



Bristol City Youth Council Manifesto Campaigns 2017 – 2019



Introduction from Bristol City Youth Council Chair Hannah Gardner

February 2017 marked a huge democratic achievement for young people in Bristol: a record number of 12,534 young people voted in the Bristol Youth Vote to elect 28 members onto their Youth Council. This shows the willing of our city's young people to engage in political life and make their voices heard on the issues they feel are most important. The Youth Council consists of 28 elected representatives and 5 co-optees from equalities groups and forums, who will work together over the next two years to promote and campaign around the issues facing young people in our city.

This manifesto document is our first step on that journey. In it, we outline our key priorities for our up-and-coming term in office, presenting everything we wish to achieve in the next two years. This term, our priorities fell into four main categories:

- **Young and Equal**
- **Education for Life**
- **Youth Voice**
- **What Next? – ages 15 to 18**

In this manifesto document, we also outline the priorities of our four United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP) representatives, and our two Youth Mayors. One of our first actions as a Council was to elect these six positions of responsibility, and they provide important links to other youth councils across the country, as well as to key political figures. Their campaigns are separate to those of Bristol City Youth Council but are all supported by and championed by the Youth Council.

This manifesto is the result of much careful work on behalf of the Bristol City Youth Council, and is an accurate reflection of the issues that young people aged 11 to 18 across Bristol feel need to be focused on. Hopefully, with the cooperation of other organisations and decision-makers, we can make the changes promised in this document, and make Bristol a better place for young people.

**Hannah Gardner
Chairperson
Bristol City Youth Council 2017**

About This Manifesto

Over the next two years, the Bristol City Youth Council will work hard to achieve change in a number of areas that affect young people across the city. As we do this we will seek to further embed young people at the heart of democracy in Bristol. This city can be proud of how far it has come regarding young people's involvement, but it still needs to continue to push forward to become a standard bearer for the rest of the United Kingdom and Europe.

The priorities featured in this manifesto originated from a number of different sources:

- Campaigns that members of the Bristol City Youth Council stood for
- Mayoral priorities
- UK Youth Parliament priorities
- Equality Forum priorities

As well as focusing on the campaigns Bristol City Youth Council has also committed to supporting **Equality Youth Forums** in the city. Although the equality forums will lead these campaigns, Bristol City Youth Council will also champion these priorities on their behalf:

Listening Partnership	Pathways for disabled young people to meaningful employment
Children in Care Council	Support for young people in care around body image
Unity BME Youth Forum	Breaking down the barriers for BME young people to succeed in Bristol
Freedom Youth and Equal Youth Forum	Specific services for LGBT+ young people
Young Carers Voice	To be confirmed

Bristol City Youth Council Priorities

Young and Equal

The aim of this campaign is to challenge discrimination to all groups. We would like to create a city free of discrimination and create a pledge to all children and young people living in the city that discrimination will not be tolerated regardless of your identity.

Campaign targets:

- We will work to develop the **Young Equality Champions** to help train young people that are confident about speaking up for equalities in their schools and communities.
- We will team up with equalities forums to create a network with a view to run an equalities youth conference in 2018.

- We will create a pledge and a charter standard that young people can sign up to and show their support for equalities.
- We would like to produce a video to promote equalities that could be shown in all schools.
- We would like to produce a survey that helps understand what the experiences are of Bristol children and young people.
- We want to advertise ourselves on social media and this may include a blog and hashtag.

What Next for 15 to 18 Year Olds

The aim of this campaign is to change how work experience is made available to young people in Bristol, by getting more companies involved in the process.

Campaign targets:

- We want to create more work experience opportunities as well as making existing opportunities fairer to every young person in the city.
- We would like to create a platform for education establishments and individual companies to communicate and work together, or promote any current existing platforms that are operating already. As an example, the 'Bristol Learning Works' website is a platform that is currently operational and we will hopefully be working closely with them in the future.
- Following on from this, we want to support young people after they have completed their work experience with future opportunities to help further develop their futures with expanding out in to the workplace.
- We would also like to work with the Listening Partnership Disability Forum so disabled young people can secure more work experience that is valuable and will benefit them in the future.
- Finally, once we are satisfied with the level of improvement we would like to advance the amount of help and advice given to students about the possibilities that can arise in their future through careers advice.

Education for Life

This campaign is based around the belief that the current PSHE curriculum needs to be updated to suit the requirements of the current generation of young people in education. We want a comprehensive syllabus that acknowledges changing attitudes and topics that we feel are not being adequately covered. We want all young people to feel like their education does not leave any unanswered questions and prepares and supports them for their life.

Campaign targets:

- Resource Packs: We want all teachers to be fully equipped with lesson materials and discussion points to effectively deliver lessons that are engaging yet informative.
- Teacher Training: We will liaise with professionals that provide training for PSHE teachers to ensure that they are all fully aware of what we, as young

people, want from the curriculum and that teachers are enthused and informed to be able to teach us.

- Create Centre: The Create Centre was an opportunity that made a lasting positive impact when we were younger. We believe that if appropriate sessions were provided for KS4 students, about topics that are prevalent in their lives, it could deliver an informative and engaging experience that could enhance our lives and develop our skills.
- We will work in tandem with the UK Youth Parliament representatives on their Curriculum for Life Campaign.

Youth Voice

Over 12,500 young people took part in this year's Bristol Youth Vote, representing a 40% turnout of 11-18 year olds living in Bristol. This shows a willingness to engage politically and we want to ensure that Bristol City Youth Council continues to be seen as a point of contact for Bristol's young people.

Campaign targets:

- We would like to work with Rife to release a BCYC broadcast, promoting what we do and explaining the campaigns of the youth council.
- In October 2017, we will be running a youth conference during National Democracy Week to discuss political engagement and the issues facing our city's young people.
- We would like to reach out to youth groups, explaining the work of the youth council and making sure we are approachable and represent their views and ideas.

UK Youth Parliament

The Bristol Members of Youth Parliament Matt Simpson and Fintan Yeatman as well as Deputies Alistair Wall and Hannah Fritsch were elected after the Youth Council elections in February. We are part of the 276 member UK Youth Parliament. Bristol City Youth Council is a member of the British Youth Council.

UK Youth Parliament campaigns are:

1. Curriculum for Life

We believe that every young person deserves to be equipped with the knowledge to make positive choices for themselves, and are ready for adult life. We deem these topics paramount and need to be covered on the PSHE curriculum.

- Politics
- Personal finance
- Sex and relationships
- Drugs

- Mental health
- First aid
- Essential I.T skills (e.g. spreadsheets, touch typing)
- Challenging discrimination

In Bristol we will;

- Work with schools, colleges and youth centres to ensure that the young people of Bristol have access to impartial information and advice surrounding these issues.
- Work with the Bristol City Council to ensure that young people are consulted when decisions are made about guidelines for PSHE lesson content.
- Aim to ensure that **every** secondary school in Bristol is committed to teaching a Curriculum for Life by the end of our term.
- Champion Curriculum for Life becoming compulsory on a national scale.

2. Votes at 16

We feel that 16 year olds should be empowered to shape their future. Therefore, they should have the opportunity to vote in all elections and referenda, as these will have a huge impact on their lives.

In Bristol we will;

- Lobby the Mayor, local MPs to support the Votes at 16 campaign and champion the Votes at 16 messages in all areas of the youth council.
- Push political education within the Curriculum for Life so young people can make an informed vote.

Bristol Youth Mayors

The Bristol Youth Mayors Jack Payne and Eve Szczelkun were elected also elected in February 2107. They have created a different manifesto to improve the lives of young people through education.

As well as championing the Youth Council's manifesto, the Youth Mayors have decided to campaign on removing the stigma surrounding mental health including a focus on male mental health. Mental health is a topic both Youth Mayors feel passionate about. Mental health affects everybody as everyone is searching for mental wellbeing. For males, cultural pressures have created a stigmatised image of a 21st century man, suicide is the biggest killer of men 18-40 years old, this statistic is one of the reasons why the Youth Mayors want to help challenge these stereotypes. Another priority is political education, so that we can have a better, kinder democracy with an emphasis on increasing the number of young people registered to vote for the upcoming local elections in 2020 and general election in 2022. The Youth Mayors would like to see more young people engaged in politics by supporting votes at 16 and encouraging 16 year olds and over to register to vote.

Campaign targets:

- Work with the Mayor, cabinet and councillors to create a campaign, to raise awareness and to increase the number of young people voting in elections. One suggestion for this is to create a social media campaign to raise awareness of registering to vote at 16 so they are ready to vote in the upcoming 2020 and 2022 elections.
- Another way to increase youth voice and engagement in politics could be to run a debate/discussion at the Youth Conference in October 2017 about votes at 16 and use the conference as a platform for political engagement and encouraging young people involved to register
- Take part in panel discussions, and encouraging more young people to get involved with open conversations about mental health.
- Run a conversation at The Freedom of Mind Festival about the topic of male mental health.
- Work with organisations such as Off the Record, to encourage more support systems for men and ways they can express their feelings.

Emerging Priorities

Bristol City Youth Council will respond to emerging issues over their term in office, as they occur. Issues may emerge if decision makers from the Bristol City Council, other organisations or Bristol young people wish to consult with us, or raise any concerns.

Conclusion from the Bristol City Youth Council Chair

Now that you are familiar with the priorities of the Bristol City Youth Council, we hope that you can support us in our endeavour to achieve these aims. If you feel you can support us in any way, or want to get involved in our campaigns, please contact us. Any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the manifesto or the Youth Council as a body, can be directed to the contacts below.

I thank you for reading our manifesto, and hope that it has proved the determination of Bristol's young people to have their voices heard and to change our city for the better.

Hannah Gardner
Chairperson
Bristol City Youth Council 2017

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