



Youth Scrutiny Review

2018

Richmond Card – Youth Offer



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BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

Kingston and Richmond Youth Council is a group of 30 democratically elected young people from each of the three clusters across Kingston and Richmond Boroughs

Council members have been elected by 13,000 young people from Schools, colleges and youth clubs across Kingston and Richmond to proactively represent their views to people who make key decisions about young people in both Boroughs.

In 2018, Richmond Council Democratic Services and Achieving for Children (AfC) supported the development of the Youth Scrutiny Panel – the third one carried out by the Richmond Council - Achieving for Children partnership. Following a debate among youth scrutiny members it was noted that we had a brilliant service - the youth Richmond card - and it was not being fully utilised. Following further discussion and with more facts, it was agreed that the improvement of the Richmond Card Youth Offer should be the focus of the Panel's scrutiny project. Over six meetings, the first one on 19th of September, the Panel gathered evidence, drafted recommendations and agreed the report.

After an introductory information session with Tom Price, Customer Services Improvement Manager, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils, the method of research was interviews with professionals that had ties with the card and information about best practice from Bracknell Forest Council and Cambridgeshire City Council. The interviewees were: Cheney Gardner, (Library Development Manager, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils), Janice Pratt, (Librarian, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils), Laura Stevenson, (Business Marketing Officer, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils), and Jonathan Davey, (Service Manager, Sports, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils - by phone to Democratic Services). The main findings and table of recommendations can be found at appendix 1.

CONTEXT

Laura Stevenson confirmed that currently, 6000 young people use the card. They use the card solely for discounts at leisure centres. Although those numbers are good, the Panel believes that creating a more targeted card would engage more young people in using the card which could help lower the number of obese young people in the Borough – 14% of Year 6 children were noted to be obese in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in 2014.

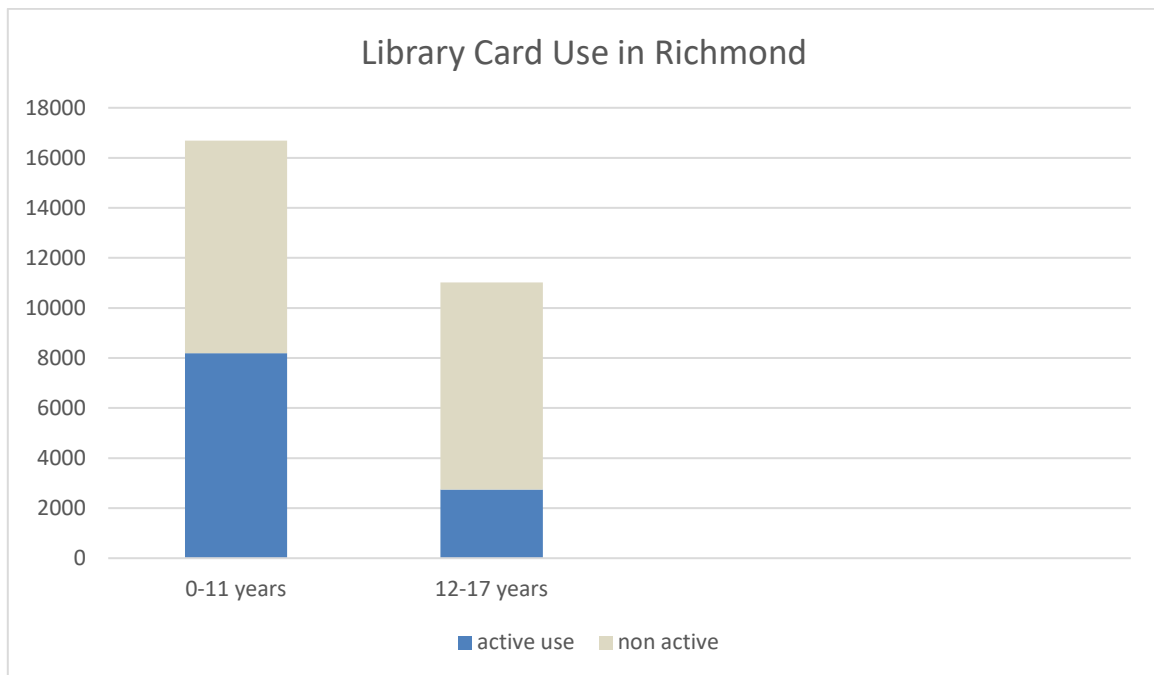
Additionally, the youth leisure card is not currently merged with the library card and the Council officers we spoke to believe that merging the two would increase library usages.

Furthermore, while discussing the card with Laura Stevenson, Business Marketing Officer, we discovered that the identity of the Richmond card is based on the free parking and not the cultural opportunities offered by it. By making the offers and discounts explicitly clear on the young people's card website, we could ensure the card is used more effectively.

We also learnt that, currently, the introduction letter accompanying the card mainly entails information for adults which is non-applicable for the young people which may deter them from applying. Additionally, information regarding offers and discounts on the website is neither clear nor current, for example, the football offered at Heatham House is free, but is said to have a cost on the website.

DATA RELATING TO CARD USE IN RICHMOND BY YOUNG PEOPLE

From the Office for National Statistics (mid-year estimate 2017) there are 45,122 people aged under 18 years in Richmond.



From the figures provided by the Library Service, 27,698 under 18 year olds have library cards. However, not all card holders are active members.

The graph shows that active use of libraries drops by over half in the older age group. This might be because secondary schools have their own library facilities, or that this age group is using the libraries to study, read or to use their online services, but not to actually borrow books and films. The higher figure of active users in the younger age group is probably due to children accompanying parents/carers to the library.

Leisure Services at the Council informed us that there are currently 4852 Leisure and Youth Card users who are between 12 and 19 years old. Between January and November 2018 there were 2743 attendances.

WHAT DID THE PANEL DO?

The Youth Scrutiny Panel started by having a training day on 31st July 2018, which included an introduction to scrutiny, what makes a good topic and information about questioning techniques and survey training from Devon Bradley and Ellen Tappin, Consultation Officers from Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. The Youth Scrutiny Panel then selected the topic, the Youth Offer on the Richmond Card.

The Panel started by finding out what is currently offered by the card, and heard from Tom Price, Customer Service Improvement Manager, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. Tom informed the Youth Scrutiny Panel that:

- The project for new Richmond Card started in 2013.
- There had previously separate cards for each service.
- There was now all-in-one card for the standard Richmond Card.
- The Youth Card currently offers leisure discounts and local business discounts.
- The card is free to anyone up to the age of 19 years old (25 years old if you have a registered disability) provided you either:
 - Live in the borough
 - Work in the borough
 - Attend school in the borough
 - Attend a youth club in the borough
- The cards can be obtained by applying online or over the counter at a local Council run leisure centre.
- The service was introduced as part of Councillor manifesto.
- Any policy or service changes are signed off at Member level.

During a question and answer session, Tom informed the panel that:

- The youth leisure card only gives discounts on leisure facilities in the borough and that it was brought in by councillors. There would be scope to make some changes to the offer.
- The Richmond Card is advertised in a newsletter, which has to be signed-up to. The card is not specifically advertised to young people, in part, due to data protection issues.
- The library card is separate to the Richmond Card, but there would be the possibility to merge these.
- The adult-version Richmond Card combines different services (libraries, parking, leisure). It was noted that there were age restrictions on some library items.
- Registration for the Richmond Card takes place online, but the Youth Card does not show the leisure discounts.
- The youth discounts were better than those for adults, but Tom agreed the youth benefits were not made clear on the website.
- There was no specific youth consultation when the card was introduced. It was brought in on councillors' instruction to combine the three service benefits.
- There was no data on Richmond Card young people's use from the businesses end.
- The Panel informed Tom Price that they felt the website was out of date and that the youth benefits were not easily visible. It was suggested that the benefits of the

Richmond Card could be added to the Achieving for Children (AfC) website and advertised via schools and youth groups in the borough, as there had been no promotion specifically for young people.

The Panel felt that if the card included libraries, it would encourage more young people to use them.

Tom Price explained that councillors wanted the Richmond Card to encourage patronage of local businesses, and it would not be appropriate to approach large businesses, such as cinema chains, to become part of the scheme.

The Richmond Card was reviewed every 3 years, the last review being 2016.

The Panel suggested the young people's offer could be used to improve physical and mental wellbeing by encouraging healthy lifestyles, such as taking more exercise and having more discounted leisure activities.

Panel members queried whether it would be possible to include local theatres in the offer, particularly where the plays put on linked to the school curriculum. It was noted that some uniformed youth groups had reduced price tickets for some plays and the Panel would like to see this extended to the Richmond Card.

The Youth Scrutiny Panel also received evidence from youth services, library officers, leisure service managers and the cards business marketing officer by interviews held on 16th October 2018 (appendix 2).

During the interview with Cheney Gardner, Library Development Manager and Janice Pratt, Librarian, the Panel heard that Library Officers visited secondary schools once a year to inform them about what is available. The Panel hear that:

- Under 18 year olds needed a separate card for libraries
- Issues to children in the Borough were among the highest in London
- Some promotion takes place on social media, and
- There was no need for an adult to be present for a young person to register for the library service

During the interview with Laura Stevenson, Business Marketing Officer, the Panel heard about the number of people that benefit from using the card and that:

- only local businesses can be part of the scheme
- the types of offers available
- businesses benefit from the advertising and being able to run promotions through the scheme
- there was scope for more businesses to join, that there is no targeted promotion for young people and that businesses receive a pack on joining the scheme.

The Panel learned from Jonathan Davey, Service Manager, Sports, that there had been no recent consultation with young people about the scheme, that more offers could be added, but that this would require funding to be agreed and that data on card use was collected under a range of headings.

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

The Youth Scrutiny Panel gained information from Bracknell Forest's card scheme offer. Bracknell Forest Council's scheme offers;

- A card which combines library services and leisure services;
- A card which enables data to be managed;
- A show card for local retail discounts;
- A proof of age PASS card for ages 12-25 years;
- A household recycling incentive scheme with points redeemed at leisure centres, libraries, the local science park and arts centre. Bracknell advised successful youth incentives elsewhere have promoted healthy eating, engagement in various activities/schemes including attendance at sessions on key topics such as sexual health. The use of leader boards can create greater engagement.

The Panel also gained information from Cambridge City Council for their Cambridgeshire Culture Card. Cambridge is piloting a scheme to engage young people and children through the development of two platforms (11-19 and 0-10) which allows participants to gain points by taking part in cultural activities and then once points accumulate young people are awarded free or discount entries to exhibitions and museums. There are also online badges and leader boards. This scheme aims to acknowledge the contribution these activities make to young people's learning and skills, support young people's cultural education and provide evidence on the difference that arts participation makes to young people's wellbeing, education and quality of life.

ANALYSIS OF OUR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be split into 4 categories: marketing, improvement of services offered by the card, creation of incentive programme and data.

Data

There was a lack of comprehensive data regarding young people's use of the Youth Richmond Card and Youth Leisure Card.

Recommendation 1

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends bench marking data, to include protected characteristics. This will inform the Council if there is any improvement.

Improvement of services offered by the card

There is more use of the Library Card than the Leisure Card, and the Council does not currently provide a proof of age scheme as Bracknell Forest Council do.

Recommendation 2

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends combining the leisure card with library card services, identical to the system offered to adult holders of the Richmond card, therefore librarians we spoke to already have said it is possible. The cross usership of leisure card and library members will further promote the two services among current users of either services. This shared card would save money and plastic. It is also more convenient.

Recommendation 3

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends the Council utilises the national scheme PASS and enables the photo card to be proof of age. This ensures that young people are watching and buying age appropriate movies and games. As currently there is no ID other than young people's passports this would also lessen chances of losing passports. PASS is backed by the NPCC, the SIA and relevant trade bodies and is included in Home Office guidance.

Improve marketing

The Panel noted that the information on the Council website was not accurate and did not specifically promote the scheme to young people. Businesses did not have any targeted promotion for young people.

Recommendation 4

The Youth Scrutiny Panel highly recommends ensuring all information on the website is current and correct and that the website explicitly states that the adult discounts are also available for the youth card.

Recommendation 5

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends a youth targeted website within the Council website. The language of the website should be accessible for all.

Recommendation 6

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends wider promotion of the card, especially school and youth clubs. Promotion using a social media account, such as a non-Council youth card Instagram, is also recommended. This will ensure that the service is being used. Additionally, we recommend offers and discounts could be based on users' age.

Recommendation 7

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends the creation of a youth-tailored introduction letter. Currently the letter mainly includes information about parking, which is not applicable to young people. The letter should also cover discounts offered by the card, and if an incentive scheme is created, include information about this.

Recommendation 8

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends the creation of youth-centric designs for the cards. These designs should be chosen from a competition of young people designing a card for young people of their age group.

Recommendation 9

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends local business are made more knowledgeable regarding understanding and recognising that youth cards also offer discounts.

Future Developments

The card scheme could be used to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Recommendation 10

The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends an incentive scheme paired with the card similar to that at Cambridge City Council. The incentive scheme would likely be a website or app which awards points for participation in super-curricula activity. The creation of two platforms with the same scheme however, targeting different age groups would be a good idea.

Recommendation 11

The promotions offered by local businesses should include healthy lifestyle choices, such as healthy eating offers.

APPENDIX 1 - TABLE OF RECOMMEDATIONS

Recommendation 1	Data collection	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends bench marking data, to include protected characteristics. This will inform the Council if there is any improvement.
Recommendation 2	Combined card	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends combining the leisure card with library card services, identical to the system offered to adult holders of the Richmond card, therefore librarians we spoke to already have said it is possible. The cross usership of leisure card and library members will further promote the two services among current users of either services. This shared card would save money and plastic. It is also more convenient.
Recommendation 3	Proof of age/ID scheme	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends the Council utilises the national scheme, PASS, and enables the photo card to be proof of age. This ensures that young people are watching and buying age appropriate movies and games. As currently there is no ID other than young people's passports this would also lessen chances of losing passports. PASS is backed by the NPCC, the SIA and relevant trade bodies and is included in Home Office guidance.
Recommendation 4	Website improvement	The Youth Scrutiny Panel highly recommends ensuring all information on the website is current and correct and that the website explicitly states that the adult discounts are also available for the youth card.
Recommendation 5	Targeted website	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends a youth targeted website within the Council website. The language of the website should be accessible for all.
Recommendation 6	Wider promotion	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends wider promotion of the card, especially school and youth clubs. Promotion using a social media account, such as a non-Council youth card Instagram, is also recommended. This will ensure that the service is being used. Additionally, we recommend offers and discounts could be based on users' age.
Recommendation 7	Target marketing to young people	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends the creation of a youth-tailored introduction letter. Currently the letter mainly includes information about parking, which is not applicable to young people. The letter should also cover discounts offered by the card, and if an incentive scheme is created, include information about this.
Recommendation 8	Card design	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends the creation of youth-centric designs for the cards. These designs should be chosen from a competition of young people designing a card for young people of their age group.
Recommendation 9	Local business awareness	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends local business are made more knowledgeable regarding understanding and recognising that youth cards also offer discounts.
Recommendation 10	Incentive scheme	The Youth Scrutiny Panel recommends an incentive scheme paired with the card similar to that at Cambridge City Council. The incentive scheme would likely be a website or app which awards points for participation in super-curricula activity. The creation of two platforms with the same scheme however, targeting different age groups would be a good idea.
Recommendation 11	Promoting healthy lifestyles	The promotions offered by local businesses should include healthy lifestyle choices, such as healthy eating offers.

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEWS WITH WITNESSES

From Richmond and Wandsworth Councils - Cheney Gardner, Library Development Manager, and Janice Pratt, Librarian

1. What are the links that you have with school libraries?

Library officers visit a number of secondary schools once a year to inform them of library services, promotions and competitions etc.

2. Is there a partnership between libraries and the Richmond Card?

Yes, the RC is also a library card, for adults, with a number and bar code on the back which relate to the library system. The adult data is stored in the library service system.

This is not the case for under 18s, which need a separate card for the libraries. However, the system would work with the number on the back of the Richmond Card, but the current policy is not to do that.

3. Do you have any statistics on young people's library use?

Yes, children's issues are one of the highest in London, measured per 1000 population. The statistics are collected by a central agency and Richmond sits in the upper quartile.

4. Was there any consultation with young people about the library card?

Yes, the design of the card was done by young people. Children are surveyed about library services every three years, where those coming into libraries are surveyed. Visits to secondary schools by library officers took place and around 900 secondary school children were reached in this way.

5. Is it possible to promote the libraries more than they are at the moment?

Yes, but promotional work is limited by time and money. Promotion takes place at present on social media with Twitter, Facebook, Pintrest and a blog.

6. Do you offer any online resources and how are they promoted?

Online resources are offered, such as the ebook services, the online magazine service, e audio books and streamed music.

7. Can there be consent forms instead of parents walking in for over 12s to set up a library card?

No need for adult to be present, as long as young person has relevant documents to show which adult will be a guarantor

From Richmond and Wandsworth Councils - Laura Stevenson, Business Marketing Officer

1. Is there any data on usage?

6000 people use the card, and benefit from leisure discounts. Everyone in the borough is able to use the business discounts too. Only local businesses can be part of the scheme.

2. What offers are currently available – other than leisure offers, what other offers are there on the Youth Richmond Card?

Business offers, coffee shops etc

3. What do businesses get out of the Richmond Card?

They benefit from wider advertising, and the ability to run promotions through the card.

4. Is there any scope for more local businesses to sign up?

Yes, currently 130 businesses signed up, with 300 offers. Only local businesses can join, and sometimes what look like local businesses can be part of major companies.

5. Has there been any youth consultation for marketing purposes

Not sure

6. Are the offers inclusive (disabilities, children with low income, minority backgrounds etc)?

Yes, consideration is given to matching the offers with the Richmond demographic.

7. How and where is the card promoted, what methods are used to promote the youth card?

There is no targeted promotion for young people. However, offers need to be attractive for as many people in the borough as possible.

Businesses receive a pack on joining the scheme, including window stickers, till point cards etc.

8. Is there any targeted promotion aimed at young people?

Nothing specific.

9. Had Laura heard about the 'Totem' card

No, but interested in the offers given in that scheme.

**Richmond and Wandsworth Councils Leisure Representative: Jonathan Davey,
Service Manager, Sports (by phone to Democratic Services)**

1. Has there been a consultation, on the youth offer for the Richmond Card if not, would you be open (to carrying one out)?

No recent consultation, no reason one could not be carried out if there was a business case for it.

2. What is currently offered on the youth Richmond Card from sports and leisure?

As on the website

3. Can more things be added to the offer? Would you consider adding peak time offers?

In principal, yes, but more concessions will require funding to be agreed.

4. Is there any data on leisure usage, and is there any scope for this if not already done?

Yes, data collected under many specific categories (see fees and charges report that went to Cabinet earlier this year for headings that can be searched)

5. It seems from the website that youth paid for facilities are presented (as a benefit) despite the fact that they are free – why is this?

The Heatham House example does not fall under Jon's remit, so could not give an answer.

APPENDIX 3

Feedback from Cheney Gardner, 17th October 2018 following the interview session:

With regard to membership, talking to the young people has actually already had some impact as we have come back and checked our policies and then checked what various staff at different levels understood from it and found quite a lot of confusion (hence the experience of one of the panel members who was turned away wrongly from Twickenham Library recently). We are already getting a meeting together to look at our policy on library membership for young people and see how we can make joining easier and more straightforward for all concerned. We certainly don't want young people unable to access our services so it has been very helpful to us already to have met them and been asked these questions.

Feedback from Laura Stevenson, 12th November 2018 following the interview session:

Following feedback from the Youth Scrutiny Panel, I am speaking with The Exchange* to see if I can arrange offers which may be of particular interest (to young people).

*The Exchange is a newly built community venue with a 300 seat theatre, 6 studio rooms, a cafe and a bar. Situated opposite Twickenham station, The Exchange is owned by Richmond Council and managed by St Mary's University.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Youth Scrutiny Panel is a sub group of the Richmond and Kingston Youth Council. The members of the Panel are: Abi Fisher (Chair), Kailin Guo (Vice Chair), Issy Trapnell Hoyle (Communications Manager), Josie O'Connell, Isabella Topley, Alex Lynch, Eliada Idehen and Mehakdeep Kaur.

The Youth Scrutiny Panel would like to thank the following for their support of this review:

From Richmond and Wandsworth Councils:

Tom Price, Customer Service Improvement Manager

Ellen Tappin, Consultation Officer

Devon Bradley, Consultation Officer

Jonathan Davey, Service Manager, Sports

Cheney Gardner, Library Development Manager

Janice Pratt, Librarian

Laura Stevenson, Business Marketing Officer

Hilary Gullen, Governance and Scrutiny Officer

Nick Garland, Governance and Scrutiny Officer

From Achieving for Children

Michael Connors, Participation Lead

Dempsie Earles, Heatham House Lead

Sarah Reid, Head of Children, Youth and Community

From external organisations

Michelle Lord, Arts Development Officer & Cambridgeshire Culture Card Project Manager

Cambridge City Council

Nicky Kaye, e+ Programme Manager, Customer Experience Service Delivery,

Bracknell Forest Council