

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

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WARD(S): All

PART I

FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

SLOUGH YOUTH PARLIAMENT

1. Purpose of Report

To advise the Board on the structure and work of the Slough Youth Parliament (SYP).

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

That the Panel endorses the work being undertaken by the SYP and is recommended to note this report.

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

The SYP 2017 / 2018 manifesto is broad in scope and helps to address and/or contribute to a number of areas of importance identified by the Wellbeing Board, including improving the mental health and wellbeing of residents (including young people), in Slough.

By providing young people with opportunities to have their voice heard and to shape service planning and delivery; Slough's Youth Parliament Manifesto makes significant contributions to delivery of the following Five Year Plan outcome:

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, helpful and successful

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

Currently the work of the Youth Parliament is totally funded via the Council's Young People's Service. This may need reviewing if the work continues to grow.

(b) Risk Management

There are no risk management implications to this report

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

No Equalities Impact Assessment has been necessitated by the compilation of this report.

5. Supporting Information

Background

- 5.1 In 2014 the Slough Children and Young People's Partnership Board (CYPPB) approved the implementation of an elected Youth Parliament for Slough. Building on the existing Youth Cabinet, which was made up of young people nominated to sit on the group, the CYPPB was keen for young people in Slough to have a truly representative group, democratically chosen by young people, which was able to influence decision making across the town.
- 5.2 The Young People's Service was charged with taking this forward as part of the wider Youth Voice agenda and worked closely with schools to implement the borough's first Youth Parliament.

Selection process

- 5.3 Any young person aged 11-19, living in Slough was able to nominate themselves to stand as a candidate on behalf of their school or college. Each participating school was an election ward, and held elections, where every student was able to vote. In the end over 120 young people put themselves up to stand for elections which first took place in January 2015.
- 5.4 Campaigning and elections took place across 12 secondary schools and East Berkshire College. Using the first past the post system, the two candidates with the highest number of votes at each school become Members of Slough Youth Parliament (SYP) for a two year term. 5,596 youngsters voted for their chosen representatives with some schools achieving over 90 percent turnout in their elections, and the average turnout for the borough was 61percent.
- 5.5 The second SYP elections took place in January 2017. Involvement from schools increased during this cycle resulting in participation from 17 local secondary schools, 95 young people stood for election and 8018 young people voting for their Youth representatives; some schools achieved over 90 per cent turnout in their elections and the average turnout for the borough increased to 78.6 percent. This compares favourably with national averages which usually are in the region of 23% turnout. (Median average based on 2012-14 figures from British Youth Council (BYC)).

- 5.6 The Young People's Service is currently working with 19 secondary schools plus Windsor Forest Group, Langley campus to raise awareness of and encourage young people to stand in next elections, due January 2019.
- 5.7 SYP is currently made up of 33 elected young people aged 12-19. As well as the members elected through schools and colleges, 4 representatives come from 'co-opted' groups from under represented young people. This includes lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender young people, service users and young carers. SYP is currently working to build closer ties with the Children in Care Council group 'Reach Out'.
- 5.8 SYP usually meets at least twice a month, and host guest speakers from partner agencies to inform discussion and decision around pertinent issues. In addition to their monthly meetings, youth representatives participate in a range of training and enrichment activities including volunteering at community events, attending away days and residential. Youth Representatives also sit on a variety of strategic groups or community forums, these include the Safer Slough Partnership Board, Independent Police Advisory Group and local police forums, CAMHS Participation Group, Cultural Educational Partnership, secondary schools Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) network, Wellbeing Board, Education and Scrutiny Board and since 2018, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Members also have also had the opportunity to represent Slough on the national stage, for example at British Youth Council conventions, The All Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs, Youth Select Committees and the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP).

Progress to date

- 5.9 Youth Representatives designed and hosted Slough Youth Awards in November 2016 & 2017, to profile young people in a positive way and celebrate their contribution to Slough. This has now become a regular event for the town. Slough Youth Awards has had 100 nominees and 500 attendees in total across both years. Over 70 nominations have now been received for 2018's awards, ceremony due 8th November 2018.
- 5.10 SYP recommended to Head Teachers in 2017 & 2018 to set up a schools' PSHE network aiming to map local delivery of the subject, share resources, align content and improve PSHE teaching. The network has been established and schools are now working together on this area for first time, it has already met twice this year with next meeting due in October 18.
- 5.11 Slough had one participant take part in Make Your Mark ballot (largest Youth consultation in UK) in 2013. In 2014, promoted by Young People's Service, 697 young people took part. In the first year of SYP, it was promoted by Youth Representatives for the first time and 6487 young people took part. Slough was awarded in Parliament for being the most improved L.A in UK.
- 5.12 In 2017, the turnout improved to 7883 participants with Slough getting the second highest % turnout in UK. This improved further to 9368 participants in 2017. Slough achieved the top % turnout in the UK with 80% and received another award in parliament. 2018 results due Oct 2018 with all our secondary schools registered to take part for the first time and youth representatives coordinating the consultation within their schools. SYP brought these results to the attention of local decision makers, including elected members, the MP for Slough and the Slough Association of Secondary Heads. The five issues with the most votes locally were:

- 1) Work experience hubs for 11-18 year olds
- 2) Making public transport cheaper
- 3) A curriculum to prepare us for life
- 4) Protecting school budgets from damaging cuts
- 5) Votes at 16

- 5.13 SYP designed and shared a young people's community safety questionnaire in 2015 which received over 300 responses. This provided data for the first time regarding young people's concerns and fed into the SSP's community safety strategy. The survey was updated and revisited in May 2018, this time receiving 976 responses. Key trends were shared with local decision makers at both SSP and Wellbeing Boards. The survey was followed up with 2 focus groups with SYP in Aug 2018 with further focus groups in the community planned for autumn 2018. The feedback is intended to inform the SSP gangs' strategy and the refresh of their priorities.
- 5.14 Youth Representatives also worked with East Berks Clinical Commissioning group (CCG). In 2017, they were consulted on the design of their health survey ensuring that it was young people friendly. The survey was launched on Oct 10th 2017 to mark World Mental Health day and SYP promoted it at school and social media with 974 responses collected from East Berkshire including almost half, 448 from Slough.
- 5.15 Survey results were followed up with focus group in January 2018 with key themes were presented by Youth Representatives at school head teachers' conference *Emotionally Healthy Schools: making the invisible visible* in February 2018. Rachel Cross (conference organiser) said "*it was excellent and really put the conference firmly back into reality for the delegates*". The key themes have also informed the refresh of the East Berks local CAMHS transformation plan due to be published in Oct 2018.
- 5.16 Since Feb 18, SYP designed and delivered 31 assemblies or presentations across their schools, challenging mental health stigma. SYP continue to lobby for every secondary school to provide access to a school counsellor, although this campaign has also resulted in universal counselling in the community being commissioned in Slough through provider Youth Talk and online through Kooth.com which they also continue to promote.
- 5.17 SYP has been actively involved in community cohesion and inter generational work most recently hosting Equaliteas community event to mark representation of peoples act through structured round table discussions and debate in July 2018 with youth groups, community groups and residents. Working with local charity Aik Saath , SYP have also held 9 young people Question time events since March 15, with a total of approx. 600 attendees across all 9 events, latest being a special with local MP Tan Dhesi in July 18.
- 5.18 Successfully lobbied elected members across parties to support votes at 16 in both 2015 & 2018. Full council passed a motion in April 18 and are now setting up a working group. Youth Representatives also continue to lobby for a change to adult fares on public transport for young people and are due to meet with senior managers from operator, First, in Oct 18.

Awards and national recognition

- 5.19 Slough has had strong representation at national events, for example during the last 3 years, Youth Representatives have spoken in UK Youth Parliament debate in House of Commons on issues such as curriculum for life, cheaper fares for young people on public transport and votes at 16, the latter was featured on Channel 4 news.
- 5.20 Youth reps were interviewed and featured across national news in May 2018 including BBC news at 10, speaking about gender equality following the statue unveiling of Millicent Fawcett in Parliament Sq. More recently they have appeared on BBC Berkshire radio discussing issues such as protecting youth work and votes at 16.
- 5.21 In autumn 2016, SYP were shortlisted in the youth volunteering and social action category at the Children and Young People Now Awards. At Slough Voluntary Sector Awards, individual youth reps were recognized for their hard work and have won the young volunteer of the year award in both 2015 and 2016. In 2017, SYP were awarded as the runner up in their community group of the year category.

6. Comments of Other Committees

Slough Youth Parliament is represented on a wide range of committee's including Education Scrutiny, Slough Safer Partnership and the Wellbeing Board. It is seen as a key and active contributor to a wide range of agendas.

7. Conclusion

Slough Youth Parliament has developed and is now fully embedded in to the wider workings of Slough. It is valued by young people and is seen as a critical influencer by a variety of agencies including the council, health, the police, SASH and Slough SCVS.

The Youth Parliament has also helped put Slough on the map nationally through its work on the UK Youth Parliament and the national Make Your Mark campaign.

In conclusion, the Youth Parliament is integral to the current and future development of Slough and its Members are fantastic ambassadors of the town.

8. Appendices Attached

'A' - Youth Parliament Manifesto 2017-2018

'B' - Make Your Mark Infographic 2017

9. Background Papers

None