	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21 October 2009</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Report from the Director of Children and Families department</b></p>
For Information	Wards Affected: ALL
<p><b>Annual Report of Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) 2008-09</b></p>	

## **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out the progress and impact made by the Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) at the end of its second term. The report evaluates the performance of the youth parliament against the terms of reference agreed by its currently elected members at their induction session in November 2008.
- 1.2 This report is an update from the six monthly progress report that was presented at the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April 2009, thereby highlighting progress made by BYP in the last six months only.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the good progress made by the BYP in its second term and endorse the changes proposed for the next term. These are mainly around extension of BYP term to a two year term and a proposed increase in seat allocation. Details are provided in section 5 of this report.
- 2.2 Members are requested to agree the proposed actions aimed at strengthening youth participation across the work of the Committee as outlined in section 6 of this report.

## **3.0 Detail**

### **Background**

- 3.1 The BYP was established in 2007 with the aim of creating a robust youth participation structure that would encourage young people in Brent to have a voice and influence policy and decision making.

3.2 Elections were held in October 2008 during Local Democracy Week to elect new members of youth parliament (MYP) for the year 2008-2009. There are 63 seats on BYP and these are comprised of representatives aged 10 to 19 from local schools including special schools and local youth groups. The structure chart of BYP and the profile of current MYPs is outlined in the six monthly progress report.

### **Terms of Reference (TOR)**

3.3 At the induction, the elected MYP's agreed their TOR for their term in office. These are outlined below along with the progress made since the submission of the six monthly report to Scrutiny in April 2009.

#### **A) To be the voice of young people in Brent**

3.4 BYP ensures that it is the voice of young people in Brent by coming together at monthly parliament sessions to talk about issues that matter to young people and by attending meetings outside of the sessions to ensure that views of young people are always represented. Details of progress made in the last six months are set out below.

3.5 Attendance at the monthly parliament sessions has remained over 75% per session. The sessions are planned and facilitated by the BYP executive. Some of the discussion and activities at the sessions in the last six months have included:

- production of a short film publicising the work of BYP and raising awareness of its campaign
- debates on whether BYP should move to a two year term
- creation of the young friendly comic version of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)
- meetings with respective Lead Members and senior officers from the council to address the issues raised by BYP within their portfolios
- consultation with BYP on the borough's Sports and Physical Activity strategy
- responding to governments consultation on PSHE reforms in schools
- consultation on the establishment of a youth website supported by the council

3.6 In addition to attending the monthly parliament sessions, MYPs also take part in meetings outside of the sessions that require young people's perspective. In the last six months these have included:

- attending the consultation event for the establishment of the Children in Care Council in Brent
- attending the Children's Rights conference organised by UNICEF UK and CRAE (Children's Rights Alliance for England) to hear progress on implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the UK
- taking part in the consultation about the merger of Hay Lane and Grove Park school.

## Portfolios

- 3.7 The current BYP have selected five portfolios from the list of Member Portfolios and have chosen to focus on a single issue within each area. Letters from the chair of BYP were sent to the respective Lead Members and directors of departments requesting responses to the issues highlighted by BYP. All letters sent by BYP have received a response and details of the progress made against each portfolio are highlighted in the table below:

<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Progress made in the last six months</b>
<b>Crime Prevention and Public Safety</b>	BYP raised lack of street lighting in certain areas as a concern. Details of these areas were provided to the street care team who have subsequently resolved the issues where possible. Regular contact is maintained with the street care teams.
<b>Health and Social Care</b>	BYP raised concerns with the quality of health education and health provision within schools. A detailed letter was received by BYP from the Chief Executive of NHS Brent outlining details of the health provision for young people in Brent. In response to BYP's concern about sexual health, a focus group was set up to discuss preventative and treatment aspects of Chlamydia. BYP also responded to the national consultation on PSHE reforms proposed by central government. The response was shared with colleagues at the School Improvement Service. More recently the BYP have been consulted on the borough's Sports and Physical Activity strategy.
<b>Environment and Culture</b>	BYP highlighted litter dropping and the need for more educational initiatives as a concern. The assistant director for Environment and Culture attended one of the parliament sessions and informed members of local initiatives in place to educate young people about environmental issues as well as services available to encourage local residents to recycle. He further requested BYP to put together a list of specific areas where they felt litter dropping/lack of recycling was a problem and promised to get them addressed where possible.
<b>Regeneration and Economic Development</b>	BYP highlighted the lack of open spaces and buildings that could be used by teenagers and requested to be involved in future consultation on new developments in the borough. A detailed letter from Brent Youth Service was received highlighting future plans for locality based working thereby providing opportunities for more spaces for young people across the five localities. As a result of BYP's letter, a group of young people were consulted on the design of the Civic Centre staff and further plans are in place to liaise with colleagues within Policy and Regeneration Unit.
<b>Children and Families</b>	BYP raised concerns about the lack of careers advice given to young people in schools. Discussions have since taken place with the members of 14-19 strategic forum who have welcomed the opportunity to speak to members in detail about their needs on this issue.

## **B) To have a say in decisions that are usually made by adults and to influence policy**

- 3.8 BYP ensures that it has a say in decisions that are usually made by adults by having young people present at meetings attended by adults, by ensuring that policies for children and young people are brought to the attention of BYP for consultation and by getting involved in the recruitment of staff that work with young people. Details of progress made in the last six months are set out below.
- BYP were invited to a focus group with the Civic Centre staff to ensure that views of young people were taken into consideration with the design as well as the usability aspect of the building
  - Some members have taken part in interview panels to recruit staff working with young people (key workers for the Family Intervention Team in Social Care and Personal Advisors for Connexions)
  - Members have attended meetings of the Brent Children's Partnership as well as Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting
  - BYP were consulted on the borough's Sports and Physical strategy as well as on the development of a website for young people.

## **C) To promote the work of BYP and celebrate the achievements of young people**

- 3.9 BYP ensures that it promotes the work of MYPs by regularly featuring in The Brent Magazine, updating BYP pages on the BRAIN website and interacting with non members via social networking sites such as Facebook. BYP also plan events to celebrate the achievements of young people. Details of progress made in the last six months are set out below.
- 3.10 The Vtalentyear volunteer working with BYP has worked with staff at Brent community website BRAIN and updated the BYP pages. BYP members have also taken ownership of updating BYP information and interaction on the social networking site Facebook. This has helped raise awareness of BYP and increase interaction with non members.
- 3.11 Members are progressing well with their campaign 'break the stereotype, fix the impression', which is aimed at tackling the negative stereotypes of young people that are often portrayed in the media. Members have produced stickers and a short film to publicise their campaign, they are going to launch a survey to gather views from across the age ranges about how young people are viewed in society today, and are planning their first youth conference (planned for 13 November) to raise awareness of their campaign across a wide student audience who are non members and to encourage youth participation at a wider level.

## **D) To work with UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) and influence national policy**

- 3.12 BYP ensures that it works closely with UKYP to influence national policy. This is done by attending UKYP meetings, events and the annual sitting. Details of progress made in the last six months are set out below.
- 3.13 Two MYPs attended the UKYP annual sitting in July at Kent University where they were involved in policy discussions affecting young people across the nation e.g. tuition fees, transport costs and climate change. Some members also attended the UKYP debate at the

House of Lords, first of its kind where young people have been allowed for the first time to debate at the House of Lords. BYP also hosted the July UKYP regional meeting where over 60 UKYP members visited the Brent Town Hall.

#### **4.0 Monitoring the impact of BYP and supporting its members**

4.1 Feedback is sought from MYPs at the end of each parliament session on the quality and content of the session. To date the overwhelming majority of the feedback has consistently been positive. The monthly evaluations are further supported by an in-depth end of year survey gathering members' views about their satisfaction levels of the support provided to them by the council. Analysis from the end of year survey is attached as an Appendix to this report.

4.2 Each BYP member has a Personal Development Plan (PDP) outlining the skills they wish to gain during their time with BYP. The participation officer monitors these plans and ensures opportunities are provided to members to enhance their skills.

#### **5.0 Changes proposed to BYP**

5.1 **Two year term:** BYP activities are monitored on a regular basis both by council officers and by the MYPs themselves. There was a concern that the time taken up during the election process, the exam and the holiday period meant that a one year term was not sufficient for BYP to be able to make the progress and the full impact that will benefit young people in Brent in the long term. Consultation was undertaken with the Co Chair of Brent Youth Parliament, with members of BYP, with UK Youth Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament. The general consensus from this review has been to move to a two year term.

5.2 Current members will be given the option to stand down, some will move on naturally as they progress with their education, allowing new members to join each year. The move to a two year term will allow for a longer term planning of the work of BYP, thereby benefiting both the members as well as the wider youth population of Brent.

5.3 **Seat allocation:** In addition, following guidance from UK Youth Parliament it is now proposed that the seat allocation of BYP should be increased from 63 to 72. This is following discussions at the UKYP annual sitting where it was recommended that all formal participation structures should include a rule where one young person is consulted for every 1000 in the borough. Brent has 72,472 young people; therefore the seat allocation has been increase accordingly. The revised structure chart is attached as an appendix to this report.

#### **6.0 Strengthening youth participation**

6.1 BYP have welcomed the opportunity to work with the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the last year and would like to further strengthen youth participation across the work of the Committee. It is suggested that the following recommended actions will create a robust platform ensuring the views of young people are heard on a range of key matters:

- a) Where applicable, reports submitted to the Committee should have a section entitled 'young people's views' that demonstrates how young people were involved in discussion in the particular area of work and their views given due weight.

- b) The chair of the Committee should have quarterly meetings with the BYP executive to discuss issues raised by BYP as well as those that come to the attention of the Committee, to ensure that young people are at the heart of discussions and decisions that are pertinent to services for young people in Brent.

### **Background Papers**

Brent Youth Parliament, mid year progress report, October 2008-April 2009

### **Contact Officers**

Sarah Mansuralli, Head of Joint Strategy & Commissioning, Children and Families department. Email [sarah.mansuralli@brent.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.mansuralli@brent.gov.uk) , Telephone 020 8937 3128

Or

Krutika Pau, Assistant Director, Strategy & Partnerships, Children and Families department. Email [krutika.pau@brent.gov.uk](mailto:krutika.pau@brent.gov.uk) , Telephone 020 8937 3126

John Christie: Director of Children and Families

## Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) Structure and Seat Allocation

### Brent Children’s Partnership (BCP)

*Chaired by the director of Children and Families, BCP is responsible for setting the strategic direction for services for children and young people in Brent and for working with other agencies to champion the interests of young people. The chair of BYP is a member of this group.*

### Brent Youth Parliament (BYP)

*BYP was established in 2007 to give young people the opportunity to express their views and to have a say in decision-making that affects them. Members are aged between ten and 19 years and come from all walks of life.*  
**(72 seats)**

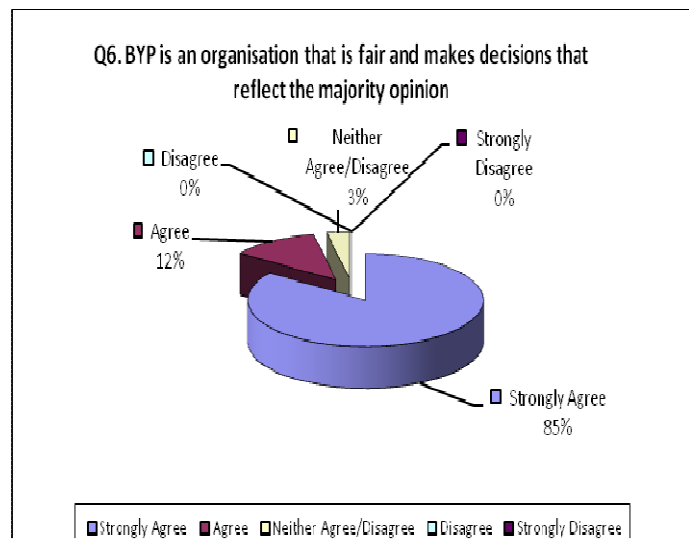
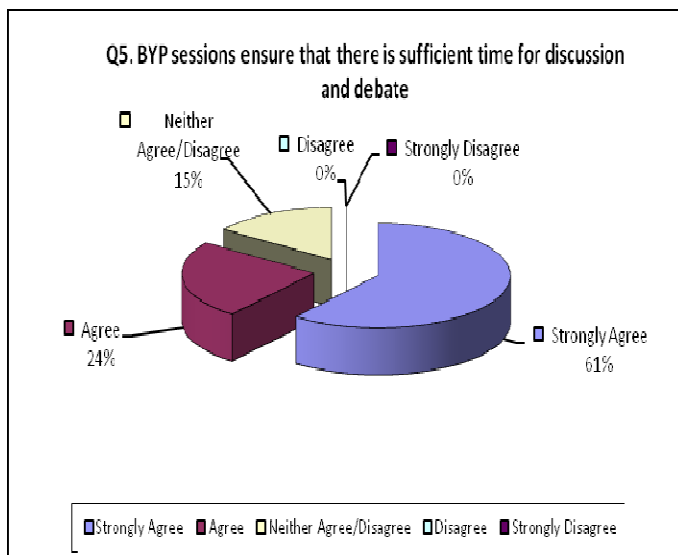
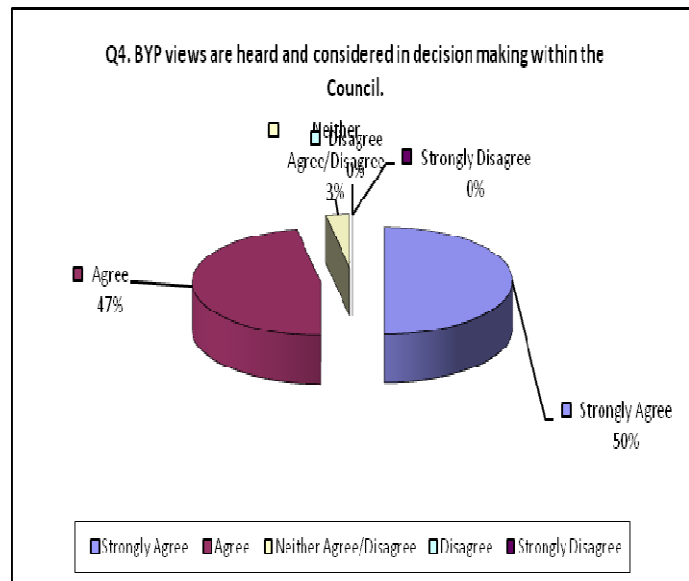
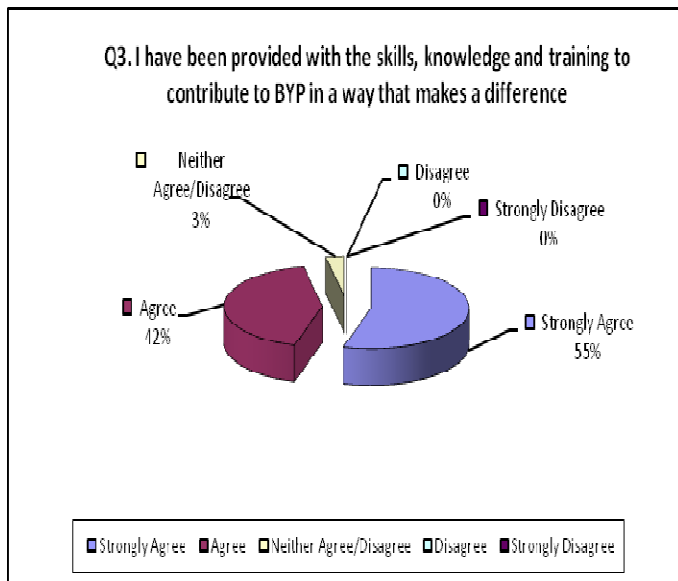
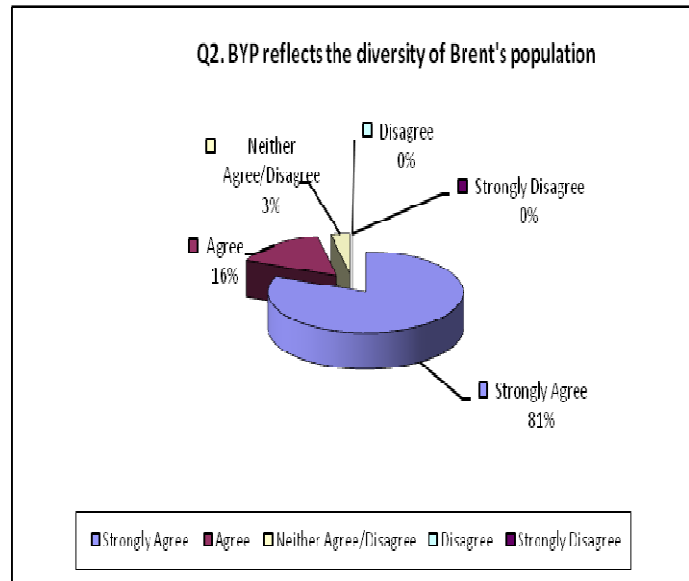
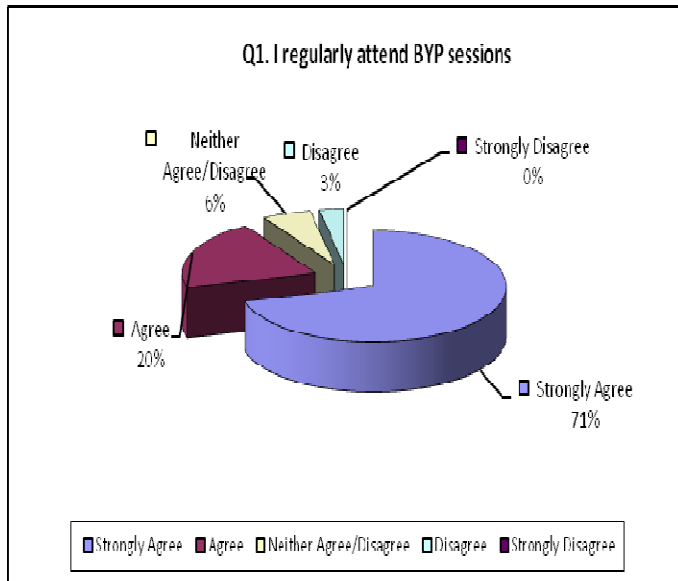
### BYP Executive

*The executive is made up of the chair, vice chair, secretary, UKYP/deputy UKYP representative. The executive is responsible for leading BYP and facilitating the monthly sessions.*

<b>Secondary schools</b>  <b>(14 seats)</b>	<b>Primary schools</b>  <b>(10 seats)</b>	<b>Targeted groups</b> <i>(Seats for young people (YP) with disabilities, YP in care, YP not in education or employment, YP with refugee status or seeking asylum, YP from special schools and PRUs)</i> <b>(10 seats)</b>	<b>College of North West London (CNWL)</b>  <b>(2 seats)</b>	<b>Local youth groups/ sports clubs</b>  <b>(16 seats)</b>	<b>Brent Youth Matters 2 (BYM2)</b>  <b>(5 seats)</b>	<b>Returning MYPs</b> <i>(Reinstated for their excellent contribution in the previous year)</i>  <b>(15 seats)</b>
---	---	--	--	--	---	---

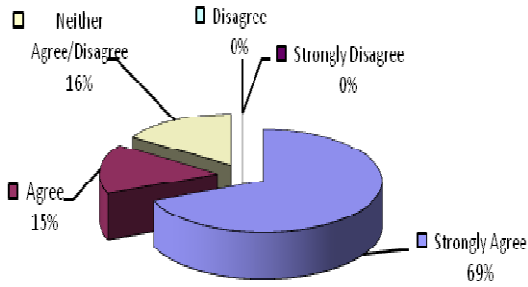
## Appendix 2

BYP end of year survey was completed by members at their session on 19 September 2009. 33 out of the 58 elected members attended the session and completed the survey, thereby giving a 57% response rate. Responses to each of the survey questions are analysed in the charts below.



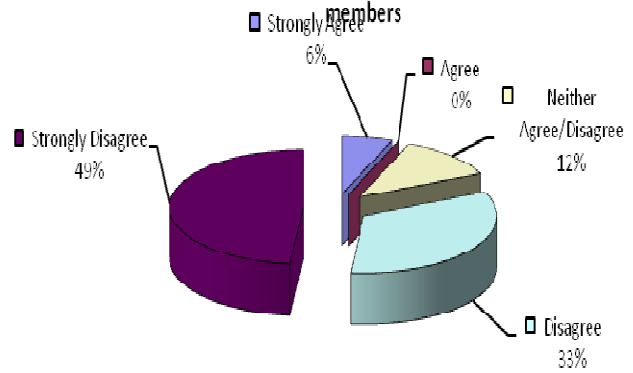


**Q7. BYP is able to make its own decisions**



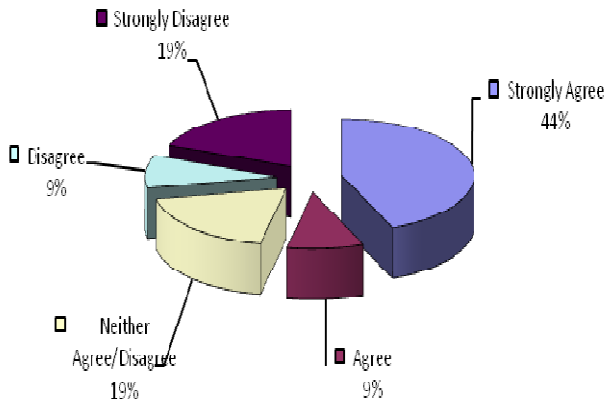
Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree/Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

**Q8. Adult involvement in BYP restricts the views and wishes of BYP members**



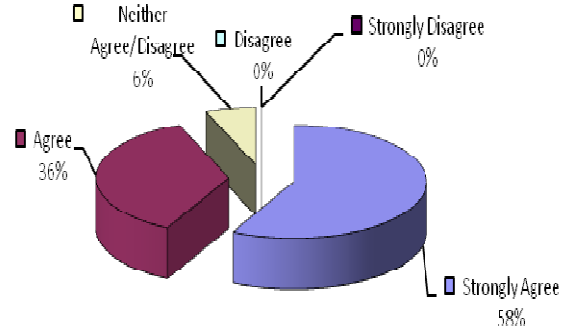
Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree/Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

**Q9. BYP members receive financial support to attend meetings and events**



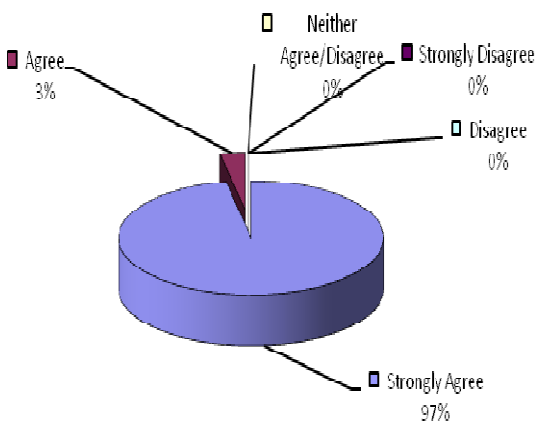
Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree/Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

**Q10. BYP sessions are held in venues that are young people friendly**



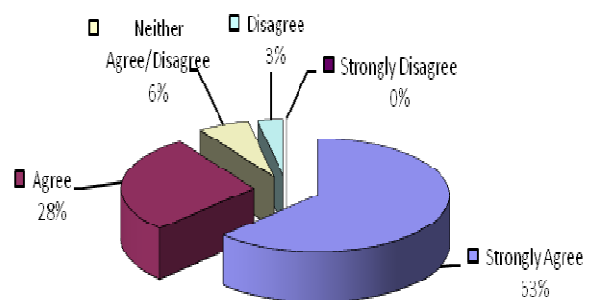
Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree/Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

**Q11. Refreshments are provided at each BYP Session**



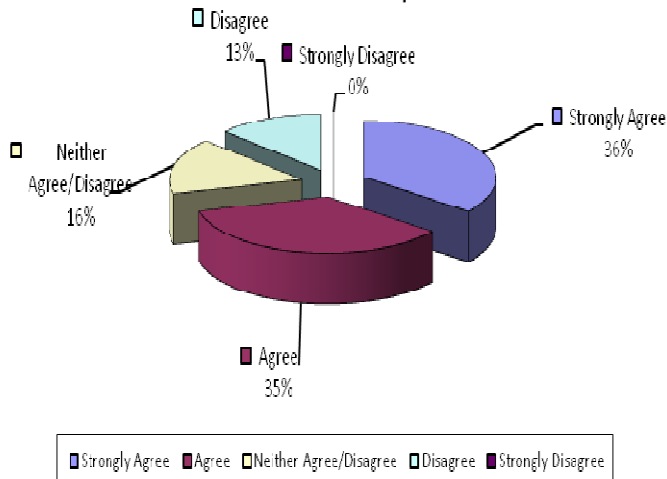
Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree/Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

**Q12. There are sufficient stationery and supplies at BYP sessions**

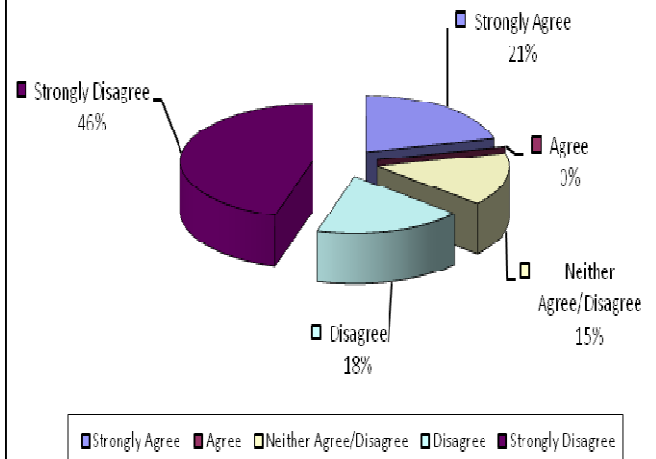


Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree/Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

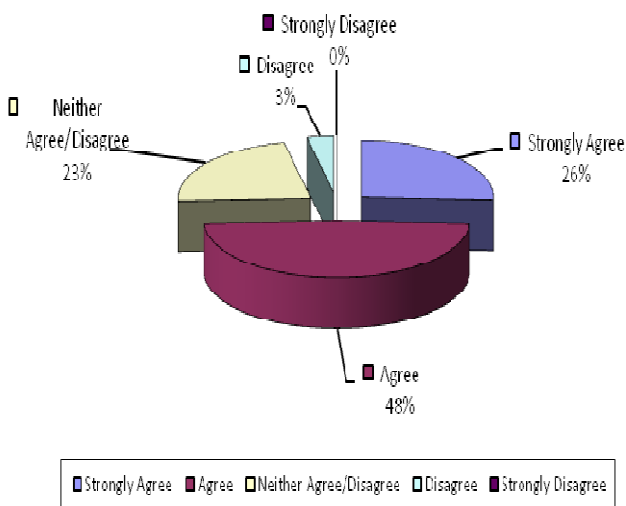
**Q13. Brent Council provides the resources required to progress  
BYP actions and priorities**



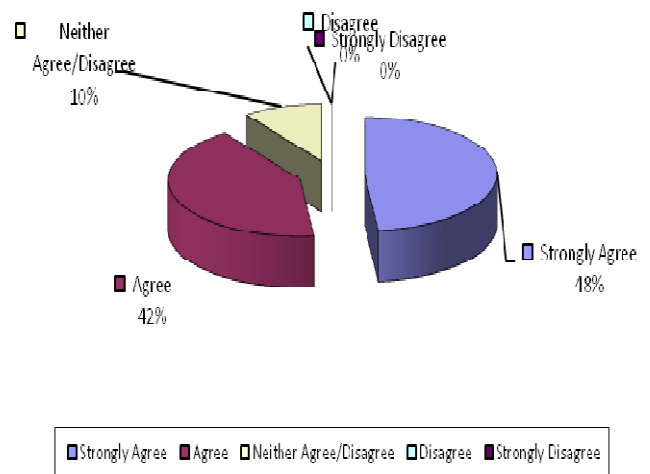
**Q14. BYP members should receive payment for attending sessions**



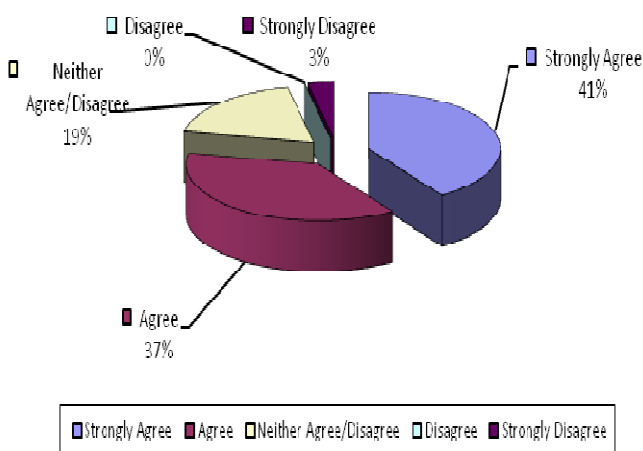
**Q15. BYP members are able to allocate resources to projects**



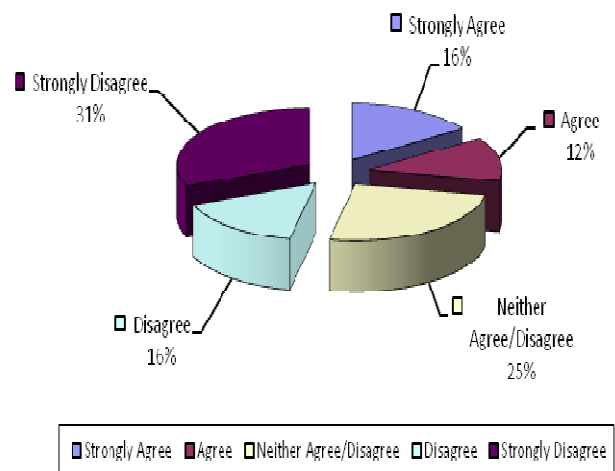
**Q16. BYP has the ability to take the actions necessary to achieve  
its goals**



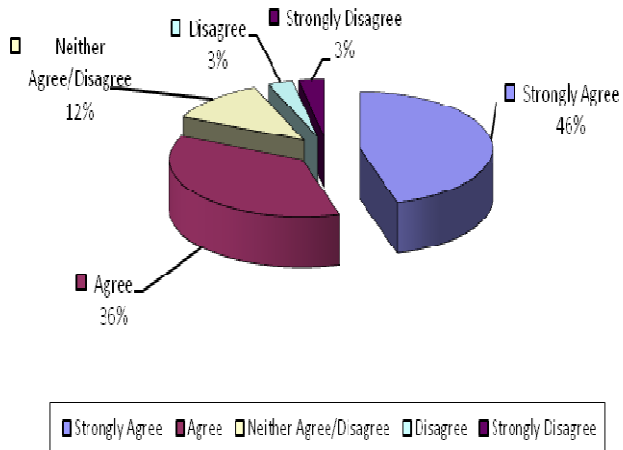
**Q17. BYP feels that the decisions it takes are respected and made  
a priority by Brent Council**



**Q18. BYP feels that despite involvement of young people, ultimate  
decisions are made by adults**



Q19. My contribution to BYP makes a difference to other young people in Brent



Q20. I would recommend becoming a BYP members to my friends

