

Report to Communities Select Committee

Date of meeting: 14th March 2017

Subject: Epping Forest Youth Council Presentation

Officer contact for further information: G. Gold (01992 564247)

Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (01992 564246)



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- 1) That the Communities Select Committee receives a presentation from the Epping Forest Youth Council (EFYC), to introduce the new cohort of Youth Councillors elected in November 2016 and to review the Youth Council achievements of 2016/17; and,
- 2) That the Committee recommends a proposal to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to allocate a DDF sum of £5,000 to the Youth Council, for projects during 2017/18, as stated on the DDF list

Report:

1. One of the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Review of Youth Engagement within the District, was for Epping Forest Youth Council, to provide a presentation to Members, twice a year, on the activities and achievements of the Youth Council in the current year, and potential plans for the next 12 months.
2. A group of four EF Youth Councillors will therefore be present at the Communities Select Committee, on Tuesday, March 14th to undertake the second presentation of 2016/17, and to respond to any questions that Members may have.

Background:

3. Youth Councillors are elected for a term of office of two years and depending on their age at the end of this period, can be re-elected for a further term. The elections take place in local secondary schools, under formal electoral conditions and include printed ballot papers and a secret ballot process with staff from the Council's Democratic Services Team leading on this work.
4. Elections were held in November 2016 for a new cohort of Youth Councillors with 44 candidates from local schools involved in the process. From these nominations, 25 Youth Councillors were elected and have now started their two year term of office.
5. The Youth Council has a continuing Services Budget of approximately £12,000 per annum, which is used to cover all travel, training and education expenses, but projects and events are generally funded through external funding bids.
6. However, a second recommendation of the Youth Engagement Task and Finish Review was to enable EFYC to apply for up to £8000 project funding in each year, to be agreed via the Communities Select Committee.
7. In 2016/17 this funding was used for the development of a special Mental Health project for young people, based on the findings of the Youth Conference 2015 and concerns

of other young people in local schools.

8. The project which was given the name 'MiLife' by the Youth Council, was developed in conjunction with Council officers, North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) and local charity, Red Balloon Family Foundation. MiLife also received £4000 funding support through the Epping Forest Youth Strategy fund.

9. It is designed as a roadshow, that visits secondary schools within the district and provides an hour-long workshop for students from each year group, which aims to raise awareness of positive mental health and helps to build personal resilience, thus enabling young people to help themselves and their peers.

10. The project has been very successful with young people and has been endorsed as a model of best practice by NHS England and has also been nominated by the High Sheriff of Essex, for the National Crimebeat Awards. This success has led to, the development of a digital MiLife project with NELFT, which will enable the project to be rolled out to schools across Essex and across the country and plans are in place to develop an extension of MiLife, to be delivered in local primary schools.

11. Other EFYC projects over the review year included:

- Youth Volunteering
- Anti-bullying Campaign
- NELFT Volunteers
- The Essex Records Office Listening Bench
- School Dementia Awareness training
- Inter-generational schemes projects

The Youth Council successfully secured £2700 to undertake these projects.

12. The Youth Council is also regularly asked to be included in consultations and recent ones include the Local Plan, Police and Crime Commissioners Consultation, NHS 'My Mind' project and Essex County Council's Youth Service Consultation.

13. It is hoped that the Communities Select Committee will agree to recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee the allocation of £5,000 DDF funding in 2017/18 for the Youth Council to continue with youth led, youth based projects.

Reason for decision:

14. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Review of Youth Engagement in 2015/16, recommended that the Youth Council, provides two presentations per annum, to Senior Members of the Council, in order to give an overview of the activities and projects undertaken throughout the financial year.

15. It also recommended that up to £8,000 project funding be available, for the Youth Council to bid for, in order to develop and deliver activities and events for young people. This report therefore seeks to inform Members of the work undertaken by the Youth Council in 2016/17 and seeks support from the Communities Select Committee, in recommending approval of the allocation of £5,000 DDF funding for the purposes as stated.

Options considered and rejected:

N/A

Consultation undertaken:

N/A

Service review:

Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Review of Youth Engagement.

Resource implications:

Personnel:

Officers from the Council's Community Health and Wellbeing Team organise, manage and facilitate the Epping Forest Youth Council work and liaise with partner agencies that may wish to work with EFYC.

2016/17

EFYC have secured external funding totalling £6700

£4000 from Epping Forest Youth Strategy

£1500 from the Jack Petchey Foundation

£150 from the Think Big O2

£300 from the Jack Petchey Education Grants scheme

£750 from the Jack Petchey Small Grants awards

£5000 project funding has been added to the DDF list for 2017/18.

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference:

Corporate Plan Medium Term Aim 3

Relevant statutory powers: N/A

Background papers: N/A

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: N/A

Key Decision reference: (if required)

N/A