

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17TH JULY 2014

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

**Children & Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Mrs Ann McCoy
Corporate Management & Finance- Lead Cabinet Member- Councillor David Harrington**

STOCKTON YOUTH ASSEMBLY (SYA)- INTERIM REPORT AND FORWARD PLAN

1. Summary

This report presents Cabinet with an update on the work of the Stockton Youth Assembly (SYA) since its formation in September 2013; and includes proposals for its work programme up to the end of its current term in February 2015.

2. Recommendations

1. That Cabinet note the work of the SYA to date and approve the proposals for the SYA Forward Plan.
2. The next SYA Borough Wide Annual Debate be held in Summer 2015 following the local elections.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To appraise Cabinet of the work of the Stockton Youth Assembly since the Annual Debate held in September 2013.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

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SUMMARY

This report presents Cabinet with an update on the work of the Stockton Youth Assembly (SYA) since its formation in September 2013; and includes proposals for its work programme up to the end of its current term in February 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Cabinet note the work of the SYA to date and approve the proposals for the SYA Forward Plan.
2. The next SYA Borough Wide Annual Debate be held in Summer 2015 following the local elections. .

DETAIL

Background

1. Members will recall that the new model for Youth Participation in Stockton agreed by Cabinet replaced the former Shadow Youth Board with a more representative “Youth Assembly” that seeks to involve young people in innovative and accessible ways, taking part in activities/consultations to guide the work we do as a Council. The first Borough-wide Debate took place on 30 September 2013 and brought together the SYA members, Elected Members, and key officers to discuss the following key policy areas that most affected young people:
 - Health & Wellbeing
 - Getting Ready for Work
 - Arts and Leisure
 - Police & Crime
 - Communities & Environment
2. Following the Debate, the SYA’s Forward Plan was developed for the period of September – May and included several issues arising from these discussions to be considered in more detail by the SYA. This report outlines the work that the SYA has carried out to date since that time and proposes further issues to be considered by the SYA until their term of office ends in February 2015.

3. There are currently 19 SYA members representing eight schools, sixth form and colleges across the borough, universal youth clubs, young carers, looked after children, LDD, and Stockton's Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) and Deputy MYP

The Work Programme to Date

4. Meeting of the SYA have so far been held in North Shore Academy Community Zone and Stockton Town Hall. The first formal SYA meeting took place in November 2013, and Jessica Belch, MYP, was appointed as Chair of the Assembly, with Ciaran Poole, the Deputy MYP, appointed as Vice-Chair. Over the first two meetings the SYA considered and contributed to the development of key governance documents in respect of their Code of Conduct and Rules of Procedure for SYA meetings, outlining acceptable behaviour accepted at the meetings and as a member of the SYA. The British Youth Council and the Council's Code of Conducts/Rules of Procedure were used as examples of best practice. The SYA also considered the outcomes of the Annual Debate, copy attached at **Appendix 1**.
5. At the same meeting the SYA contributed views towards the topic of Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing, first raised at the Annual Debate and examined the needs of children and young people and whether services were available to meet these needs. Members noted the main issues for them regarding mental health and the support they would like to see made available. The Public Health Team took on board the SYA's views and returned to the Assembly in May this year to present an update on the draft Health Needs Assessment which indicated the services children and young people had said that they need, and whether these services were in place to meet those needs.
6. The SYA also had an input into the development of a Sport and Leisure programme for young people. SYA Members highlighted the activities that they would be interested in; the types of venues they thought would be suitable for activities, and times that would be most appropriate. The SYA established a smaller Task and Finish Group to meet further with the Councils Leisure & Sport Development Manager on the proposed programme. The results were reported back to the SYA in May with emphasis placed on the importance of getting the pricing structure correct, having appropriate venues from which to provide activities that were available for use after school and at weekends; to have reliable public transport, and have a diverse range of sports and leisure offer within the programme.
7. Following the results of the Crime and Disorder Survey, the Community Safety Team planned to visit schools to address young people's concerns regarding robbery. Before doing so, the Team attended the SYA to gain their views on the questionnaire they had devised to take into school. The Members made several suggestions for how the information could be presented to young people in schools and discussed their views on crime. The Community Safety Team amended their approach to include the SYA's feedback and would report on the outcome to a future meeting. The SYA were keen to explore further how they could contribute to alleviating alcohol related crime and domestic violence.
8. Getting ready for work: In summer 2013 the YMP and Deputy MYP had consulted and encouraged young people to get involved in the British Youth Council's Mark Your Mark campaign, identifying the top five issues from the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) manifesto to be debated in the House of Commons. The top three issues for Stockton were zero tolerance towards bullying (306 votes), better work experience (268 votes) and apprenticeships (233 votes). The SYA decided to take forward a local campaign regarding better work experience and apprenticeships, as part of the National Curriculum for Life – which was one of the top two issues nationally – and in addition had an input into the Children & Young People Select Committee's Scrutiny Review of Education and Employment in the first instance. The Select Committee presented their findings from the review to the SYA who then discussed their views on access to work experience, careers advice, and entering the job market. Their views helped shape the Select Committee's recommendations to Cabinet, which included a recommendation

to support the SYA's local campaign. The Members will campaign for these issues to be debated at the next Make Your Mark campaign.

9. Nationally, the second top issue to be taken forward from the Make Your Mark Campaign was Votes at 16 and SYA Members took part in this campaign via their informal meetings.
10. The SYA has achieved a substantial increase in the participation of young people from all communities across the borough in Council Services. Through their work SYA Members have had an input in shaping council services for the future, debating future needs, in addition to engaging with the Councils Scrutiny Review of Education and Employment and work programme activities. The SYA has assisted in ensuring that the Councils communication with young people is effective and thereby ensuring that the young people's voice is heard. The SYA has also engaged on a national level through the Make Your Mark campaign and on a regional level through the course for their development, and has championed with the Council and beyond the Young Carers Quest Project raising general awareness of the contribution of young carers and their needs.

Development Activity

11. To ensure that the SYA Members are fully supported to represent young people across the borough and have the confidence to carry out the work of the SYA, it is vital that the skills they have are recognised and they are also given the opportunity to develop new skills to enhance their role.
12. The British Youth Council's (BYC) Youth Voice Award accredits hard work that young representatives do in their communities. SYA Members have begun their qualifications by accessing the Youth Voice Award to recognise and accredit the hard work that they carry out within their local communities, and also challenge them to try something new, exciting and innovative. SYA members will be required to complete at least ten hours of varying activities in order to gain the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) accredited award. By taking part in this award they will be able to reflect on the different skills that they have learnt, develop new skills and maybe learn something new about themselves and the young people they represent.
13. Eight SYA members attended the BYC's Youth Voice Leadership Development Programme on 11 – 13 April, joining over 300 young people from across the country on the flagship programme. The programme consisted of seven tailored training courses that supported young people to be successful youth voice leaders in their community. The SYA members were engaged in two of the seven programmes on offer; one for Youth Councillors and the other for Members of Youth Parliament. On all programmes the young people gained:
 - The opportunity to learn about their role through practical and essential sessions
 - Practical leadership skills to enhance their position and strengthen their community
 - A simulated exercise that challenges their skills and knowledge, the 'Forgeford Council', took place. The Youth Councillors Group 9, which several SYA members were a part of and was delivered by Stockton Youth Workers, won this part of the national competition.
 - An understanding on the BYC and how SYA members can be involved in local and national campaign issues and/or further their experience with exciting BYC opportunities.
14. The MYP has been successful in achieving a position on the National Scrutiny Group (NSG), which is made up of young people who work with the Government and Minister to ensure that their views and needs are taken into account when developing policies that affect them. The NSG, made up of 15 young people aged 11 – 19 from across England, will enable Government departments and ministers to make more informed decisions, by giving young people's views on content and implementation policy. The group will work together to identify a number of priority issues for the coming year. Ministers will also be asked to consider engaging with the NSG on

issues that need to be 'youth proofed'. The MYP has also been successful in becoming a member on the NHS Youth Forum, another National forum that she has a valued voice on.

15. The BYC has helped NHS England bring together a group of the young people to help shape health services. The group will bring together a diverse range of young people to give advice and opinions on healthcare policies, provide ideas on how services can be improved and hold both Commissioners and the NHS England Board to account for their decision making. The group will come together three times a year to work directly with decision makers regarding key areas of work. The work will be decided in partnership with the young people's group. They will also be involved in on-going work throughout the year; this will involve connecting via email and social media, as well as taking part in discussions, review and feeding back on materials outside of meetings. This will be done through forums such as the recently launched dedicated Facebook page.
16. Stockton have travelled to BYC Regional Conventions events over the past year and continue to prove to be the best at opening out this offer to all sectors of Youth Voice from across the borough to ensure that young people can access what happens both regionally and nationally. Stockton have networked to support partners from our area in accessing these conventions including: Eastern Ravens, Billingham Youth Town Council, Skate Park User groups as well as all SYA members bringing together a real Youth Voice for Stockton feel to these meetings. Each region host three BYC Conventions that will:
 - Support young people to develop their skills and knowledge to be effective in representing their peers locally, nationally and internationally
 - Feed into consultations (including National Government Consultations and the national scrutiny services) in order to influence decision makers
 - Share and learn from other young people from a variety of representative roles within the region. The agendas have a varied feel and have included Make Your Mark regional results meetings, Holocaust Survivor Presentations, Art/graffiti workshops and lots of fun activities.
17. An event was held to celebrate Youth Voice, with groups from across the borough joining together to celebrate young people's involvement in Stockton's Youth Voice opportunities. The evening, held at Preston Hall in October 2013, was packed with fun entertainment, comedy and a real celebration. Stockton SYA invited schools from across the borough that supported the MYP elections process, Eastern Ravens YC Aloud, Billingham Youth Town Council, and CiCC, to encourage inclusive youth voice opportunities and support working in the coming year.
18. The SYA now also has a presence on the SBC website, which signposts young people to agendas and minutes of the SYA and contact information for the MYP and Deputy. The site will continue to be developed with content relating to SYA activity, and in a format likely to engage most effectively.

Work Programme 2014/15

19. Further dates for the SYA formal meetings have been booked on a two monthly basis up to and including January 2015. The MYP election and appointment of the SYA members will take place in February 2015. The current Forward Plan identified items up to July 2014.
20. At the SYA meeting in March, the Community Safety Team requested to return to discuss other issues, including alcohol related crime. It is also noted that the Police and Crime Panel have established a Task and Finish Group to explore the work carried out by the Police and Community Safety in Schools, and the SYA will have input to this work at their next meeting in July.

21. Following consultation with service leads present at the Annual Debate, other issues identified for further consideration, were:

- Perceptions of Anti-Social Behaviour
- Phone App for signposting to activities (being developed by University and PCC) and involvement in advertising events
- Volunteering
- School Nursing Service / Teenage Health Checks
- School Libraries and book clubs

22. Given the amount of work still to be considered it is therefore proposed that the Borough-wide Debate not be held in September 2014 and instead the above issues be added to the SYA Forward Plan for the period May 2014 – January 2015.

23. The MYP, Deputy MYP and SYA Members term of office ends in February 2015. An election for the MYP and Deputy MYP will take place and appointments for representatives to the SYA will then be sought. Following this process, both the Local and Parliamentary Elections will take place, and the Council's AGM will be held on 3 June 2015. It is therefore suggested the SYA Borough Wide Annual Debate be held in June 2015 to coincide with the Councils democratic procedures and set its priorities for the following two years.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

24. Participation work will need to be met from existing budgets.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

25. None arising from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

26. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

27. Stronger Communities

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

28. Cabinet Members for Children & Young People and Corporate Management & Finance, both of whom are members of the SYA. Consultation on this report will also take place with the SYA at their next meeting on 15th July 2014.

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Education related? No

Background Papers

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors All

Property None