

## Giving young people a voice!

Involving young people in CBC's decision-making has become much more of a reality, thanks to the publication of an innovative Youth Audit.

Including the views of young people in designing youth services is imperative and, in 2013, the council recruited, trained and supported a group of young people, drawn from schools, colleges and youth groups from across the county, to undertake the audit of CBC's 'Youth Offer' – the first of its kind in the country.



CBC's young auditors

With help from CBC's youth workers and the British Youth Council, the young auditors met with service providers - and the partners who contribute to the youth offer - including the council's Leader and Director of Children's Services; and, of course, young people themselves.

CBC's local youth offer has been developed in line with government expectations, covering areas like informal education and volunteering, and careers guidance on education, employment and training. Support is targeted at those young people who need more support, such as looked after children; and provides specialist services relating to drug and alcohol misuse, sexual health and homelessness.

Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships, Engagement and Youth Services explained: **“The feedback from the audit was very constructive and revealed a high level of satisfaction with CBC's Youth Offer. However, it also revealed that young people felt that the wide range of opportunities was not being publicised well enough. Their solution is to create a dedicated, young people friendly website.”**

Other key findings from the audit were: the need for CBC to do more work around creating minimum standards for careers guidance in schools; and better sexual health and relationships education to prevent the need for services when it's too late

Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services concluded: **“The next steps include meeting again with the young auditors to review progress and discuss future audits. But the strength of this work is undoubtedly the fact that it's led by the young people themselves, allowing them to determine the direction of future services and hold CBC and its partners to account on the issues that really matter to them.”**