Manifesto 2018
I am extremely proud to introduce the Rotherham Youth Cabinet Manifesto.

These are exciting times for the voice of young people, locally and nationally. The General Election secured the highest turn out of young voters for 25 years and there is growing momentum for the lowering of the voting age to 16 with cross party support at Westminster and a national movement through the British Youth Council Votes at 16 campaign. Rotherham Council is one of the first councils in the country to vote to support this scheme, following input from our Youth Cabinet.

Here in Rotherham we are seeing more young people than ever engaging in democratic processes and wanting to make a difference. The Council has an ambitious vision for a Child Friendly Borough and the Different But Equal Board is harnessing a wide and diverse range of voice and influence groups to ensure that the voice of children and young people in Rotherham is both heard and acted upon.

The Rotherham Youth Cabinet has a proud history of canvassing for the issues that matter to children and young people and making things happen. In the last year alone they have secured a year round discounted travel fare for young people across all of South Yorkshire, working with South Yorkshire Public Transport Executive (SYPTE).

This manifesto has a set of clear aims and objectives for the next year including focusing on raising awareness of body image; increasing work experience opportunities for young people and driving up good quality mental health first aid training.

These will require a wide range of Council services, Elected Members and our partner agencies to work together to achieve the desired outcomes.

Objective number one is:
To ensure young people’s voices influence decisions made within Rotherham.

I for one am very happy to publicly pledge my support to ensuring that this objective becomes a reality.

What will you do?

David McWilliams
Assistant Director,
Early Help and Family Engagement
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 activities of Youth Cabinet members. This includes work around oppression and anti-fascism, which we do every year.
- To convert words into action.

Members of Youth Cabinet preparing for a meeting at the Town Hall
Key aims for 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.

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.

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.

Further aims for 2018:

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

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

3. 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.

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

5. 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 and heard and listened to.
Youth Cabinet Achievements during 2016 to 2017:

**Aim:** We will organise an event to launch our Public Transport Report which includes our recommendations and will continue to work with organisations to campaign for these recommendations to be accepted.

**Achievements:** For Children’s Commissioner Takeover Day, Youth Cabinet took over an Overview Scrutiny Management Board meeting. This meeting was also attended by Managers from bus, tram and train companies plus South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTE) who discussed recommendations Youth Cabinet members had made in their report ‘Get In Gear’.

Following the Takeover Day, a South Yorkshire Young People’s User Group was set up and young people from Rotherham, Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster now attend meetings regularly to work with Public Transport Managers and SYPTE in order to improve public transport for young people.

One recommendation Youth Cabinet made was to introduce a new pass for all young people age 16 – 18, even if they are not in full time education and which would continue throughout the school holidays. They were successful with this and the pass was launched in June 2017.

Members of Youth Cabinet were also featured in the Sheffield Star and other media regarding these changes and have been involved with press releases and publicity regarding the successful change to the 16-18 passes.

Members have shared their public transport report with other local areas across Yorkshire and Humber and have also lead a workshop around public transport at a British Youth Council Convention where the report is being shared as an example of good practice.

The Get In Gear transport campaign was shortlisted to the final three in the Best Campaign category at the National British Youth Council Youth Voice Star awards and was shared within the House of Commons Youth Parliament Debates as an example of good practice and a successful campaign.
**Aim:** We will work with Rotherham’s Looked After Children’s Council to create an educational film resource which will reflect our feelings that we are proud of our town and supportive of our diverse community.

**Achievements:** Youth Cabinet members worked with the charity ‘Fixers’ and young people from Rotherham Looked After Children’s Council to make a film about being proud of living in Rotherham called Rotherham Proud. This film can be viewed at http://www.fixers.org.uk/news/15815-11208/rotherham-diversity.php

Members of the Youth Cabinet have also supported the development of Child Friendly Rotherham and have supported a range of events to share their thoughts and feelings about what a Child Friendly town should look like.

They have also consulted with young people from National Citizen Service (NCS) groups around Child Friendly Rotherham and worked with RMBC’s Design Studio to help with the design of a logo.

**Aim:** We want to help young people to feel confident with their own appearance and raise awareness of the effects and impact of negative body image.

**Achievements:** Members are planning to hold a conference for young people across Rotherham around the issue of body image and are working with Mental Health Professionals to make this happen. The Rotherham CCG is working with the Youth Cabinet and are providing funding for this campaign.

We continued to support the development of the My Mind Matters Website and also supported World Mental Health Day by tweeting about the young people’s mental health ‘STILL’ campaign.

This is a Rotherham Council led campaign to ensure young people have the support they need to talk about mental health issues they may be experiencing.

**Aim:** We want to promote Youth Voice in order to help all young people know how to have a voice, what opportunities for participation are available and encourage them to have an equal opportunity to be involved in Youth Voice initiatives and participation.

**Achievements:** Members of Looked After Children’s Council, Young Carers Council and Eastwood Youth Forum have attended Youth Cabinet meetings and have taken part in joined up work.
Members of Youth Cabinet have joined the Different But Equal Board which has been set up by Voluntary Action Rotherham/Voluntary Consortium. They worked with other young people from groups across Rotherham to plan a borough wide event for young people to raise awareness of services within Rotherham and participate in voice and influence activities. Youth Cabinet members also delivered workshops at the event around Child Friendly Rotherham and Public Transport.

Publicity material has been delivered to every school in Rotherham and within voluntary sector groups and it has been promoted through the Early Help teams, which has resulted in young people being referred into the group.

The Youth Cabinet has recruited new members to enable it to be more representative of our diverse town.

Members have undertaken the Make Your Mark consultation, which is the UKs largest consultation of young people and the outcomes will inform their future UK Youth Parliament national campaigns. They have consulted with over 7,000 young people from across Rotherham including young people within targeted groups to ensure their voices were heard for example; Roma young people, young people in care and care leavers, Youth Offending teams and disability groups etc.

Social Media sites have had increased numbers of followers and likes and currently have 806 Twitter followers and 352 Facebook likes.
Aim: We want to raise awareness of water safety amongst children and young people to make them aware of the dangers of open water and how they can stay safe.

Achievements: Young people had a presentation from South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue around open water safety to increase their knowledge of the issues in order for them to share this with other young people.

Members of Youth Cabinet were invited to the launch of a new Water Safety Line which has been installed at Ulley Country Park as part of the ‘Doing it for Dylan’ campaign around open water safety.

Members of Youth Cabinet worked alongside the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service with a group of National Citizenship Service (NCS) young people at Sheffield Hallam University to raise awareness of the dangers of open water. This resulted in two teams taking up this issue as their social action project and raising funds to purchase two water throwlines.

The Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership Group agreed to fund a water throwline which will be dedicated to former Youth Cabinet member Jack Hogan in recognition of his contribution to Youth Voice in Rotherham.

Awareness raising material around open water safety has been distributed to young people’s organisations to enable this to be shared with children, young people and families.
Further achievements and involvement during 2016 – 2017:

Service design and consultation

- Members of Youth Cabinet have attended Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership Board meetings to ensure young people are represented.
- Members of Youth Cabinet supported the Young Inspectors Programme to assist with their inspection of the Children’s Ward and Outpatients in Rotherham Hospital and St Anne’s Leisure Centre.
- Young people have been part of interview panels to support the recruitment for a range of posts within Rotherham Council’s Children and Young People’s Services.
- Two members were on an interview panel for the recruitment of new workers at Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHs). Members of Youth Cabinet have been invited to attend monthly meetings at CAMHs to help with service development.
- Members of Youth Cabinet had a meeting to ask their opinions about what should be included within a newly developed transitions website.
- Young people worked with staff from Quality, Performance and Commissioning to review the questions on the Lifestyle Survey and suggest improvements.
- Members participated in consultation around a Rotherham Town Centre Public Protection Order to ensure young people’s voices were included.
- Young people attended a Health Select Committee to receive feedback around their work and recommendations to CAMHS from consultations and activities undertaken during 2016.
- Youth Cabinet members attended the Equalities Reference Group to have a voice for young people and participated in an Equalities Peer Review.
- Members supported the development of the complaints process for young people.
- Young people attended the launch of the Rotherham Plan, where their Rotherham Proud film was shown.
Training and Development

- Members of Youth Cabinet visited the National Holocaust Museum in Newark with members of the Looked After Children’s Council to learn about the Holocaust and worldwide genocide.

- Youth Cabinet members gave readings and presentations at Holocaust Memorial Day with one young person presenting the event.

- Members have taken part in teambuilding activities and training, plus a teambuilding residential at Crowden, Rotherham Council’s outdoor education centre based in Derbyshire.

- Members met with staff from the CCG to learn about how budgets are distributed and how health services are commissioned in Rotherham.

- Members of the Youth Cabinet were invited to look around the disused Rotherham Magistrates Court. This was organised by Council Leader Cllr Chris Read. This visit has helped one young person make decisions about his future career.

- Young people supported the White Ribbon Campaign - Rock Against Domestic Abuse Event to campaign against all forms of domestic violence and abuse.

- Members of UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) visited the Young Carers Council and Young Inspectors to deliver Don’t Hate Educate training to them which helped them understand hate crime and racism

- Representatives from UK Youth Parliament and Youth Cabinet attended the Remembrance Day service and parade in Rotherham and laid a wreath on behalf of all young people in Rotherham.

- Young people participated in Armed Forces Day in the town centre.

- Members of Youth Cabinet have set up a Mentoring Scheme to ensure all members receive support and guidance within their roles as Youth Councillors.
Rotherham Youth Voice
(regionally and nationally)

- Members of the Youth Parliament worked with the Leader of the Council, Cllr Chris Read, on a motion to support votes at 16 for young people. This motion was passed at a full Council Meeting on Wednesday 12th July 2017.
- Members of Youth Cabinet and UKYP attended an induction residential at Kingswood Dearne Valley to learn about their roles as Youth Councillors and as Members of UK Youth Parliament.
- Rotherham Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) Jack Hogan was elected to the highest position within regional young voice of Procedures Group Representative for the Yorkshire and Humber Region. He will represent all young people in the region nationally within the British Youth Council until the beginning of 2019.
- Young people have attended a number of regional conventions where they met up with Youth Councils, Youth Cabinets and Members of UK Youth Parliament from across the Yorkshire and Humber Region to plan campaigns and undertake training to help with their roles as Youth Councillors.
- Rotherham MYPs attended the House of Commons Debate and Ashley Gregory MYP was elected by his peers to give a speech at the Dispatch Box about the NHS. This was televised on Parliament TV.
- Members of Youth Parliament for Rotherham met with MPs to discuss their annual campaigns and also organised a question time session for members of Youth Cabinet.
- Members have been involved in the Northern Powerhouse and have delivered workshops at regional events.
- Three Youth Cabinet members were shortlisted for the Community Young Volunteer of the Year award in November 2016 by Voluntary Action Rotherham for volunteering work across Rotherham.
- Youth Cabinet member Toni Paxford was elected onto the Board of Trustees for the Yorkshire and Humber Youth Work Unit.
- The Youth Cabinet have been recognised at the British Youth Council (BYC) Youth Star Awards where they were shortlisted for the national Best Campaign for their work around Public Transport.
- Youth Worker, Sarah Bellamy, won the national British Youth Council (BYC) Youth Voice Worker of the year 2017 award.
Get In Touch!

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