

Report to Cabinet

November 2020

West Sussex Youth Cabinet Update

Report by the West Sussex Youth Cabinet

Electoral division(s):

Summary

The West Sussex Youth Cabinet has been invited to attend the Cabinet meeting on 24 November to provide an update on its activities and future plans. This paper has been provided by the Youth Cabinet to give some background information to support its update.

Recommendations

Cabinet is invited to discuss the update.

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Youth Cabinet and UK Youth Parliament for West Sussex is an organisation made up of 46 young people, between the ages of 11 and 18, who are elected to represent the views of young people in West Sussex.
- 1.2 We work on various campaigns. Some are decided by Make Your Mark, a ballot open to all young people in the UK that helps us establish focus points for campaigns. Others are agreed upon by the Cabinet, and what we feel is relevant to the youth of West Sussex, and the UK.

2 Our campaigns

- 2.1 **Environment:** A campaign that focuses on educating people of all ages in West Sussex about ways to live sustainably, and the effects they have on the environment. We have a social media campaign continually running and working with outside companies to tackle climate change through the media. Other events have been organised, such as a series of beach clean-ups.
- 2.2 **Mental Health:** This campaign focuses on the mental well-being and services in West Sussex available to young people. The Youth Cabinet works with external groups and assists with the design and approach taken by many services. There is also a social media campaign running, encouraging positivity and offering advice on how to be mindful. A public blog is running under the Youth Cabinet, where young people and professionals can post blogs about their experience with mental health and any advice they may have.

- 2.3 **Tackling Racial Inequality:** This campaign is centred around ensuring West Sussex is an inclusive, and enjoyable environment for everyone. The Youth Cabinet ran three days of online webinars with speakers discussing racial inequality with signed up members of the public. A social media campaign is running, outputting educational posts about different cultures and religions. Our annual debate with county councillors this year was linked to this campaign; 'Racial Inequality: how to improve and influence the pastoral curriculum at schools and colleges in West Sussex, to ensure all young people have a better understanding of the issue and those experiencing discrimination get the support they need.'
- 2.4 **Covid-19 support:** During the first wave of Covid-19 we ran a social media campaign aimed at young people that encouraged them to get involved with challenges, and boredom busters for lockdown. As well as the more fun and practical side, we advocated for mental health throughout, and made sure our social media output was positive. This campaign will continue to run until it is no longer needed.

3 What next?

- 3.1 Since the new term of this Youth Cabinet started, our working relationship with the County Council has improved significantly. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and council officers have attended several Youth Cabinet sessions and the Cabinet Member is having monthly informal meetings with the Youth Cabinet Chair to update on activities and identify future opportunities. The Cabinet Member's address to Full Council meetings now includes an update from the Youth Cabinet, raising its profile with all county councillors. Introductory sessions were held during the summer with each County Council Cabinet Member and members of the Youth Cabinet interested in their portfolio areas. Also, the Youth Cabinet is now invited to attend and contribute to all meetings of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 As a Youth Cabinet, we want to continue to strengthen the relationship. Our recent involvement with scrutiny committees and the area of interest meetings with individual cabinet members has proven beneficial to all the members of the Youth Cabinet. Further opportunities to be involved with more scrutiny committees or council projects would be welcomed. As a Youth Cabinet, we are going to aim to involve county councillors in our campaigns on a more regular basis.

4 Details

- 4.1 There are no resource, risk, policy or legal implications for the County Council arising from this report by the West Sussex Youth Cabinet.

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Appendices - None

Background papers - None