

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

NORTHERN AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE: 21 MARCH 2001

DRAFT CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON'S CHARTER OF RIGHTS

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise local committee members of the history and development of East Ayrshire Council's draft Child and Young Person's Charter of Rights. Members views are sought, as an essential part of the community consultation process.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 'Our Children', East Ayrshire Council's first corporate children's services plan, introduced a draft Child and Young Person's Charter in 1998, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Public consultation, particularly involving young people, was promised.

A National Children's Homes Action for Children (Scotland) research worker, engaged in consultation with the parents of children attending nurseries and family centres. Schools and school boards were also contacted for consultation feedback. A significant number of young people have been actively involved in the development of the Charter:

- 595 young people aged 12 – 25 – (mostly teenagers) – responded to East Ayrshire Council's postal consultation exercise, 'Use Your Voice: Take Part', which included a section on the draft Charter;
- The recommendations of East Ayrshire Council's 1999 Youth Conference, which focused on active citizenship, were incorporated into the Charter;
- A local authority service users group of young people was initiated, to translate the Charter into more appropriate language;
- Representatives of the service users group presented the amended Charter at the Youth Conference held in 2000. The information leaflet and poster, which now comprise the Charter, were outcomes of the workshop activities at this Conference;
- 2 of East Ayrshire's 3 Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament made a further contribution to the Charter's evolution.

- 2.2 The Child and Young Person's Charter (see Appendix) has largely been developed by East Ayrshire's young people for East Ayrshire's young people. This constructive partnership between youth and the council, is in itself a productive example of active citizenship.

3.0 PROJECTED BENEFITS OF THE CHARTER

- 3.1 It is anticipated that the Charter will enhance the work of schools and community education in promoting active citizenship among children and young people.
- 3.2 It will also facilitate the implementation of the 'Inspiring Young People' section of the Council Plan 1999 – 2002.
- 3.3 Active citizenship involves:
- Being informed and having an awareness of individual and personal rights;
 - Respecting the rights of others;
 - Perceiving oneself as a stakeholder in the community;
 - Becoming empowered to make a positive contribution to your community.
- 3.4 The task of meaningfully addressing these aims will be undertaken at the forthcoming Youth Conference on 11th April 2001, with the main conference topic being Social Justice.

4.0 FINAL STAGE OF CONSULTATION

- 4.1 A Panel was held on 20th October 2000, involving the Head of Schools, Principal Officer, Children and Families and Young Person's Worker – (supervised by Who Cares? Scotland) – Educational and Social Services, a Solicitor from Legal Services, a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament, Chair of East Ayrshire's Children's Panel and Manager, Princess Royal Trust, Carers Centre, Kilmarnock to plan the final progression of the Charter. It's targeted publication date is June 2001, when it is envisaged that the Charter will be published as a complimentary production, to the authority's second children's services plan 2001-2004, which is currently in completion.
- 4.2 The draft Charter is in it's final stage of public consultation, with the consultation period ending on Monday 23rd April 2001. This entails:
- Exploration of the Charter by East Ayrshire's Childcare Partnership. The Partnership has parental, community and independent sector representation;
 - Seeking consultation responses from key statutory agencies, such as health, the police, and reporter's administration;
 - Requesting the views of local committee members.

5.0 POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The committee is requested to:

- i) provide consultation comments, suggestions and recommendations concerning the proposed Charter of Child and Young Person's Rights; and
- ii) otherwise note the contents of this report

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services
21 February 2001.
JDB

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. East Ayrshire Council Plan 1999 – 2002.
2. 'Our Children', East Ayrshire Council's, Children's Services Plan 1998 – 2001.
3. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.

Members wishing further information should contact John D Butler, Service Officer, Quality and Planning, Educational and Social Services, Civic Centre South, John Dickie Street, Kilmarnock KA1 1BY.
Tel: (01563) 554891

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: JOHN D BUTLER

AGENDA