

## **RESPONSE FROM BANBRIDGE COUNCIL**

### **Northern Ireland Network for Youth**

Thank you for your invitation to comment on the proposals to establish the Northern Ireland Network for Youth.

The Council would make the following comments on the questions you raise:-

#### **Q. What is your vision of a NINFY?**

**R.** One that is inclusive, in particular reaching those young people who feel marginalised and excluded from mainstream society, including young people with disabilities, those from black and minority ethnic communities and young people with mental health issues who experience isolation.

NINFY needs to be a network that delivers what it says is going to deliver, as young people become disenfranchised very quickly! One assumes that the NINFY will take into account the vision and aspirations as outlined in the ten year “Children’s Strategy for NI”?

The network should be open, accountable and any information should be made freely accessible in a child friendly manner, keeping abreast of new technologies.

Really the best people to answer this question and many of the others posed are the young people themselves. In the end the network needs to have some sort of clout for young people to engage.

#### **Q. What sort of values and principles should NINFY adopt?**

**R.** They should be reflective of those as outlined in the NI Children’s Strategy.

#### **Q. What functions should they have?**

**R.** This would really be dependant upon what powers the Network would be given. Resources would also be a major factor in deciding what functions should be covered. The network should dovetail with existing structures and bodies.

#### **Q. How would NINFY link with existing participative structures for children and young people?**

**R.** There are so many of these, it is difficult to know, perhaps the use of new technologies via email etc Visit models of best practice and make these widely known. Local government has been keen to establish Youth Councils.

#### **Q. Are there any existing models in the UK or internationally that would be relevant to this initiative?**

**R.** Perhaps you could research the “Child Friendly Cities Initiatives” to see what has been achieved.

#### **Q. What are the barriers that would stop NINFY from being effective?**

**R.** This is difficult to answer not knowing what resources and powers will be at NINFY’s disposal. Certainly stretching beyond its capacity in terms of resources (both human and financial) would be detrimental to the initiative.

I trust you will take our comments on board.