

Brief for the 2016 Youth Select Committee on Racism and Religious discrimination.

1. Project Overview / Terms of Reference

Following the success of the first Youth Select Committee Inquiry which focused on Transport and Young People in 2012, and then on the Curriculum for Life in 2013, Votes at 16 in 2014 and Mental Health Services in 2015, the British Youth Council, with support from Parliament, is announcing the setting up of a **new Youth Select Committee on Racism and Religious Discrimination**.

It will be developed to mirror the UK Parliament Select Committee structure, allowing young people to scrutinise and hold inquires in to topics of interest to young people. The Youth Select Committee will comprise of a maximum of 11 young people (aged 18 years and under) and will be based on the following model:

- 1 Member of Scottish Youth Parliament
- 1 Member from a Youth Organisation in Wales
- 1 Member from Northern Ireland Youth Forum
- 2 Members of UK Youth Parliament
- 3 Members of Youth Councils
- 1 representative from the Young Mayor's Network
- 2 additional seats reserved for key groups of young people

- The Chair and the Vice Chair will be elected during the training/induction event.

The British Youth Council will recruit the young people on to the Select Committee and arrange their induction and training. The Select Committee will be supported with research and the calling of witnesses throughout the period of the 2016 inquiry. A final report will be produced and launched.

This year's inquiry will focus on Racism and Religious Discrimination, as voted as the national campaign by the UK Youth Parliament in the House of Commons in November 2015.

2. Youth Select Committee - Timeline for 2016

- **22nd March:** Formal announcement/launch/invitation to young people in the United Kingdom to declare interest in becoming a member of the Select Committee; information shared across the country about what will be involved and how to apply.
- **5th April:** Closing date for applications. Potential telephone interviews and committee members appointed on 12th April.

- **Monday 25th April:** Induction and Training event in the Houses of Parliament London (arrive in London late afternoon/early evening on Sunday 24th and finish on Monday by 5.00pm).
- Press release to follow, announcing committee membership, the areas on which the inquiry will focus and the formal **call for evidence** - identify potential witnesses.
- **April – June** : Research/collation of evidence, Invitations sent out to witnesses.
- **Friday 8th July** : Oral Evidence Day One in Westminster
Arrive in London late afternoon/early evening **on Thursday 7th for preparation.**
- **Friday 15th July:** Oral Evidence Day Two in Westminster, arrive on **Thursday 14th** as above.
- **July - September:** Production of the final report and recommendations.
- Press Release announcing the key findings of the inquiry.
- **October / November** : Publication of the final report and circulation in time for the UK Youth Parliament sitting in the HOC Chamber in November 2016.
- **November** : Launch 'Event' in Westminster (tbc).
- **January 2017** : Formal Ministerial Response to the inquiry in the House of Commons to follow.

3. Recruitment of a maximum of 11 young people

Criteria to be members of the Select Committee:-

- Aged 18 and under.
- Must be available, and commit to, all of the dates listed.
- Can travel independently by train (unless under 16 and can be supported).
- Already engaged in campaigning on racism and / or religious discrimination locally and / or an awareness of the issue and can demonstrate the ability to research and to scrutinise and / or are or have been affected by or have first - hand experience of racism and / or religious discrimination.
- Confident communicator and can demonstrate that they can challenge effectively.
- 2 additional seats reserved (includes location, gender, disability).

Once the Select Committee is announced, together with the project timeline, the British Youth Council will publish and make the relevant application details known to all the BYC youth networks.

There will be an aspirational commitment to recruit young people from different geographical areas and cultural backgrounds so long as they meet the criteria.

4. Training/Induction & support for the young people to establish line of inquiry

Attend a one and a half day residential induction/training event in London on April 24th and 25th 2016, facilitated by BYC with support from Parliament to include a focus on the work of a Clerk and how Select Committees work.

London has been chosen in order to incorporate a visit at least one committee room in Westminster that is currently used for Parliamentary Select Committees when taking oral evidence from witnesses. Official photographs will be taken and there will be opportunity for the Youth Select Committee to meet with their core support team from both the British Youth Council and Parliament.

5. Research/Evidence gathering

Key physical and online resources to be made available to help with research, including Hansard Reports of previous Youth Select Committee inquiries, and seeking professional advice on how to access (and use) successful methods of gathering evidence to support an inquiry.

Professional support from the current Select Committee Clerks and the Parliamentary Public Engagement and Learning Service will advise and support the Youth Select Committee members and help them focus on specific issues to research.

6. Identify potential witnesses

These will be suggested by the Youth Select Committee members with ongoing support from BYC and Parliament and supplemented by further suggestions from other young people, once the Youth Select Committee has launched their inquiry and sent out the first call for evidence.

7. Call witnesses to answer questions and for the committee to hear oral evidence

Two one-day events will be scheduled on Fridays (8th July & 15th July 2016), using the same committee rooms as used by Parliamentary Select Committees in Westminster. Both days may be televised live and available online and proceedings will be recorded in the usual way by Hansard.

Witnesses will be a mix of young people and adults, including Senior Government Ministers. This process will be supported by the Parliamentary Public Engagement and Learning Service and other key departments/officials/party whips that will help to endorse the invitation to witnesses in order that senior decision makers are made aware of the inquiry focus for the 2016 Youth Select Committee.

8. Write report and make recommendations

The Clerk will lead, in common with reports from Parliamentary Select Committee reports, with the Youth Select Committee deciding the steer and focus. The Chair is supported by BYC to actively engage in the drafting process and the Youth Select Committee has the final editorial overview on the wording of recommendations and conclusions.

9. Publish the Youth Select Committee's Report and recommendations

Final Report published October / November 2016.

BYC and Parliament issue a joint Press Release, involving members of the Youth Select Committee and endorsement of their work by senior politicians and key stakeholders.

Launch event in Westminster (details to be announced) planned and delivered by the British Youth Council.