives of everyone living within our communities. We hope to help break down stereotypes and prejudice, and help to reduce hate crime.

3. We want to raise awareness and promote online resources which encourage positive mental health so young people know where to turn to in times of need. We will also continue to work with mental health professionals to endeavour to continue to improve services for young people.

4. We want to work alongside the Young Carers’ Council to ensure young carers have the same opportunities as adult carers in accessing free activities whilst in their caring role.

ADDITIONAL AIMS FOR 2018

5. We will continue to work with South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and transport companies locally to ensure young people’s voices are being heard and acknowledged. We will also work with other young people from the Yorkshire and Humber to have a consistent approach with public transport services in the North.

6. We aim to promote the benefits of a sustainable and clean environment to help encourage people to become more environmentally friendly.

7. We will raise awareness of the lasting effects that drink driving can have on the victims and their families and encourage drivers to choose not to drink and drive.
AchEveMENTS In 2017/2018

Key aims for 2017 - 2018

1. We will organise a conference for young people to help them feel confident about their body image. We will also create a film to help educate young people around body image and raise awareness of support which is available to them.

Youth Cabinet received funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group to support their work around body image and mental health. The young people decided to hold a conference and create a film; both of which aimed to support young people to feel confident with their body image and know where to go for help and support.

The conference attracted 67 young people and 32 staff from across the borough with workshops being delivered by both healthcare professionals and young people.

The film was created around mental health and eating disorders. Members acted in the video which was filmed at the Lifewise Centre and was written, filmed and edited by young people. This is available on the Youth Cabinet website.

Members were also involved in a pantomime/play which addressed a range of issues including body confidence and mental health.

Members attended, supported and provided workshops at a Mind, Body, Soul Residential at Crowden, helping to build resilience for positive mental wellbeing with the young people who attended.

Members were invited to a NHS England Learning Collaboration to share good practice about their work on body image and mental health with professionals from across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

2. We want to increase opportunities for young people to take part in positive work experience and highlight where they can find existing work experience and volunteering opportunities.

On Children’s Commissioner Takeover Day in November, members of Youth Cabinet announced their theme for this year which is work experience. This was the top issue raised by young people in the 2017 Make Your Mark Ballot.

Consultation was undertaken with over 80 young people and a report of the findings was produced which formed the basis for preparation for the CCTOD event.
The Youth Cabinet took over an Overview Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) meeting in April. Young people worked with Elected Members to prepare for the event and a range of relevant professionals attended so the young people could raise questions and try to establish ways to improve opportunities for work experience.

The report from CCTOD was approved at a Full Council meeting and the recommendations will be worked on over the next year, with OSMB support.

Four young people have completed work experience within the Voice and Influence Team and a member of Youth Cabinet shadowed the Chief Executive during elections for the South Yorkshire Mayor.

3 We want to increase opportunities for good quality mental health first aid training for young people and those working with young people and increase the number of people who receive this training in the borough.

Youth Cabinet members took part in a Mental Health First Aid Training Day with Rotherham United Community Sports Trust. The training was a bespoke session to enable young people within the group to learn about what mental health is, how to identify poor mental health, how to support people and the appropriate language to use.

Four members of the group participated in a Young Minds Future Minds event in London which aimed to involve young people in developing mental health services of the future. Rotherham young people worked with young people from across the country in a variety of learning and developmental workshops. Recommendations were made to have accessible young person’s Mental Health First Aid Training available.

Members worked with the Children and Young Peoples’ Mental Health Quality Improvement Manager for NHS England North to express what is important to young people with regard to mental health support in schools. Information received from young people will be used to help determine future funding for schools.

Young people attended a Children & Young People’s Mental Health Digital Innovations Shared Learning Event to find out what online support is available for the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. They will share their learning with other young people and professionals in Rotherham.

Members have attended CAMHS Youth Forum meetings which enable young people to meet with staff and managers of the service to enable them to work together to make positive changes.
FURTHER AIMS FOR 2017/2018

To work with Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group to support planning of health services for future generations living in Rotherham as part of the 70th anniversary of the NHS.

- Young people have worked with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to identify 70 aspirations and recommendations for the future of the NHS to celebrate the recent 70th Anniversary of the service. These were displayed at the CCG Annual General Meeting.

- Young people attended the CCG AGM and helped with an activity to capture further future aspirations from the guests. The CCG are using these recommendations within their ongoing development of health services.

To work with South Yorkshire Public Transport Executive (SYPTE) and public transport companies to continue to address issues raised by young people in Rotherham.

- Members have attended meetings with public transport managers, including SYPTE to continue to discuss issues raised by young people.

- They also have regular meetings with young people from Doncaster, Barnsley and Sheffield to strengthen the voice of young people and are producing a Charter for South Yorkshire Transport’s approach to young people.

- Young people have been involved in Transport for the North and have delivered workshops in Leeds as part of the ‘Passengers of the Future’ Youth Forum to improve public transport regionally.

- Members were invited to the official launch of the new Tram Train which links Rotherham to Sheffield.

To work with colleagues from Sheffield Youth Cabinet to develop Paige’s Project, to provide safe, welcoming and relaxed spaces for young people who have any invisible illness such as mental illness, eating disorders and other chronic illnesses which are not visible.

- Youth Cabinet member, Toni Paxford, has developed a social action project to offer peer support to other young people who have invisible illnesses. The group are currently meeting monthly and are supported by other volunteers from Youth Cabinet. They are also linking with young people in Sheffield to create a similar project there.
• The project has created a strong buddy system which links young people to volunteers.

• Paige’s Project has signposted its users to other Early Help activities such as residencies and social support groups.

**Provide help and support to further develop Rotherham as a Child Friendly Borough.**

• Members of Youth Cabinet have participated in workshops with the Cultural Strategy Board to help develop the Cultural Strategy for Rotherham.

• Members joined other young people from across Rotherham to participate in a range of workshops to help develop the future of the town hosted by the Embassy for Reimagining Rotherham. This was achieved through a range of creative methods such as song writing, bag making, sculptures, creative writing etc which gave young people the opportunity to share the positives and negatives of Rotherham, along with making suggestions for improvements, in particular with regard to arts, culture and heritage, which will be fed into the Cultural Strategy.

**To continue to establish new links and develop existing links with young people’s groups and schools so that all young people feel their voices are heard and listened to.**

• We have extended our links to work with some new schools, including Special Schools, who did not support our activities in the past.

• We have worked with a range of different groups of young people over the last year including Young Carers Council, LAC Council, Different But Equal Board, Young Inspectors, Eastwood Youth Forum, Special Schools and Paige’s Project to name a few to widen our reach to young people.

• Several visits have taken place to schools and young people’s organisations to publicise the work of Youth Cabinet and promote membership. Members of Youth Cabinet have also been working on products and information to raise the profile of the group.

• Young people attended a head teacher’s meeting and spoke to 150 head teachers from across Rotherham about the work of the group.

• The group have re-branded and now are the proud owners of a range of Rotherham Youth Cabinet merchandise to identify them at local, regional and national events. These include identity badges, lanyards, pin badges, t-shirts and hoodies.

• A promotional film has also been created which can be viewed at www.youthi.org.uk/youthi/homepage/6/rotherham_youth_cabinet
LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL YOUTH VOICE

- Attended regional conventions with young people from across the Yorkshire and Humber Region to develop skills and knowledge and work on regional campaigns.

- Met the Sheffield City Region Mayor, Dan Jarvis to learn about his role and how he can support young people in the South Yorkshire region. Young people are helping to develop a Sheffield City Region youth voice platform to enable a direct link to young peoples’ voices and engagement.

- Members participated in Rotherham Armed Forces Day.

- Rotherham’s Elected Members of Youth Parliament visited the House of Commons and took part in the Annual Debate. They felt privileged to sit on the green benches for the debate, which was chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow MP. The national campaigns chosen were A Curriculum for Life and Votes at 16.

- Participated in a regional event to discuss the implications of Brexit on young people.

- Attended a regional event to mark Yorkshire Day at Bishops Palace in York.

- Members of Youth Cabinet participated in the Remembrance Day Parade and Service and laid wreaths at the cenotaph on behalf of young people in Rotherham.

- Water safety throwlines have been purchased and erected in Rotherham town centre following the members 2017 campaign.

- Supported Safeguarding Awareness Week through a social media campaign around online safety.

- Participated in Early Help Holocaust Memorial Day and Emilia Ashton did a reading at the town centre HMD event.
Members participated in a Yorkshire and Humber Regional Induction Residential which gave them the opportunity to learn about their roles and responsibilities to enable them to represent Rotherham young people effectively. Rotherham young people were also involved in the delivery of workshops to other young people from across the region.

Jack Hogan was successful in gaining a place on the planning committee for a Transnational Youth Policy Conference, working with young people from 16 countries on issues around education, employment, culture and society and security.

Jack has also held the position of Procedures Group Representative for the whole of the Yorkshire and Humber Region for the last two years.

Toni Paxford has been successful in gaining a position on the national NHS Youth Forum. She is one of 14 young people from across the UK who will sit on this forum to work on developments within the National Health Service.

Toni also participated in an international Youth Forum as part of the European Youth Parliament, which was held in Strasbourg in May 2018.

Emilia Ashton has been successful in securing a place to participate in a House of Lords Select Committee to be involved in an inquiry into intergenerational fairness.

Training, Development and Awards

- Members have had training sessions to develop debating skills.
- Young people delivered workshops in schools for Safeguarding Awareness Week along with a week long social media campaign on online safety.
- Members participated in a first aid course with Young Carers Council and Young Inspectors and received an accredited certificate.
- Youth Cabinet members were joined by young people from Young Inspectors and Young Carer’s Council to complete a Leadership Award qualification.
- Members have had mental health first aid training delivered through Rotherham United Community Sports Trust.
- The Different But Equal Awards for the most inspirational young person and most passionate about the voice of young people were awarded to Toni Paxford and Jack Hogan.
SERVICE DESIGN AND CONSULTATION

- Abigail Smith and Amaan Saqlain met with the Shadow MP for Policing and Crime and the Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss issues around crime and safety raised by young people.

- Members engaged with 7243 young people in the annual Make Your Mark Ballot to find out the most important issues for Rotherham’s young people.

- Molly Crossmore assisted the Young Inspectors with an Inspection on Libraries and Crowden Outdoor Education Centre.

- Emilia Ashton and Sundas Raza attended a violent hotspot meeting with Elected Members, police and community personnel to discuss knife crime prevention.

- Elections took place in February 2018 to elect two new members of UK Youth Parliament for Rotherham, plus two deputies. A total of 18 young people expressed interest in becoming MYPs and over 3000 young people voted in these elections.

- Young people worked with RMBC’s Green Spaces on the consultation of Rother Valley Country Park Caravan Site.

- Members participated in a Safer Rotherham Partnerships event to discuss their priorities.

- Young people supported consultation for a Heritage Bid with Clifton Park Museum.

- Youth Cabinet members participated in an event aimed to identify risks and safety in their daily lives which was coordinated by Early Help Voice and Influence workers along with SharedVision and Chickenshed theatre company on behalf of the Centre of Excellence for CSE.

- Members created an online survey to encourage young people to contribute to the consultation around changes to the Early Help Service. They produced a video to inform young people of the importance of hearing their voices within this process.

- Young people were invited by the Trustees at Magna to visit to share their thoughts and feelings about Magna as a venue and attraction for young people. Members of the group were shown around the venue, including behind the scenes, and then had a feedback session with management.

- Young people took part in the interviews to recruit the new Director of Children’s Services and an Apprentice Youth Support Worker for Early Help Services.

- Members have supported Rotherham Public Health in consultation to develop services and initiatives around helping young people achieve a healthy weight.
GET IN TOUCH

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