

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CUMNOCK AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE - 25 MARCH 2004

ANNUAL YOUTH CONFERENCE 2003

Report by the Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the Cumnock Area Local Committee of the outcomes of East Ayrshire's 7th Annual Youth Conference held in Kilmarnock College in April 2003 and of the resulting developments which have influenced the coordination of the 2004 Conference.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A Youth Conference has been held every year in East Ayrshire Council, attracting young people from across the whole Council area. The Conference is planned by a group of young people recruited from local youth forums and other citizenship initiatives and is supported by Community Learning and Development staff.
- 2.2 The format of the Conference offers participants the chance to take part in workshops which address issues or themes which are identified as current and important by the planning group of staff and young people.
- 2.3 Last year's conference was called 'Active8'.
- 2.4 The Conference targets young people aged 14 years and over, and transport is provided to enable young people from all communities to participate.

3. REPORT

3.1 Recruitment

Young people are contacted throughout the year through the various active citizenship initiatives including youth forums, student councils and ongoing work with the Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament. From this contact all young people who indicate an interest are invited to take part.

Leaflets are also distributed to youth groups, youth workers and voluntary youth organisations.

3.2 Registration

In 2003, one hundred and one young people registered for the event and 59 young people attended on the day. Previous experience suggests that this

was a good response particularly as it was the Easter holidays and the weather was very good.

3.3 Programme

In 2003, there were 8 workshops divided into 4 themes and the participants chose 3 workshop sessions. Young people chose from themes called Life, Learning, Power and Fun.

The programme was challenging for the young people, however the evaluation completed by the participants was very positive. Young people had the chance to evaluate each session and have all of their comments recorded.

A new development in last year's conference was to conclude the day with a West Sound Roadshow.

3.4 Partners

While the co-ordination of the Conference is the responsibility of Community Learning and Development staff, partners have given support and assistance during the planning as well as attendance on the day. Partners included Kilmarnock College, Strathclyde Police, Borderline Theatre West FM, yipworld.com and Blue Triangle. The initiative was part funded with European funding.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Youth Forum groups are affiliated to the National initiative called 'Connect Youth' who have further assisted the co-ordination and training of young people to develop their skills in the democratic process.

4.2 Evaluations have indicated that young people felt that the Conference had been a great success and many were pleased to commit themselves to further developments in their own communities and within the Council wide context.

4.3 Again evaluations have helped shaped the good practice exemplified in each Youth Conference and as a result of the expressions from young people it was decided to continue with the conference title 'Activ8' for 2004.

This year's conference will take place in Kilmarnock College on Wednesday 7 April 2004, from midday until 5.00 pm. The theme of ENTERPRISE has been adopted and will be reflected throughout the day with enterprising activities in which young people in East Ayrshire organisations are currently involved.

4.4 There will also be a series of workshops, time dedicated to displays and stall visits.

During the conference young people will be given the opportunity of joining and participating in their local and council wide youth forum as well as a wide range of other youth activities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All costs are met from existing departmental resources with additional aspects being supported by European funding.

6. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS – Nil

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members of the Local Committee:

- i) Welcome the success of the Youth Conference;
- ii) Note the developments for this year's conference;
- iii) Otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational & Social Services
3 March 2004.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Community Support, Tel: (01563) 576104 or Anne Jackson, Principal Officer, Communities Tel: (01563) 576126.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR