



## **EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **- 3<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2025**

**SUBJECT: YOUTH FORUM PRIORITIES**

**REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is to inform Members of the issues raised by Children and Young People via the Youth Services Youth Forum. The report is seeking the views of members prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

#### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Following the annual Youth Forum Conference in January 2025, Children and Young People have identified current issues that are important to them and have voted on Priority Issues for 2025.
- 2.2 The previously agreed process that follows the identification of issues has been as follows:
- Presentation of issues to Education SMT for information.
  - Young People present issues to Education Scrutiny and Cabinet for information and support.
  - Issues are presented directly by Young People.
  - Young People form a Project Group that meets weekly to address the Youth Forum priority issue, working directly with Officers and Members as appropriate on a range of initiatives intended to have a positive impact on the issue. This work will continue until December 2025.
  - Progress, outcomes, and impact, as a result of young people working to address the priority issue, is monitored through the Education's termly monitoring of the Service Improvement Plan.
  - The work of the project group draws to a close ahead of the next conference (January 2026), when the process restarts, and new priority issues are identified. Final impact assessments are completed, and young people receive feedback on progress made.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 3.1 Members are asked to:

- a) support the presentation of Youth Forum issues, by young people, to the Cabinet;
- b) consider how to support the Youth Forum in addressing their Priority Issue;
- c) to have due regard to issues raised within this report by Children and Young People when making decisions which impact upon their lives.

### 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure members are informed of the priorities identified by children and young people, and that the voices of children and young people are considered as part of decision-making processes.

### 5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Youth Forum enables young people aged 11-25 to have a voice on issues that affect them. Each year, young people's ideas and issues are identified in a borough wide consultation, structured and organised around five themes: Prosperous Caerphilly; Safer Caerphilly; Learning Caerphilly; Healthier Caerphilly; and Greener Caerphilly.
- 5.2 At the Annual Youth Forum Conference Young People are provided with the opportunity to further explore the issues raised via the borough wide consultation and engage in a dialogue with peers, relevant Officers, and Cabinet members. From exploring all themes within the context of young people's lives, young people identify and agree on a priority issue for each theme.
- 5.3 Following the Conference, an overall priority is voted for by young people representing the Youth Service, Schools and Youth Support Services. The issues are listed below, with the percentage detailing the proportion of the vote through a borough wide ballot in which 2,383 young people participated. The issue with the most votes is the 'priority issue' and the one in which the youth forum will work on for 2025.
- 34% Learning Caerphilly - **Priority Issue**  
School toilets – We need more toilets in our schools to be opened throughout the day in order to be able to use them freely and sensibly.
  - 24% Safer Caerphilly  
Personal safety – We need to feel safe in our communities on public transport and walking home at night to keep ourselves safe
  - 19% Healthier Caerphilly  
Physical and Mental health – We need to educate young people about positive body image, eating the right food for a balance of nutrition and inform of tools to help overcome mental health issues.

- 13% Greener Caerphilly  
Littering – We need more visible bins in our communities, and we need to educate people around littering and recycling and encourage people to be more environmentally aware.
- 10% Prosperous Caerphilly  
Employment – We need more help and support around getting employment, setting up a business or becoming self-employed including on how to secure work experience and applying for financial support available.

5.4 Following the ballot to identify the overall priority issue, the Youth Forum project group have since consulted with school councils and the youth service to further explore the issue and gain a more informed insight into why this is a matter of concern for young people. The project group are in the process of examining the consultation feedback, including generating ideas on how young people can address the issue.

5.5 The Youth Forum will attend Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to present the issue and give an outline of the youth forum's project group activity, including any plans to address the issue during 2025.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 In considering the recommendations the following assumptions have been made:

- Enabling children and young people to have a voice in matters that affect them is a statutory duty and the Youth Forum and the processes that support it, provides the mechanism in which this statutory duty is fulfilled.

## **7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 This report provides information and asks for support; therefore, an integrated impact assessment has not been completed at this time.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications with respect to this report.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no personnel implications with respect to this report.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 All responses from the consultations have been incorporated in the report.

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## **11. STATUTORY POWERS**

11.1 'Shared Purpose: Shared Future, Statutory Guidance on the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015', and in particular SPSF 3 – Annex B, which is issued in accordance with Section 17(3) of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 and applies to local authorities in respect of local well-being plans and whenever they take decisions which might affect children and young people.

11.2 The Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, Section 12 requires local authorities to promote and facilitate participation by children in decisions of the authority which might affect them.

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**Consultees:** Richard (Ed) Edmunds, Chief Executive  
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Rob Hartshorn, Executive Director for Education and Social Services  
Councillor Sean Morgan, Leader of the Council  
Councillor James Pritchard, Deputy Leader of the Council  
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities  
Leanne Sykes, Deputy Director of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer  
Lynne Donovan, Director of People Services  
Headteacher's Consultation Group  
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