

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Scrutiny and Overview Committee

21 March 2013

AUTHOR/S: Tom Mayer, Chairman of Youth Council and Tracy Mann, Lead Officer

YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATE

Purpose

1. For Scrutiny and Overview Committee to note the Youth Council's progress to date and make comments and/or recommendations for any further work that might benefit the Youth Council and/or South Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. This is not a key decision, but has been brought before Scrutiny and Overview Committee because of the Committee's interest and commitment to the Youth Council.

Recommendation

3. That the Scrutiny and Overview Committee note the Youth Council's current work plan and make comments and/or recommendations for further work and involvement where it could be of benefit for the Youth Council and the District Council.

Background

4. Scrutiny and Overview Committee approved the Children and Young People's Plan in April 2010 to provide opportunities for children and young people to have a say in decisions that may affect them in their local area.
5. The successful participation and engagement of children and young people over the following eighteen months meant that the establishment of a Youth Council was a natural progression to the Children and Young People's Plan.
6. This also came at the time of the Council's bid for Quality Charter accreditation for Member Development, in which the Council must demonstrate support for the District's young people to become engaged in local government issues.
7. The Youth Council was successfully established in September 2012, following a 12 month period of recruiting young people to become the first South Cambridgeshire Youth Councillors. Of the 18 original volunteers, 15 young people eventually committed to serve as Youth Councillors for a period of 12 months in the first instance. Youth Councillors have undergone training sessions to better understand the role of Youth Councillor, the District Council and issues that affect the District. The Youth Council held its formal launch in January 2013.

Considerations

8. The Youth Council's current work plan is as follows:
 - Working with the providers of Northstowe's first Primary school and Secondary school to help develop the new schools. Initial meetings have already taken place with Swavesey Village College (part of the Meridian Trust

that will provide the Secondary School), and a meeting is planned after Easter with Ely Diocese (the provider of the first primary school). Youth Councillors are currently organising visits to local schools in the area to observe lessons, survey teachers, students and parents, look at schools' ethos and Ofsted Inspections. Once all the information is collated, Youth Councillors will work with the school providers to help shape the schools for Northstowe. Youth Councillors will also be involved in helping to design the new schools.

- Youth Councillors will be providing comments and attending workshops with the University to help develop the play spaces, community centre and other facilities and open spaces on the North West Cambridge site.
- As above, the Youth Council will be helping developers and officers working on the Darwin Green 2 and 3 developments (previously known as NIAB 2 & 3).
- Again as above, the Youth Council will be involved in helping to develop facilities and services for young people at the Cambridge East development.
- The Youth Council is working on launching a health and wellbeing campaign aimed at young people across the District. It is anticipated that the campaign will be launched at the District Council's Park Life Event in August this year and will be aimed at helping young people make positive choices in relation to education and employment as well as taking responsibility for their own health (eg, not smoking, drinking, drugs, anti social behaviour). This will include working with the police, health, children and young people's service, etc.
- At Park Life this year, the Youth Council will also be organising part of the event as regards showcasing talented young people in the District and encouraging young people to engage more in civic life.
- Chairman of the Youth Council, Tom Mayer, will be spending a day with the Leader of the District Council, Cllr Manning, in order to have a greater understanding of the Leader's role and responsibilities.
- The Youth Councillor for Policy and Finance, Isabella Marshall, will be spending some time with Cllr Edwards to increase her understanding of budgeting and policy development. Isabella is also spending the summer months at the Senate in the USA and part of her time there will be spent making comparisons and gathering information to share with the Youth Council when she returns.
- Youth Councillor Dale Hargrove, the Northstowe specialist, is spending two weeks' work experience working with the Northstowe Team to gain a greater understanding of the Northstowe development and all the things that need to be taken into consideration when building a new town.
- Youth Councillor Callum Hatch, the Housing and Planning specialist, is spending two weeks' work experience working with the Housing Team to gain a greater understanding of the Housing Service.
- The Sustainability and Environment Youth Councillor, Helena Keys, has attended meetings of the Sustainable Parish Energy Project and the Youth Council will become involved in helping to encourage young people's involvement in the project.
- Youth Councillors have also been invited to attend local parish council meetings but, due to ill health, unfortunately have been unable to attend to-date.
- Towards the end of this year, the Youth Council will need to begin preparations for the Youth Council elections next year.

Implications

9.

Financial	Minimal – Youth Council budget for 2013 – 2014 is still to be agreed
Legal	Safeguarding Children
Staffing	Officer time
Risk Management	None
Equal Opportunities	EQIA in place
Climate Change	Specialist Youth Councillor for Sustainability and the Environment

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