

Children's Services

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting

Tuesday 12 September 2023

Youth Cabinet Update



Purpose of the report: The Youth Cabinet would like to provide members with an update of their work.

Please note: Thurrock Youth Cabinet are on summer recess from Friday 21 July till Monday 4 September; therefore, no meetings took place during this time. For this report we will provide an update of our work prior to summer recess and share work plans for September onwards.

1.1 **Essex Wildlife Trust**

As part of the Youth Cabinet's ongoing work with Essex Wildlife Trust for the [Nextdoor Nature project](#) ten members of Thurrock Youth Cabinet, along with Essex Wildlife Trust and Riverside Community Big Local Group, completed a successful community litter pick on Wednesday 28 June at Falcon Woods, Grays. Thurrock Youth Cabinet were keen to host the event to help clear the community woodland of unwanted rubbish and waste.

Residents were also invited to join the litter pick, in which two members of the public took part and helped to fill fourteen bags of litter in the process. *Please see appendix A for images of the event.*

Thanks to the success of this event, the youth cabinet, working in partnership with Essex Wildlife Trust and Riverside Community Big Local, will be holding a small community event at Falcon Woods in September. This is an opportunity for residents to drop in, share their views and learn more about the work that the groups have been doing. We look forward to sharing news about this ongoing piece of work.

1.2 **Local Plan**

At June's Working Group Meeting we continued our interactive workshops with Thurrock Council's Local Plan Manager. This month's workshop was slightly different. We grabbed our clipboards and pens and ventured into Grays High Street with Thurrock's Local Plan Manager to carry out a place check. What is a place check? A place check is the simplest way of finding out what a place and its people can tell us about an area and start the process of making change happen.

For us this was an exciting outing, where we were able to learn and practice a new skill with the support of the Local Plan Manager who guided us through the task as we walked through the High Street. On our journey we discussed the space, the buildings, and noted down what we liked, dislike and what could do with improving.

At the end, our feedback was collected up and shared with the relevant team(s) at the council to inform growth plans for the area. We found the site visit to be really interesting. We looked at Grays High Street with different eyes and discussed how small changes could make a big impact.

Over the summer we carried out place checks in our own local communities and we plan to feedback our thoughts to the Local Plan Manager at September's Working Group Meeting. *Please see appendix B for images of site visit.*

1.3 **British Youth Council (BYC) Events**

BYC YouthCon

On Saturday 1 July 2023 seven members of the Youth Cabinet, along with two workers, travelled up to London to take part in the British Youth Council YouthCon event. It saw over 200 young people come together for a day of discussions, guest speakers, workshops, and campaigns all around Youth Voice and making a positive social impact.

The event enabled us to develop our campaign and public speaking skills, build our confidence and improve our ability to express ourselves verbally whilst feeding into the Food for Learning campaign work. The day was extremely valuable to us.

Annual Conference

On Friday 21 July Thurrock's Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) headed to Leeds University for a weekend residential to take part in the British Youth Council's Annual Conference.

The weekend's focus was around the Food for Learning Campaign and creating a Food for Learning Bill. MYP's from across the country debated and voted on five chapters for the Bill, which is now being drafted ready for the House of Commons Sitting in November.

Thurrock young people will be given a chance to discuss and vote on topics around the Food for Learning campaign in the coming months and have the opportunity to take part in Free School Meal lesson plans via their schools. The outcome of these votes in Thurrock will feed into the Food for Learning Bill which MYP's will debate and vote on at the House of Commons Sitting in November. Thurrock's MYP is looking forward to hearing the thoughts and opinions of other young people in the borough and being part of the Commons Sitting.

Members of the Youth Cabinet thoroughly enjoy attending British Youth Council events. They are crucial to our development as we can bring back what we have learnt to our local areas and begin to take action to make positive social change.

1.4 **Dr Dave Smith**

On Tuesday 11 July, four members of the Thurrock Youth Cabinet met Dr Dave Smith, Chief Executive & Managing Director Commissioner during a visit to the Inspire Youth Hub in Grays. The meeting is part of a range of visits by Dr Dave Smith across all services.

The four members enjoyed meeting Dr Dave and spoke to him about the Youth Cabinet's work. This included the recent Youth Wellbeing Day at Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre; the Falcon Woods litter pick in Grays; and their work with the Local Plan Manager on the new emerging Local Plan making sure that young people have a voice on the future of the borough that they live in. *Please see appendix C for image.*

In November Dr Dave Smith will be attending one of our Youth Cabinet meetings. We are looking forward to welcoming him and sharing our news and progress.

1.5 **Work on the horizon**

- Thurrock Youth Cabinet elections for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson roles will take place mid-September. At the next O&S meeting there will be a new Youth Cabinet representative.
- Developing a new strand to our work to encompass SEND Youth Voice. We have felt for a while that this is an area of growth to ensure that the voices of SEND young people are captured in our work.
- Raising knife crime awareness with the support of Essex Police.
- Thurrock Youth Cabinet recruitment drive to replace members that left the cabinet in July.

Appendix A – Falcon Woods Litter Pick Event (June 2023)



Before



After



14 bags of rubbish collected 😊

Planning for a
public consultation
event after the litter
pick



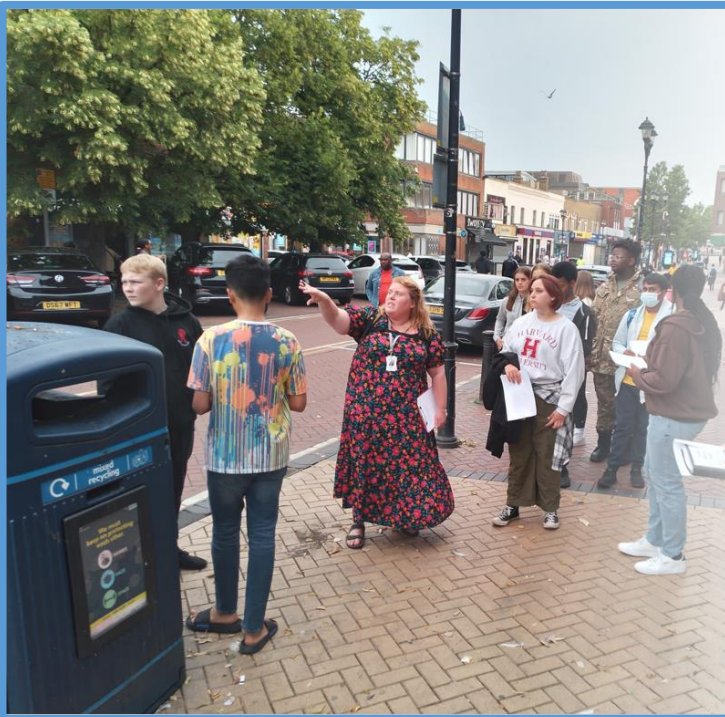
Thurrock's Local Plan

Linking with Thurrock Council's Local Plan Manager



Helping to shape the future of Thurrock

Us taking an active role in helping to shape the future of the borough by taking part in a series of interactive workshops that will inform the new Local Plan.



Appendix C – Youth Cabinet meet Dr Dave Smith (July 2023)

