

TEIGNBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE PART 1

31ST OCTOBER 2019

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| Report Title | Teign View: Youth Network |
| Purpose of Report | To outline options for developing a formal process to consult with and develop channels for engagement with young people |
| Recommendation(s) | The Committee RECOMMENDS to Council that: (1) A Youth Network is launched between Teignbridge District Council (members and officers) and youth groups (2) A report is taken through the existing Council meeting cycle twice a year to update Members on progress and issues to date |
| Financial Implications | Martin Flitcroft/Head of Finance: Please see item 2.2 below. A full budget proposal would have to be agreed by Executive if this proposal is to be adopted. |
| Legal Implications | No legal implications other than those mentioned. Paul Woodhead, Legal services Team Leader and Deputy Monitoring Officer |
| Risk Assessment | Report author to comment on the Risk Assessment Kay O'Flaherty Business Improvement and Development Team Leader Tel: 01626 215602 Email:kay.oflaherty@teignbridge.gov.uk |
| Environmental/Climate Change Implications | Report author to comment on Environmental/Climate Change implications Kay O'Flaherty Business Improvement and Development Team Leader Tel: 01626 215602 Email:kay.oflaherty@teignbridge.gov.uk |
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| Portfolio Holder | Councillor Martin Wrigley Portfolio Holder for Communities and I.T |
| Appendices | n/a |
| Background Papers | n/a |

1. PURPOSE

To develop both a formal and informal communication process to consult with young people on council issues. This process needs to demonstrate that it is effective and that the views of young people are listened to. The network would be an ongoing series of planned regular and one off events and activities in response to the needs of young people. Findings from consultation and engagement need to be reported through the existing committee structure.

2. REPORT DETAIL

2.1 Background

For the purpose of this report the term young people applies to two age groups as identified by the Office of National Statistics. 2018/19 data shows that 16.3% of the population of Teignbridge are between under 16 years and 7.9% between the ages of 16-24. Combined this is almost a quarter of the whole population and is recognised as an important group to work with to ensure their needs are met and that Teignbridge continues to be a great place for them to live and work. There is an increasing risk of young people leaving the area in search of new opportunities so it is important to ensure that this age group feel valued and listened to, and that they engage in local democracy.

Formal engagement with young people has not taken place since 2008 when the Youth Council initiative ended. There is, however, extensive work that is done with young people in the area that results in key relationships having been established. Active Leisure, the Resorts team and Community Safety all have current work programmes in place and consultation on a range of issues takes place when required. Development and ongoing performance management of the Council Strategy includes consultation with the identified age group to ensure that representation is across the whole demographic of the area.

The Youth Council identified a number of issues including how it was resourced. It was agreed that it was not a sustainable at the time due to increasing costs to encourage attendance, spending on projects and decision making, catering, DBS checks and officer time were too high and it was therefore not economically viable to continue.

In order to develop a way of working for the future it is necessary to acknowledge some key points. Any initiative needs to have the capacity to develop and grow, ensuring that it is a sustainable model for the future. Young people need to be communicated with in their preferred channel which is often not the traditional

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approach adopted in the past. It is also important to recognise that for the majority of young people they do not differentiate between the District, Town and County councils, therefore any feedback that is relevant to Town and Parish or Devon County Council is fed back to the appropriate department for resolution.

There is a need to recognise the work that is already going on across the district, linking in with this rather than setting up an alternative forum. Any consultation must ensure that it engages with young people who are often hard to reach, who may be disadvantaged or at risk as well as those young people who are regularly involved with more mainstream activities. Finally best practice indicates that consultation and engagement is more successful if you go to where the young people already are rather than expect them to come to us.

2.2 Financial

There would be financial implications with some of the suggested options. These would need to be fully costed if the report is agreed. Costs would include any funding of youth initiatives, travel to youth forums and schools, additional officer time and possible investment in new technology for consultation events.

2.3 Legal

DBS requirements may be required, this would need to be explored as part of the development of an action plan and budget requirements.

2.4 Risks

A number of risks have been outlined below. If the proposal is agreed a full analysis of risks would be identified and mitigations put in place to reduce any impact:

- Capacity to deliver the options – resource would need to be identified and a lead officer given responsibility of co-ordinating the action plan
- Lack of engagement from schools and other organisations – lack of resources and competing priorities may make it difficult to take part, by promoting the benefits of the initiative and making it as simple as possible to be involved it would be a more realistic offer for these groups
- Lack of participation from young people – all consultation needs to be in a medium that young people can identify with. Using innovative technology, marketing through social media, video streaming would appeal much more than traditional communication channels
- Not sustainable for the future – the action plan would need a lead officer and involve departments from across the council so that learning is shared and future delivery is not dependant on individuals

2.5 Environmental/Climate Change Impact

There would be a potential positive impact in this approach as young people are often fully aware of the issues faced. Through engagement with young people they may suggest new initiatives to combat climate change, while also raising the profile of good practice within Teignbridge District Council.

By going into schools, youth groups and other existing opportunities this would limit additional travel into council offices to attend consultation forums.

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3.OPTIONS

To develop a Youth Network that creates dialogue between young people and the Council. Officer and Member representatives would attend School Council meetings and other identified youth forums on a quarterly basis. Forums include school council meetings, Young Devon and the Devon Youth Parliament. Feedback from the network would be drawn together in a twice yearly report to Overview & Scrutiny, followed by Executive and Full Council. Any relevant elements would be fed through to Town & Parish councils for implementation. Feedback in a 'You Said, We Did' format would be provided to all groups and individuals that had been involved in the sessions to build confidence in the process.

4.CONCLUSION

Building relationships with the young people of Teignbridge is fundamental to identifying what issues concern them most. Through an innovative range of consultation and engagement opportunities that would appeal to them, it will be possible to develop initiatives that help to meet their needs and ensure that the district remains a place that young people want to live and work.

If agreed these proposals would be explored further and budget proposals put forward where required.