

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-023-2019/20

**Date of meeting: 10 December
2018**



Portfolio: Community and Partnership Services (Councillor S. Kane)

Subject: Epping Forest Youth Council - Project Development

Responsible Officer: G. Wallis (01992 564557)

Democratic Services: A. Hendry (01992 564532)

Recommendations:

That the Cabinet agree a DDF sum of £15,000 to be allocated to Epping Forest Youth Council, as a project budget to enable the Youth Council to deliver a range of targeted projects for young people in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Executive Summary:

The Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Review of Youth Engagement in 2015/16 recommended that the Youth Council be granted £8,000 DDF project funding in 2016/17 to provide targeted project work for young people in the district and that the opportunity to secure DDF funding would be available to the Youth Council in subsequent years.

In 2017/18 a further sum of £8,000 was granted for Youth Council project work, which enabled the provision of £5000 for a Street Survival project and £3000 funding to deliver Year 3 of the MiLife emotional health and wellbeing project in local schools.

The Youth Council would like to be able to provide these valuable programmes of work on an ongoing basis for children and young people, as continuity is needed across new cohorts of pupils in the district.

The Youth Council therefore seeks Cabinet approval to grant DDF funding of £15,000, to enable £5,000 to be available for this work in each of the following years, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 21/22.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Review of Youth Engagement in 2015/16, recommended that the Youth Council be able to bid for project funding each year, in order for them to develop and deliver activities and projects for young people. It is now requested that approval is given for DDF funding to be available for a three year period in order for the Youth Council to plan projects over a longer period.

Other Options for Action:

To not provide any funding for Epping Forest Youth Council project work.

Report:

Background

1. Epping Forest Youth Council enables young people to have a voice in their local district and to put forward the views and concerns of other local young people. Since its' inception, the Youth Council has been very proactive in developing a range of

projects and programmes to benefit and support young people across the Epping Forest District, including anti-bullying, emotional health & wellbeing and drugs awareness campaigns.

2. The core budget for the Youth Council covers costs of training, travel and meeting expenses for the Youth Councillors, but does not contain any project funding. However, the Youth Council actively seeks external funding and has been successful in securing up to £8,000 in previous years, from organisations such as Essex County Council, the Jack Petchey Foundation and High Sheriff's Awards.
3. An Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish panel was set up in 2015/16 to review Youth Engagement across the district in 2015/16 and part of this included a complete review of the District Youth Council and its' functions. A result of this was a recommendation that the Youth Council be granted £8,000 DDF project funding in 2016/17, in order to provide targeted project work for young people in the district and, that the opportunity to secure DDF funding would be available to the Youth Council in subsequent years.
4. This initial funding was used for the development of MiLife, an adolescent mental and emotional health and wellbeing programme, which was designed directly around concerns that had been raised by local young people. Council funding was matched with £4,000 from Essex County Council Youth Strategy Fund and this enabled the provision of MiLife to all young people in local secondary schools in the district. The Council further funded MiLife in 2017/18 and over 8000 young people aged 11-17 have taken part in the programme since it started. Due to its success, it has also been modified for Primary Schools and is now available in digital form, so that it provides online support to children and young people. The project's success also led to it being awarded the National Crimebeat Award this year, following nomination by the High Sheriff of Essex.
5. The Youth Council would like to be able to provide this valuable resource on an ongoing basis for children and young people in the district and will need committed funding to enable this to be possible.
6. They would also like to launch a new programme of work entitled 'Street Survivor', which aims to help prevent young people from being drawn into gangs and associated gang culture. This will be through targeted work to build resilience and confidence in individuals and by raising awareness of the risks of being involved in gangs.

Summary

As both of these programmes of work will need continuity across new cohorts of pupils in the district, the Youth Council seeks Cabinet approval to grant DDF funding of £15,000, to enable £5,000 to be available for this work in each of the following years, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 21/22.

Resource Implications:

Officers from the Council's Community Health and Wellbeing Team organise, manage and facilitate the Epping Forest Youth Council work and liaise with partner agencies that may wish to work with EFYC.

External funding already secured by EFYC in 2018:

National Crimebeat Award - £1000

Jack Petchey - £1500

Total external funding secured - £2500

Legal and Governance Implications: N/A

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

This report relates wholly to Community Safety.

Consultation Undertaken:

Comprehensive consultation and evaluation of the MiLife programme has been undertaken with schools, including evaluation forms completed by pupils and teachers. Informal feedback is also obtained from partners. EFYC is discussed at EF Youth Council Strategy meetings and partners are also contacted for their comments.

Background Papers:

Corporate Plan Medium Term Aim 3

Risk Management:

It has been identified that youth nuisance and anti-social behaviour are becoming more prevalent and it is suggested that the MiLife programme may help to prevent some young people from being drawn into this kind of behaviour.

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided at Appendix 1 to this report.