

North Yorkshire Council
Selby and Ainsty Area Committee

19 March 2026

Youth Councils Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the Committee with an update on the development and work of Youth Councils within the Selby and Ainsty area.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members of the Committee have sought clarification on whether any youth councils operate within the Selby and Ainsty area and, if so, the matters they have been addressing.
- 2.2 Attached at Appendix A is a short presentation produced by one of the individuals working alongside Council officers to establish a Youth Council in the Selby area.
- 2.3 An officer will provide a verbal update at the meeting on progress in establishing a Youth Council in the area and on potential opportunities for engagement with the Area Committee.

3.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 As the item is for information only, the Committee is recommended to note the report and the verbal update.
- 3.2 Members may also wish to consider adding a standing item to the work programme to receive periodic updates on Youth Council activity.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report is for information only and therefore no financial, legal, equalities or climate change implications arising from its content.

5.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The report and accompanying verbal update are provided for information. It is therefore recommended that the Committee notes the update.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- i) That the Committee notes the content of the report and the verbal update.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Presentation produced by one of the individuals working with Council officers to establish a Youth Council in the Selby area.

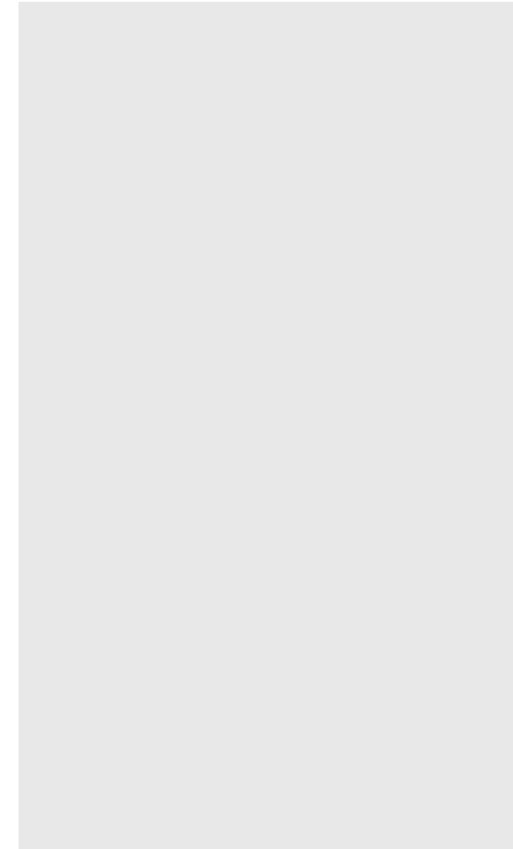
Report Author – Megan Reynolds, Youth Voice Creative Engagement Officer and David Smith, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Presenter of Report – Megan Reynolds, Youth Voice Creative Engagement Officer.

Selby Youth Council

My name is Grace Yoxall. I'm a year 11 student at The Snaith School and I believe it's important for more young people to have the opportunity to get involved in politics in North Yorkshire and across the nation.

I'm actively working with Megan Reynolds in creating a Youth Council in Selby area. I live in quite a rural area surrounded by small villages making it difficult for young people to get involved with large groups and councils that make an impact. Having a Youth Council in Selby will help build a stronger community and give people a chance for their voice to not just be heard but be listened to.



Politics in Secondary School

72% of parents, 84% of teachers, 72% of students want politics to be more intertwined in their school education.





For years politics is not something you're taught in school, rather something you're expected to just pick up when you turn 18 and know exactly who to vote for and what party to support. With the voting age going down to 16, students that are still doing their GCSE'S are able to vote and contribute to the direction of government in this country.

Nowadays, people who don't have a particular interest in politics usually get their opinions and beliefs from either their parents or social media. If the young people can be given the ability to vote, I believe we should also be given access to trustworthy information and a genuine education on the matter.

The gap in political education for teenagers in secondary school

The statistics



Young people and children want to learn more about elections and politics in school, according to new research by the Electoral Commission. The research, carried out with people aged 11 to 25, found that 72% of those surveyed wanted to be taught more about the subject.



Young people said they considered schools and colleges to be more trusted environments for learning about politics than TV and social media, but only a third of 11 – 17 year olds had heard about politics at school in the last year.



A poll of 50,000 students under 18 years old before the 2024 general election found 70 per cent did not know the name of their MP. And 59 per cent didn't know which party said MP belonged to.



A teacher survey found 84 per cent of state school teachers did not believe the national curriculum did enough to prepare students for voting in elections.



Shout Out UK recently conducted a survey, looking at the general public's view of political education, and found that 97% believe politics should be taught as part of the compulsory school curriculum.

References ★

- Vote at 16: Are schools prepared to teach pupils politics?
- Changes to the curriculum opportunity to transform democratic education in schools | Electoral Commission
- Just 1% of teachers in England feel prepared to teach politics while 72% of parents agree it's important for children to be politically literate

Politics is an essential part of our everyday lives. From choosing your outfit in the morning, to the journey you take home on an evening and everything in between. It has been viewed as a topic elderly people discuss alongside a chat about the weather, and as a toxic environment with opinionated individuals and heated debates. This is not how it should be viewed, and I believe that teaching it to students earlier on will put it in a better light and allow people to have a better understanding of it before being thrown into the deep end with a pen and a ballot.

The world is moving and we need to keep up. It's time to change the curriculum for the better and ensure education is focusing on ways in which will actively benefit our future.

