

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 27 MAY 2003

ANNUAL YOUTH CONFERENCE 2003

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to inform Members of the Education Committee of the outcomes of the 7th Annual Youth Conference held in Kilmarnock College on Wednesday 16 April 2003 and to advise the Committee of ongoing developments resulting from the 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** This 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

- 3.1.1** Young people had been 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 had indicated an interest were invited them to take part.
- 3.1.2** Leaflets were also distributed to youth groups, youth workers and voluntary youth organisations.

3.2 Registration

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

3.3.1 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 is very positive.

3.3.2 Young people had the chance to evaluate each session and have all of their comments recorded.

3.3.3 A new development in this year's conference was the conclusion of 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' which will further assist 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 The planning group were satisfied by the attendance on the day. It was lower than anticipated however and while this, in part can be explained by the excellent weather on the day of the conference and that young people are on Easter holidays, follow up work is being progressed by staff to investigate any other possible reasons.

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 Education Committee:

- i) Welcome the success of the Youth Conference;
- ii) Invite the Director of Educational and Social Services to advise Local Committees of the conference outcomes; and
- iii) Otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services
9 May 2003

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