

**Sheffield Council has supported BiG Challenge throughout its development. Councillor Jackie Drayton and Yvonne Asquith remain advocates from the programme and have met with and addressed young people at awards events.**



Yvonne Asquith is Business Development at Creative Sheffield: 'The focus for us at Creative Sheffield is about the economic development of the city. While we're not going to get business start-ups from a programme like BiG Challenge, where we're working with young people who are under 16 years old, it is a driving force behind what will be happening in the economy in years to come. It might spark an interest in a young person when they might not otherwise have thought of starting a business. The reasons for setting up BiG Challenge still apply and it is still important.'

'BiG Challenge has been the pivotal driver for delivering the Enterprise Pipeline, providing a focus across the pre-16 to post-16 journey from schools, to college and Higher Education. It's been the connection between all of them – a common denominator. Everyone has had some interest in BiG Challenge, whether they have been delivering it in schools or providing mentor support, as in the case of Venture Matrix. It has even contributed to the development of young people who have gone on to the Peter Jones Enterprise Academy.'

Councillor Jackie Drayton is Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families: 'I think it's really important. I left school at 16 with no qualifications. Then, later on in life when I'd got children, I went back into an adult education class doing Art. That teacher saw something in me that no one else had and opened my eyes to a different future. I know there are lots and lots of young people out there with a wealth of experience, knowledge and talent that they don't believe they have. The BiG Challenge is one way of enabling them to experience something that will give them the opportunity to open their eyes to say 'maybe I could do this' or 'maybe I could do that' but also to give them the confidence and skills to go forward.'



**'BiG Challenge gives young people confidence to have a go at things. It can be a turning point.'**

'I've been involved with the BiG Challenge for a while now and attend each of the events to see the young people as they go forward on their journey. You see them grow in confidence. The students that go the furthest on that journey are the ones that come in less confident and maybe with less of an academic background. It's incredible to see how they've grown in stature and how they can talk to people they'd never have dreamed of talking with before. A lot of employers say to me that they can teach young people how to work in their business but I can't teach them how to look into somebody's face and talk to them. Those life skills – those work-ready skills – are something they are certainly learning on BiG Challenge.'

'We have a big ambition for children, young people and families in Sheffield – that they all fulfil their potential. That involves raising aspiration, raising attainment and enabling enriching experiences. We can't do it on our own and so we work with schools, governors, employers and the community. If you really want people to fulfil their potential, you can't just focus on the academic. Of course, you have to get teaching and learning right, but you also have to give them the opportunity to do other things that can help to raise attainment levels. As well as getting personal skills, the BiG Challenge does help young people study in a different way and passes on to the way they work in the classroom.'

'We've had 50% of our budget cut over the last four years. But, I'm a 'glass half full' person and I see that we've still got 50% left and it's what we do with it that's important. We have to think creatively and we have to think together on this. We're putting in a small amount but what we're getting from employers, from the universities and from schools is a tremendous amount that will change the life, the possibilities and the potential of young people.'

