

**YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 6.30pm on 12 JANUARY 2017**

Present: Councillor M Lemon (Chairman)
Councillors P Fairhurst and B Light

Officers present: P Snow (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager) and
J Starr (Community Officer, Drugs and Alcohol)

YWG19 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2016 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

YWG20 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT UPDATE FROM COUNCIL MEETING AND NEXT STEPS

The Chairman confirmed that he had reported on progress made by the working group at the Council meeting on 8 December 2016 and that members had voted to proceed with the formation of a youth council for Uttlesford with a request for a further report back after an initial period of three months. In practice, this would mean submitting a report to the meeting of the Council scheduled for the beginning of April next year.

The Community Officer reported on arrangements already made for visits to local schools and said that the next step was to try to secure some firm commitments to enable the election or nomination of pupils to serve on the proposed youth council.

Members discussed various ways of achieving suitable publicity in the local press and by other means to be able to put together an election programme. Councillor Fairhurst said that he thought every member of his party group would be prepared to act as a mentor and he would like to see each school identify a member of staff able to take responsibility for the election process. This would add credibility to the whole enterprise and was therefore seen as an essential element in obtaining representation from each senior school in the district.

A number of parish councils such as Flitch Green already had a number of young people involved in projects at local level and this might eventually lead to some of them becoming involved in the proposed youth council. However, in general, schools were seen as a more likely source of youth council membership and this is where most effort would be concentrated.

The realistic expectation was to aim for a representation of four pupils from each school by a mixture of election, nomination and selection.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that the timetable set by Council would allow a three month period for a shadow youth council to be established. Once an initial body was in place more thought could be given

to the longer term aims and composition of the youth council and rules set for all future members to be elected by an agreed process.

The Chairman confirmed that he would put his name to a letter to be sent to the local press advertising the intention to create a youth council and he hoped this would aid the recruitment of more young people. To supplement this initiative schools could be asked to organise their own elections and parish councils asked to send along anyone expressing interest in their local area.

Once established, a shadow youth council could report back on progress being made and this would provide an impetus for more funding to build on the foundations put in place.

Members agreed it was essential to press ahead with the visits to schools. Further efforts would be made to arrange visits to schools in Felsted, Stansted and the Walden School, and a repeat visit made to Saffron Walden County High School.

Equipment and materials would be offered to support the election process, including, wherever possible, properly printed ballot papers, as this would lend credibility to the entire project and give greater confidence to the schools involved. It was agreed, initially, to seek three representatives from each school. The aim should be for at least 18 young people from local schools to come forward to serve on the shadow council with a further three representatives coming from the local community.

John Starr suggested aiming for the first meeting of the shadow body to be in place for the initial meeting to be held on Saturday 18 March. It was agreed to hold a further meeting of the working group on Tuesday 21 February and to invite young people from local schools to attend.

Members agreed to meet at the Walden School in Saffron Walden at 1.50pm on Wednesday 25 January.

YWG21

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

As already agreed the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 21 February.

The meeting ended at 7.50pm.