

Report to Communities Select Committee

Date of meeting: 13th March 2018

Subject: Epping Forest Youth Council

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Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (01992 564246)



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- 1) That the Communities Select Committee notes the achievements of the Epping Forest Youth Council during 2017/18. 5 representatives for the current Youth Council will give a presentation accordingly.
- 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 2018/19.
- 3) That the Committee recommends a proposal to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to allocate a DDF sum of £3,000 to the Youth Council for the MiLife project during 2018/19.
- 4) That the Committee recommends that the number of Youth Council presentations to Members be reduced to once a year, at Communities Select Committee.

Report:

Background:

One of the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Review of Youth Engagement back in 2016 was for the Epping Forest Youth Council, to deliver a presentation to Members twice a year on the activities and achievements of the group and potential plans for the next 12 months.

A group of Epping Forest Youth Councillors will, therefore, be present at the Communities Select Committee, on Tuesday, March 13th to undertake the second presentation of 2017/18, and answer any questions that Members may have.

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. Authentic 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.

The Youth Council has a Continuing Services Budget of £12,000 per annum, which is used to cover all travel, training and education expenses, but projects and events need to be funded through external funding bids or DDF.

- 1) Project work

The further recommendation of the Youth Engagement Task and Finish review in 2016 was

to enable Epping Forest Youth Council to apply for £8000 project funding in any one year, to be agreed via the Communities Select Committee.

Over the past 2 years Epping Forest Youth Council has delivered a number of high impact projects. These include:

- MiLife: An emotional health and wellbeing project, which aims to promote positive mental health, remove the stigma surrounding mental health and give young people the tools to support themselves and their peers. This successful project has been delivered to over 6000 young people to date, via a workshop experience and using real life scenarios of issues facing our young people. Members of the Community Select Committee will be receiving a separate report on the MiLife report on 13th March 2018
- 'Don't Open the Gate' – This is a drugs awareness project, based on the concerns facing young people within the local community. The Youth Councillors carried out research online regarding this subject and also spoke to their peers. Drug taking and its impact was of real concern within the school community and the impact of drug taking – such as the N20 canisters impacted on the local community. This led to a clean-up campaign where over 500 of the silver canisters were cleaned up from sites within the district. As a result the Youth Councillors designed and developed a poster and bus campaign highlighting the dangers of taking drugs to young people. Additionally an anonymous on-line survey has been developed to ask young people about their awareness and of any issues they are conscious of. To date approximately 3000 young people have completed the survey.

Other EFYC projects over the review year have included:

- Youth Volunteering
- Community Clean up
- The Epping Youth Market
- NELFT Volunteers
- The Essex Records Office Listening Bench
- School Dementia Awareness training
- Supporting Inter-generational schemes such as the Senior Safety Days

The current cohort will be delivering a comprehensive report to Members on 13th March 2018

Reason for decision:

In order to allow Epping Forest Youth Council to focus their time on project work a presentation once a year would be sufficient. However, Epping Forest Youth Council would be happy to come along to talk about specific projects and actions as required.

Project funding would allow Epping Forest Youth Council to drive forward peer led projects and continue the MiLife scheme across the district.

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 and liaise with partner agencies that may wish to become involved.

Financial resources:

£5000	- Epping Forest District Council DDF
£2100	- ECC Epping Forest Youth Strategy
£2550	- Jack Petchey Funding
£300	- Think Big O2
£750	- Safer Community Partnership

Land: N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference:

Corporate Plan Objective: 1.1.2 – Promote mental health and emotional wellbeing

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