



Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Councillor George Burlison

Councillor George Burlison is the local County Councillor for the area of Framwellgate Moor, Bearpark, and Witton Gilbert. Councillor Burlison campaigns and works with, and on behalf, of children and young people in his constituency. He is committed to promoting a positive view of children and young people. He is also an elected chair of Durham County Council's 'Corporate Parenting Panel'. This evaluation for Investing In Children membership will highlight how Councillor Burlison works to achieve this within his role of an elected County Councillor.

Youth Forum

Councillor Burlison is very committed to engaging with and listening to children and young people within his constituency. Councillor Burlison wanted to create some opportunities for young people to work with him on decision-making within his constituency.

In partnership with Durham County Council's 'Community Development Team' and local comprehensive schools he decided to try and achieve this by developing a Youth Forum. The Youth Forum is made up of representatives from Fyndoune, Durham City Business College and Framwellgate Moor Comprehensive school pupils.

The young people have been meeting with Councillor Burlison to develop their own agenda on issues that are important to them. Some of the issues that are important to the Youth Forum are:

- Improving parks and play areas.
- Improving road safety.
- More youth activities.
- Cleaning up litter.

Regular meetings have taken place with different representatives from Durham County Council. These representatives have met with the Youth Forum and Councillor Burlison to discuss the issues. Councillor Burlison also tries to campaign on the issues that have been identified by the young people and then reports back to them.

DERIC BUS.

Councillor Burlison has met with young people in Bearpark to try and find out what activities they want in their local area and has then linked in with the local community centre to try and increase more provision and activities. Continuing the DERIC bus was one such issue.

County Hall Visit.

A visit was arranged for the local primary school children to visit County Hall, and meet with Councillor Burlison to chat about how decision-making works, and to find out what things are important to these children in the areas they live in.

Multi Agency 'Looked After Partnership' - MALAP.

Councillor Burlison has been meeting with some young people who are part of a MALAP young people's group. Councillor Burlison has listened to what some of the issues are for these young people, and what their ideas are to improve some aspects of Children and Young People's services in County Durham. He has achieved this by creating opportunities for young people to direct their ideas through the 'Corporate Parenting Panel' and 'Corporate Scrutiny Sub Committee'.

Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Burlison continues to support children and young people's issues as an active member of this committee.

Young People's Views.

I met with some members of the Youth Forum who told me about what they have been trying to do and what they thought about Councillor Burlison. Colleen told me, "**I have been meeting with Councillor Burlison and think he is alright**". She went on to explain, "**We have got some extra youth nights in Bearpark and have got more bins in Framwellgate Moor**".

Melissa added, "**Councillor George is good because he realises the importance of young people's views. He listens to us and tries to take action, even if this takes a while**".

Based on what some of the young people said, it is clear that Councillor Burlison is doing some positive work in this community. He has made some very constructive steps in making young people aware of what his role is as a County Councillor and has started to create a process whereby some young people are working in partnership with him on some aspects of decision-making. It is very encouraging that Councillor Burlison is committed to engaging with children and young people and that he has developed a youth forum. I am sure further developments will be made.

I would like to recommend that Councillor George Burlison receives Investing in Children Membership for the work he does in his local area on behalf of the children and young people he represents and look forward to further developments he makes over the next year.

The following young people have read and agreed with the report, they are Colleen and Melissa

Rob Johnson
Investing in Children
April 2008

