

11 July 2017	ITEM: 6
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Youth Cabinet and Youth Work Report 2016/17	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Not applicable
Report of: Pat Kielty – Participation Officer	
Accountable Head of Service: Michele Lucas – Interim Strategic Lead Learning & Skills	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson – Corporate Director of Children's Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report highlights the 2016/17 work of the Thurrock Youth Cabinet and also reports on the wider activities of the Inspire Youth Work team.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 To note the work of the Thurrock Youth Cabinet and the wider Inspire Youth Work Team in 2016/17**
- 1.2 To support the work plans of the Thurrock Youth Cabinet and Inspire Youth Work Team in 2017/18**
- 1.3 To support the production of a 2017/18 annual report; promoting youth work and activity to external partners and potential funders**

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Thurrock Youth Cabinet

The Thurrock Youth Cabinet is made up of 35 local young people (11–19 years) and has the following aims:

- **Represent;** give a voice to young people in Thurrock
- **Campaign;** identify, debate and campaign on issues relevant to young people
- **Engage and Influence;** with local decision makers on services that impact young people

Some key highlights of 2016/17 were as follows:

Represent

- **Make Your Mark** – annual ballot identifying the top issue for young people. 4,331 Thurrock young people voted in 2016.
- **Democracy Week** - (10–16 October) saw a debating event involving members of the Thurrock Youth Cabinet and elected members of Thurrock Council. In addition there were a number of councillor visits to local schools organised. The sessions took the form of debates, Q and A sessions and a quiz. The following feedback was given by a teacher from The Ockendon Academy;

“The students found it fascinating and the topics discussed by the councillors were all current, some of which they had discussed with their parents at home. They found the whole experience very interesting and informative. They especially liked the fact the councillors were so honest with their answers”

- **British Youth Council/UK Youth Parliament** – Thurrock continues to be represented at national and regional events by its Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) and Deputy Member of Youth Parliament (DMYP). This supports the link between local work and national youth participation.
- **Youth Con 2016** - This event was planned, organised and delivered by members of the Thurrock Youth Cabinet. This included the layout of the venue, registration, running workshops and activities, filming the event and giving speeches. The morning was themed on the topic of discrimination. 85 students took part from across Thurrock secondary schools. One participant provided this feedback;

“I have very much enjoyed my visit. I very much appreciate the time and money you have spent to help us youths to aspire and grow into something amazing.”

Campaign

- **Discrimination Campaign** - Members designed a poster to raise awareness of discrimination and encourage conversation on the topic (see Appendix 1). This has been distributed and displayed in a number of schools and colleges in Thurrock. A youth cabinet member provided the following feedback;

“People from my class noticed the poster in the toilets and they were talking about how it was a good idea. They really liked the picture and thought it was a good way to get people’s attention. Overall, it started a lot of talk in my class about how

the things you say can affect someone else, often unintentionally, and it was a great time to have those conversations.”

Thurrock Youth Cabinet members also took part in the ‘Walk on Line’ roadshows in partnership with the Thurrock Local Children’s Safeguarding Board (LSCB). Discrimination awareness sessions were delivered by members to all Year 5 students in Thurrock – over 2,000 in total.

- **Mental Health Campaign** - 2016/17 saw members continue to work hard to promote ‘Only Human’; a mental health awareness video made by Thurrock young people - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnj8wkmgwzo>. This has now been shown in the majority of Thurrock secondary schools with over 5,000 views.

Engage and Influence

- Members sat on interview panels for a number of posts that carry a responsibility for young people. These include the Director of Children’s Services at Thurrock Council and two Essex Police Officers (Children and Young People leads).
- Setting interview questions for Early Offer of Help (EOH) providers and providing feedback and recommendations that resulted in changes to the commissioned parenting programme.
- Membership of Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Advice and guidance to a range of internal and external partners (Essex Police, Royal Opera House, North East London Foundation Trust) i.e. co-producing questionnaires, developing strategies, effective methods of delivering services to young people.

2.2 Thurrock Youth Work Team

Youth Clubs

- Two youth clubs run on a weekly basis in Thurrock. They offer the opportunity for young people to associate, take part in organised activities and gain access to a range of services and opportunities.
- Tilbury Youth Club has engaged with 220 young people during 2016/17. The club runs every Thursday evening and offers activities including sports, music and art.

- Ockendon Youth Club has been running every Monday evening since February. 35 young people have engaged and been involved in plans for shaping the provision for this new club.
- Both clubs have been supported by partners including Essex Police, Thurrock Youth Offending Service (YOS), Wize Up (drug and alcohol service) and Thurrock Careers. This has enabled young people to receive up to date information and support on a number of topics such as gangs and crime, child sexual exploitation (CSE) and careers guidance.

Street Football Project

- This project has covered a variety of areas where youth clubs are not operating. 85 young people took part in regular sessions and tournaments in 2016/17, benefitting from the physical exercise and social elements of the project.
- 13 young people completed the FA Junior Football Leaders Course – an accredited Football Association coaching course.

Summer Scheme 2016

- Through funding from the Thurrock Community Safety Partnership, the youth work team were able to organise a range of summer trips and activities for young people in Thurrock. Referrals for the scheme were taken from local agencies including youth offending, troubled families, social care and schools.

Music Provision

- URsound music project has been running in Grays throughout 2016/17, providing weekly music sessions for young people and support from youth workers.
- Through funding from the Essex Police & Crime Commissioner, the youth team were able to deliver music projects at The Olive Academy and the Thurrock Youth Offending Service.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 None – this report is for noting and to seek endorsement from Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The work that is associated with the youth Cabinet is critical in ensuring that we have the voice of Thurrock's young people in governance and transparency
- 4.2 The annual report outlines what the Youth Cabinet will be focusing on in the year ahead and confirms the governance arrangements for the coming year.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The Youth Cabinet have been involved in a number of consultation exercises over the year to ensure that young people have a voice in the local decisions which impact both on themselves and the wider communities of Thurrock.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 This piece of work directly links with the 5 corporate priorities of Thurrock Council.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Nilufa Begum**
Finance Officer

The support provided to the Youth Cabinet sits within the Inspire Youth Offer, we will continue to work closely with the Youth Cabinet in relation to the councils savings over the coming year – and actively seek funding opportunities.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Principal Solicitor Children's Safeguarding

The Committee is asked to note the report content and continue to lend its support.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

The Thurrock Youth Cabinet aims to represent the wider community of young people in Thurrock. It is a diverse group in terms of age (11-19 yrs), gender, ethnicity and disability – reflecting the make-up of young people residing in Thurrock. Numerous schools and local groups (including Sea Cadets & Scouts) and schools are represented and the Youth Cabinet has a close link with another local young people's forum: Thurrock's Children in Care Council.

Through its membership and activities the Youth Cabinet is committed to equality and diversity. The membership reflects the diversity of the local area and members run a number of events throughout the year to engage diverse groups (e.g. youth conference, outreach events, joint sessions with the Thurrock Children in Care Council). A number of Youth Cabinet members have trained as Hate Crime Ambassadors and are committed working in this area. In February 2015, the Youth Cabinet will receive a presentation on the newly formed Thurrock Fairness Commission, with a view to getting involved in this.

In terms of access the Youth Cabinet is open to any young people (11-19 yrs) living or been educated in Thurrock.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None.

9. Appendices to the report

None.

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