



## Case study

# accountability

**Sandwell** | How is the YVV accountable?

### What?

During the biennial Youth Cabinet & UK Youth Parliament elections, Sandwell Shadow Youth Cabinet undertook a comprehensive consultation on the issues affecting young people. At the last election in March 2012, we had just over 4,000 young people voting, of which more than 3,000 completed the youth issues consultation on the back of the ballot papers.

### Why?

This consultation helps the Youth Cabinet to prioritise the issues that young people in Sandwell have highlighted and gives them a clear mandate for their manifesto and the issues that they campaign on during their term of office.

### Summary:

**The YVV regularly consults with young people on priorities and significant issues**

**The YVV regularly liaises with other youth forums (e.g. district forums, special interest groups)**

**The YVV has a clear Communications Strategy which includes:**

- regular publication of priorities and achievements
- web-site regularly updated with interactive consultation opportunities
- creative and appropriate use of new social media to promote the activities of the YVV
- mailing list of supporters/member organisations who are regularly asked for their views
- engaging with schools, colleges and academies
- annual report on activities
- agreed protocols for media engagement by YVV
- targets for positive media mentions for YVV activities

## Impact:

The issues that have been prioritised for 2012-14 are Youth Unemployment, Issues with Gangs and Guns and Discrimination, Hate Crime & Bullying. Members of the Youth Cabinet regularly meet with respective Youth Councils in the towns that they represent, as well as engaging with specific groups or special interest forums, e.g. Looked After Children on relevant issues.

Collectively the various fora come together as the Sandwell Youth Parliament for updates on issues, campaigns, consultation, debates and question time style events with decision makers, at least biannually. In addition, further opportunities for young people to engage in decision making include shadowing the Council's cabinet, Youth Takeover Day and engagement with other decision makers including Directors, Commissioners and organisations through representation on Boards, panels and at meetings.

The Youth Cabinet has a robust Communications Strategy that makes use of various mechanisms to feedback and consult with young people including our Positive Activities website [www.justyouth.org.uk](http://www.justyouth.org.uk), through our facebook page [www.facebook.com/Sandwellyouth](http://www.facebook.com/Sandwellyouth), through the local media and Sandwell Council's press office.

The Chair of the Youth Cabinet also does a regular article in the Council's free newspaper, the Sandwell Herald. Members also engage regularly with school councils and schools to support with elections, consultation and to get involved in events and activities organised by the Youth Cabinet. At the end of their term the Youth Cabinet present a report to their electorate detailing their achievements and successes during their term.