

Report for full council: January 2019

Good Afternoon, I am Matt Simpson and I have chaired the youth council for the past year. I believe it has been another fantastic year for the youth council, and in particular I feel our campaigns have really picked up this year, and as a result it's a shame that this is our final report as a group, however we will have a new group of fresh faces replacing us, which I am sure will have lots of new ideas for the Youth Council. I will now pass you over to our representatives from each of our campaigns, who will present to you in more detail the work of each campaign group.

Youth Mayors:

HH: Myself and Jack were elected to be youth mayors back in February 2018 and we have thoroughly enjoyed working hard in this role for the last 10 months. Our main campaign has focused on improving PSHE in the city, working in the Education for life group in the youth council and you will hear what we have achieved in a few minutes. As well as the work we have done with the Youth Council, we have helped Freedom of Mind plan and deliver their third festival. Freedom of Mind was set up by a youth counsellor in the last term of office and focuses on improving awareness around mental health. It has been great to see a youth council project continue after the term and shows that the issues we are raising are meaningful to others as well.

JP: The other campaign we have been focusing on over the last few months has been around improving the bear pit and proudly have adopted the role of youth ambassadors for the bear pit. Having worked in the area for 6 months before entering my role as youth mayor, I realised that there needed to be a wholesale change in the area if this was ever going to be an area that young people felt safe in and did not think twice about walking through. It is our duty as a city to protect its young people and we cannot say this about the bear pit. While working there, I saw a woman overdose and stop breathing on my second shift, as well as suffering consistent verbal abuse and public drug use. It is irrefutable to see this area of the city as safe and welcoming and anyone who does not see this area as somewhere that needs to change is, in my opinion, naive.

HH: As well as our campaigns, we have been fortunate enough to attend many events and meetings. We attended the opening of the Global Parliament of Mayors, meeting mayors from across the world and meeting with a school in Maastricht that was starting its own Youth mayor program. We have also recently hosted the EPIC children in care awards, seeing the fantastic achievements from Children in care and care leavers in Bristol, and have represented young people at events like Remembrance Sunday, the Enthronement of the Bishop of Bristol and the signing of the Bristol Children's charter. Also for me, being youth mayor has opened up lots of opportunities for example I have worked a lot with Bristol Women's Voice, from speaking to young girls about female empowerment to helping organise events and recently starting to write articles for their website. Also back in January 2018 I helped organise the times up women's

march for Bristol along with other inspiring women, it was an amazing experience and definitely one I will never forget.

JP: We have both thoroughly enjoyed our time as youth mayors and would like to thank Mayor Rees for supporting us throughout the year, as well as all of the councilors and council officers that have supported us. But we do still have 1 month left and we are not planning to stop working! If any councilors have anything they would like to consult or work on with us then please do not hesitate to get in contact with us.

UKYP: Jack Wilfan/Caitlin

It has been a pleasure to be the Member's of Youth Parliament for the past year and I think we have achieved a lot. I feel really proud that Caitlin and I have been the MYPs when we reached over 1 million Make Your Mark votes nationwide. We have had the opportunity of raising the issue of transport and other issues of period poverty and mental health.

This year the UKYP met in Nottingham to discuss our motions nationwide and also network and meet other MYPs from around the country. We were also able to put the idea of 'Curriculum for Life' in action and try out activities on emergency response and the role of women in politics.

Make your Mark was a huge success this with a national total of 1.1million votes on a huge range of issues from homelessness to period poverty and knife crime and mental health. All important issues that I am sure will be addressed by many youth councils to come. In Bristol, we achieved a very respectable 5521 ballots which is very good for the city and creates groundwork for the next members of Youth Parliament to build upon.

This great national achievement culminated into our annual sitting in the House of Commons in November. It was an amazing opportunity to sit on the green benches and enjoy the experience and it is one I will remember for a long time to come.

Finally, can I thank everyone from the council who has supported us throughout our time in this role over the last year and I want as many young people to experience this in the future.

Youth Select Committee report launch Jack Payne/Caitlin

I attended the YSC Committee report launch in London on the 14th of November. During the summer, Caitlin O'Regan and I had the opportunity to be a part of the youth select committee. The Youth Select Committee's inquiry 2018 was about the need for recognizing the importance of work experience. In preparation for the report writing, we met policy-makers, an expert panel, and ministers from the Department for Education. Some of the points about which we questioned the various panels, included, for Caitlin, extending travel bursaries to under-16 for technical work experience. My personal favorite question to ask was also addressed to the government. It was also linked to Caitlin's question: about the new T-levels and how the Department for Education planned their implementation.

Environment and Transport:

Over the past year, the Environment and Transport campaign group have been working to improve the local transport network, particularly focusing on the bus service in Bristol. We have been meeting with James Freeman, head of First Bus in Bristol, to discuss issues that young people have brought to us through a Bristol-wide survey that was conducted earlier this year. We discussed the pricing structure for young people, including raising the age for a child ticket from 16 to 18. We also discussed the reliability of the bus service, particularly in the mornings for students commuting to school. We found that a lot of students found it very difficult to get a reliable bus in the morning, with many reports of buses skipping stops, and others being regularly late or overcrowded. We have been working with Mr Freeman and First to improve the whole transport system for young people in Bristol and we are hoping to continue to work with them over the upcoming months. We have also worked with the department working on the Bristol Transport Strategy and have helped to improve this.

We have also been looking at ways to improve the environmental situation in Bristol. Single-use plastics have been our main focus, and over the coming months, our campaign will be focused on trying to reduce single-use plastics throughout Bristol, particularly in schools. We aim to raise awareness of single-use plastics and plan to encourage young people in Bristol to cut down on the amount being used across the city.

Thank you to all of the councilors who have helped us over the past 2 years and we hope that you can continue to help us over the coming years.

Young and Equal:

In an attempt to achieve our goals for creating a city free of discrimination, we became involved with the youth forum UNITY, through the BAME co-opted on the youth council. We helped with the outreach of a survey which was being conducted by UNITY

We went to both meetings with the LGBTQ+ group and also UNITY, which are both diversity groups for young people within the city. We also helped and partook in the Equality of Voice conference as we had the UNITY co-opted member and the Chair of Unity as part of our campaign group. The event was a huge success as lots of young people turned out for a night of debate and celebration of Black History.

See Appendix 1 Equality of Voice Conference

There are 74 countries around the world where it is illegal to be LGBT. To put that in context there are 196 countries in the world. That's 37 percent of the world where a person like me could be imprisoned or given the death penalty. This is something that, at times, we don't give to the worst people in our society, simply for being who we are. I am aware that I am extremely lucky to be born where, when and into the family that I am, but that doesn't change the fact that people around the world are given medieval punishment for this "crime". I did the conference because I was unaware of this issue although, I knew that not everywhere was accepting but I didn't realise that it was on this scale. And these statistics aren't even including the countries like Russia where gay men are being rounded up and sent out into concentration camps or

being sent home to be killed by their families in the name of 'reputation'. I did this conference because I wanted other people to understand that the fight is far from over. That too many people have suffered because of ignorance. That we still have work to do.

See Appendix 2 for the booklet we produced from the conference

Education for Life: The main thing that the education for life group has achieved in the last year has been our PSHE Conference, held here in city hall on October. For those that do not know, PSHE stands for Personal, Social, Health Education and involves most of the non-academic topics such as sex and relationships education, drugs awareness and mental health education. The conference was a really good event where we had students and teachers doing different activities. The students did workshops on PSHE in their school, planning an ideal PSHE lesson and on their mental health tips, with the last one being run by Freedom of Mind. In the afternoon they debated on the questions of whether PSHE should be made compulsory and what the most important topic was in PSHE, right here in the council chamber. The teachers had talks from Cllr Anna Keen, OFSTED and Julie Coulthard, lead for PSHE in the city council. The day was really productive and a report from the day is available via email or hard copy if you come and find us at the end.

Chair's Summary:

Thank you for hearing all about our work and your continued support for the Youth Council. We are always incredibly grateful to have councilors at our meetings, offering their support and also passing on many of the concerns of the youth onto full council. We have been incredibly proud to represent Bristol's young people for the last 2 years, and we have worked incredibly hard on collecting the youth's opinions and passing them onto the council, and we have seen the policies, for example the children's charter, which have been influenced by the young people's opinions and then put into practice. We have seen the whole process and it always makes me incredibly proud to see our work making a real difference, so I would like to thank the council for their support in putting all of this into action. We have also done much more than just our campaign work and a few highlights are things such as being a part of the sugar smart consultation, hosting another youth council from Southwick in Sunderland, and having members help with the selection for the Bristol Young Heroes. We have also directly worked with councilors and council officers on consultations such as housing in Hengrove and Lockleaze, the local offer for young people with disabilities, and the once city plan. Hopefully, the next youth council will have the same success as us, and enjoy being part of the council as much as we have. I would finally like to invite any councilors who wish to attend our results evening on the 8th of February, I am sure all candidates and newly elected members will appreciate your support. So to finalise, thank you for all the support you have given us across the last 2 years, and do continue to offer your support for the next youth council, it is really appreciated.