

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR DECISION**

#### **PROPOSED NEW CO-OPTED MEMBER – SLOUGH YOUTH PARLIAMENT**

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

This report seeks approval for the appointment of a non-voting co-opted member to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel. This member is Hamzah Ahmed who will be representing the Slough Youth Parliament if appointed.

##### **2 Recommendations**

That Hamzah Ahmed be appointed, as the Slough Youth Parliament representative, to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel as a non-voting co-opted member.

##### **3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel is part of the scrutiny system at Slough Borough Council (SBC), which meets the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.

3.2 The work of the Panel reflects the following priority of the Five Year Plan:

- Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances.

3.3 Overview and Scrutiny is a process by which decision-makers are accountable to local people, via their elected representatives for improving outcomes relating to all priorities for the Borough and its residents. Scrutiny seeks to influence those who make decisions by considering the major issues affecting the Borough and making recommendations about how services can be improved.

#### 4 **Legal, Human Rights and Other Implications**

##### (a) Financial

There are no financial implications specific to the recommendations in this report.

##### (b) Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with this report.

##### (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The Local Government Act 2000 (Section 21 Subsection 10) stipulates that “an overview and scrutiny committee of a local authority... may include persons who are not members of the authority, but... any such persons are not entitled to vote at any meeting of such a committee”. As a result, the proposal is for Hamzah Ahmed to be appointed as a non-voting co-opted member.

##### (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of an EIA in relation to this report.

#### 5. **Supporting Information**

5.1 Further to the legislation mentioned in section 4c of this report, SBC's Constitution Part 4.5 (Sections 3.1 – 3.2) allows for all four scrutiny committees to appoint up to six non-voting co-opted members. These do not include the voting co-opted members who represent education, whose position is not affected by the proposal.

5.2 The Constitution also specifies that the relevant Panel making the appointment must take a vote on the nominated individual. This vote should bear in mind “the positive input an individual or organisation may make to the scrutiny process”. Given this, Hamzah Ahmed has been nominated as a representative of the Slough Youth Parliament.

5.3 Slough's Youth Parliament has been established in order to give young people in Slough the ability to influence and be involved in decision making in the town. The Youth Parliament represents 11-19 year olds from across Slough, and includes members from underrepresented groups. As a result, the creation of a position on the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel would be consistent with this objective.

5.4 The Slough Youth Parliament has just completed its first year of operation. In this short time, it has completed its constitution and designed a manifesto and also become active on the local and national stage. Having undertaken work on increasing youth participation in the Make Your Mark scheme (from 6% in 2014 to 67% in 2016, the second best turnout in the UK) and campaigned on lowering the voting age to 16, it has proved its efficacy in having an impact on the debate. It has also made recommendations to the Wellbeing Board regarding mental health amongst young people and a curriculum to prepare young people for life.

- 5.5 In addition, members of the Youth Parliament are already integrated into local decision-making. Holding seats on a variety of strategic groups (e.g. The Children and Young People's Partnership Board and Safer Slough Partnership), the appointment of Hamzah Ahmed to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel would bolster the voice of those affected by SBC's actions in the policy area.
- 5.6 In terms of the individual being nominated, Hamzah Ahmed has been elected by other youth delegates as Slough's first representative to the UK Youth Parliament. Having promoted Slough Youth Parliament's campaigns on a national platform, he has also met with senior politicians and lead a debate in the House of Commons. These experiences will allow him to contribute in an effective fashion to the Panel's meetings.
- 5.7 Given the nature of Slough Youth Parliament's remit, the individual nominated in this case will be time limited. However, the Panel is also asked to make the appointment an on-going one, with Hamzah Ahmed to be replaced by a suitable nominee once he requires replacement.

## 6. **Comments of Other Committees**

This report is not being considered by any other committees. However, should the proposal be accepted then notification will be given to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## 7. **Conclusion**

The appointment of Hamzah Ahmed to the Education and Children's Services Panel will increase the diversity of viewpoints included in the Panel's membership. It will also support the aim of ensuring that the voice of service users is central in improving local provision.

## 8. **Background Papers**

Slough Youth Parliament – First Year Report.