



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
21 September 2017
Agenda Item 7

Ward: N/A

Scrutiny Review of Youth Engagement

Report by the Director for Digital and Resources

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to introduce and attach the findings and recommendations of the Youth Engagement Working Group (previously set up by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of its Work Programme) for consideration by the Committee.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) agreed to establish a Working Group to further develop the Council's engagement with young people which followed the meeting of the Committee on 20 October 2016 when youth engagement across the Adur and Worthing communities was discussed.
- 2.2 The Working Group has held a number of meetings between March and June 2017 to gather information and evidence and has identified a number of conclusions and recommendations which it considers will complement the overall strategic vision of Adur and Worthing Councils to meet the needs of the young people and add some further thinking based on the report's findings.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 JOSC is asked to consider the report and recommendations from the Youth Engagement Working Group, set out as the appendix to this report and refer those recommendations to the Adur and Worthing Joint Strategic Committee for consideration in due course.

4.0 Legal

- 4.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.

- 4.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 4.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 There are some financial implications arising from this report which are included in the appendix to this report.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 JOSOC is asked to consider the report and recommendations from the Youth Engagement Working Group and refer the recommendations to the Adur and Worthing Joint Strategic Committee for consideration in due course.

Local Government Act 1972 Background Papers:

None

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 As part of this report the Youth Council have consulted with their Members.

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.



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Engagement with Young People and the Adur and Worthing Youth Council

Report by the Youth Engagement Working Group

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings and recommendations from the Youth Engagement Working Group which was established as part of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) Work Programme and at the request of the Joint Strategic Committee, to further develop the Council's engagement with young people.
- 1.2 This Working Group wants Adur and Worthing to be places where young people feel that their right to have a say is encouraged, welcomed, valued and respected. This scrutiny review has looked at how the Councils can most effectively improve communication and engage with young people in Council work and improve for them the access to and information about Council and other services/information.
- 1.3 This is a light touch scrutiny review which has gathered evidence and thoughts and formulated conclusions within a three month timeframe. For the purposes of this review the Working Group has looked at the Council's current approach and work on youth engagement, ways to improve how the Councils can involve the young people in planning and in making decisions that affect themselves and others and also at ways that the Councils can support the Adur and Worthing Youth Council, help other young people to find out more about local services for them and to find out what young people want the Councils to provide in terms of services, facilities and concessions.
- 1.4 The Working Group is clearly aware that the primary responsibility for providing effective youth services is undertaken by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) but due to funding cuts there have been reductions in the level of service provided. Adur and Worthing Councils have a social responsibility to assist in the support for youth engagement and have provided a good level of support for the Youth Council and helped provide information for young people via the Council website over a number of years. The Working Group considers that this level of support should be improved as set out in this report to improve youth engagement and to complement the Councils Strategic direction of travel.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 20 October 2016, the Committee discussed youth engagement across the Adur and Worthing communities. The Committee received representations at the meeting from the Adur and Worthing Executive Members for Wellbeing, Council Officers, Adur and Worthing Youth Council, Electric Storm Youth Group, a representative from the student union at Worthing College and from Sussex Clubs for Young People.
- 2.2 The Committee debated and agreed the following recommendations in response to the information gathered at the Committee:-

That the following be recommended to appropriate responsible bodies:-

That the Councils:-

i) Continue to explore all available funding sources to support the Youth Councils and all youth groups in Adur and Worthing;

ii) Subject to the availability of continued grant funding, continue to support the services provided to young people in Adur and Worthing and continue to find new proactive ways to engage with young people by researching and assessing how those needs can be met to support young people, their families and their communities;

iii) Regularly consult with the Youth Council and consider re-introducing 'working with you together' ;

iv) Consider making clearer a single point of contact for communication by young people, and publish 'how to communicate' on the Councils' website which should include using the website to advertise youth groups and encourage collaboration between them;

v) Consider the following proposals submitted by the Youth Council at the meeting to help with better youth engagement;

- Contact West Sussex County Council to suggest that 'Find it Out' centres should also be open on a Saturday rather than just usually open during school time;***
- Listen to opinions even if we don't like them;***
- Write to South Downs Leisure and Impulse Leisure to ask them to make access to tennis courts easier for younger people;***
- Introduce outdoor activities such as chess and table tennis in town centre locations;***
- Engage with young people when investigating regeneration policy;***
- Celebrate young people and promote youth awards locally***

- ***Seek to influence a reduction in transport costs for young people locally;***
- ***Introduce cinema concessions at the Connaught Theatre;***
- ***Contact West Sussex County Council about making the libraries more youth friendly and engaging for young people;***

- 2.3 The recommendations from the Committee were then considered by the Joint Strategic Committee on 10 January 2017 and it was agreed to establish a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group, assisted by the Adur and Worthing Executive Members for Wellbeing, to review the good work undertaken in the area of youth engagement.
- 2.4 Councillors Carol Albury and Stephen Chipp (Adur) and Councillors Roy Barraclough and Nigel Morgan (Worthing) were appointed to the Working Group and were assisted in the work by Councillors David Simmons (Adur) and Val Turner (Worthing). Conrad Street, Katie Waters and Shirley Robinson-Viney from Adur & Worthing Youth Council also attended the Working Group. The Working Group has received valuable input from Jacqui Cooke, Interim Head of Wellbeing and Mel Shaw, Early Help and Neighbourhoods Lead at Adur and Worthing Councils. The Working Group met on 13 March, 26 April and 28 June 2017 as part of its evidence gathering and Councillor Stephen Chipp was appointed as Chairman of the Working Group.
- 2.5 This report provides the detail of the discussions and findings from the Working Group and some recommendations which the Working Group considers will help improve the youth engagement offer already being provided by the Councils and other partners. The report and findings have not just concentrated on a 'shopping list' of 'wants' but have tried to investigate under the surface of youth engagement and the offer provided

3.0 Findings and Proposals

(a) Adur and Worthing Councils - Focus on Youth Engagement

- 3.1 The Working Group initially set out as part of its terms of reference, to discuss the current strategic focus for youth engagement in Adur and Worthing and to discuss the current engagement with Adur & Worthing Youth Council to see if there were any areas of work which the Councils could improve. The Working Group is clear that the Adur and Worthing communities should be places where young people feel that their right to have a say is encouraged, welcomed, valued and respected. It is considered to be important that the Councils continue to open up opportunities for young people to influence debate and decision making. The review has also concentrated on ways for the Councils to improve communication with young people.
- 3.2 As part of this work, the Working Group has been advised that Adur and Worthing Councils resources for youth engagement has been reduced and West Sussex County Council, who were responsible for providing youth services, have also had to reduce their Youth services budgets. This meant that a new approach was required for youth engagement which involved a focus on tackling anti social

behaviour and making sure that children and young people are safe. There was also a stronger focus on targeting communities/disadvantaged groups.

- 3.3 The Working Group has received evidence on the new Systems Leadership approach being applied to youth engagement by Adur and Worthing Councils. This work has involved some of Adur & Worthing's strategic leads including Principal of Northbrook College, the Adur & Worthing Chief Inspector, Director from Adur & Worthing Councils, Local GP's, Senior Officers from West Sussex County Council and Adur & Worthing Councils. Meetings have been held with young people aged 16-19 years who are or had experienced either mental health issues, offending, out of work or training or have lived in unstable conditions. Researchers have also spent time with 12 young people in their place of choice and immersed themselves in their lives for a few hours. The young people have told their stories and identified what helped and what they found difficult. This work has examined what young people require to be able to thrive.
- 3.4 The Working Group has learnt that this new approach has discovered that what young people need to thrive includes:-
- Opportunities to find what you love
 - Feeling like you belong
 - Being seen as a whole person
 - Being ready for the future and independence
 - Taking time for themselves.
- 3.5 Findings also revealed that it was important to expose young people to multiple experiences to challenge perceptions and open up new horizons - Young people needed to be able have a sense of purpose to justify living and also that it was important for young people to have stable predictable relationships, ones that they could trust and ones that would be there in the future.

(b) Community Works - Adur and Worthing Young People's Network

- 3.6 The Working Group has also been updated on work being undertaken by 'Community Works', the voluntary sector provider. Community Works have created a Children and Young People's Network in Adur and Worthing with the first meeting held on 6 July and a further session to be held on 4 October 2017 which will include a presentation from WSCC commissioners. The Network will meet four times per year.
- 3.7 The network is an opportunity to bring together community and voluntary organisations working on issues relating to children and young people, as part or all of their work. The purpose of the network is to share good practice and learning across the sector. It also aims to:

- share opportunities and possibilities for partnership development
- explore and discuss relevant policy developments
- provide a peer support space, with opportunities for training related to bids and tenders
- provide a forum to which the members can invite policy makers, to create dialogue and a space for consultation with the community and voluntary sector in Adur and Worthing.

3.8 The Network is open to any voluntary or community organisation in Adur and Worthing and is self-selecting. Community Works was responsible for running three thematic networks in Adur and Worthing: Children and Young People, Health and Wellbeing, and Volunteer Coordinators.

(c) Support for Adur & Worthing Youth Council

3.9 The Adur & Worthing Youth Council operates as a body for the good of all the young people of Adur & Worthing and provides the youth of Adur & Worthing with a voice and a conduit to adult Councillors and Officers from the Councils.

3.10 From the outset of the review, it was made clear to the Working Group that Adur & Worthing Councils are not able to fund, safely, long term, any shortfalls in support for youth engagement/youth services which are the result of budget cuts made by West Sussex County Council or other partners. Due to the imminent retirement of the current Support Worker, there is a clear need for support to be provided for the Adur & Worthing Youth Council. The Working Group is, therefore, pleased that a small pot of funding (£3,500) is to be identified by the Councils as pump priming, working with Sussex Clubs for Young People who will provide £5,000, to fund a replacement Support Worker for the Youth Council. This will help make the Youth Council more self sustaining and will be for a 12 month period. Sussex Clubs for Young People have indicated that they will produce a briefing on the proposal. However, the Working Group is concerned that the post is only for a relatively short period so it will be essential that the Councils and other partners should continue to find funding for the post beyond the year, perhaps by encouraging local businesses to help support and sponsor the Youth Council and the Support Worker and 'Community Works should also be involved in the search for funding and supporting the development of the Youth Council.

(d) Access for Young People to the Council, Council services and local information

- 3.11 Representatives from the Youth Council have informed the Working Group that young people have found it difficult to find out information on the Council's website about services for young people and also from the 'Find it out Centre' run by West Sussex County Council. The Working Group considers that there is a need for an improved clear 'point of contact/clear channel of communication within the Councils or improved website pages to provide young people with the relevant information/support that they require. The Working Group, therefore, urges the Councils to facilitate this by improving the Young People's' pages on the website, making them more interactive for use by young people and utilising appropriate social media tools. This could be in the form of a Portal or Dashboard which provides a signpost to Council and community information. Information should also seek to promote the Youth Council for the benefit of the young people in the Adur & Worthing communities. Contact should also be made with West Sussex County Council to see if access to information available from the 'Find it Out Centres' could be improved.

(e) Adur & Worthing Councils - Commitment to Young People

- 3.12 The Youth Council have also indicated that they would like some form of commitment from the Adur & Worthing Councils to consider the views of young people when writing reports and also formulating new policies or revising existing ones. The Youth Council consider that the views of young people are often overlooked. As part of this the Working Group also considers that there needs to be ongoing regular consultation with the Youth Councils and other young people about local issues and those affecting young people.
- 3.13 It was also suggested that some local Councillors should be encouraged to make better use of social media tools such as 'Snapchat' and 'Twitter' to improve engagement with young people who use such tools on a regular basis.

(f) What young people want? - Youth Council Focus Groups

- 3.13 As part of the review, the Youth Council sought the views of young people on Council and other partner services and what they expect to be provided and any concessions. The Youth Council created some Focus Groups to undertake this work and as part of the reviews, the Focus Groups designed surveys that were sent to children at all secondary schools in the Adur & Worthing area asking for views on:-

A review of Discount Cards - As part of this, letters were being sent to local businesses and the Councils to establish what discounts were available and to try and secure new discounts;

Theatres Reductions - This is also looking at the possibility of the Worthing Theatres venues offering discounted tickets on one day a week for young people;

Street Furniture - This Focus Group was mapping out areas where street furniture could be located ; and

Affordable Gyms

- 3.14 A summary of the findings from these surveys is attached as an appendix to this report. The findings show that the young people feel that there is a need for cheaper theatres tickets, a suggestion for more street furniture and also the provision of a concession card. The Working Group notes these findings and would encourage relevant Council Officers/Service areas to undertake further work with the Youth Council to see if any of their requests can be introduced by the Councils or other stakeholders/businesses.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The Working Group would like to thank all those involved in this review for their collective knowledge, stories and insight that has enabled the Working Group to draw together its findings and develop its recommendations.
- 4.2 The recommendations and findings in this report are intended to compliment the overall strategic vision of Adur and Worthing Councils to meet the needs of the young people and add some further thinking based on what young people and our investigations have told us during the course of this review.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 That the proposed agreement between Sussex Clubs for Young People and Adur and Worthing Councils to provide some much needed funding for the provision of a support worker for the Adur & Worthing Youth Councils for 12 months be welcomed but that the Councils, working with Community Works and other partners to support the development of funding and governance of the Youth Council, be encouraged to continue to source other funding streams that will enable the continuation of the Support Worker post beyond the 12 month period, possibly encouraging local businesses to sponsor the Youth Council;**

Why? - Because there is a need to provide support for the Youth Council for the good of the young people and to work with the young people involved.

- 6.2 That the Councils help to develop an improved formal channel of communication for the young people wishing to access information for local services provided by the Councils and others for young people. It is suggested that this could be implemented by improving the young people's pages on the Councils' website and also identifying an appropriate point of**

contact within the Councils for young people to go to when they require assistance which will help improve the support provided for young people. It is also considered that there is a need for an improved social media dashboard/portal.

Why? - Because young people have told us that the website pages are ineffective and do not provide useful information, or meet their needs.

- 6.3 That the Councils commit to consult with the Youth Councils on any new policies or amendments to existing policies which are being considered that might impact on young people and when reports are being produced that they include a section on the implications for young people.**

Why? - Because Young People have told us that they want to be involved in their community and have a say in issues that affect them. At the moment there is a general view from young people that their views are being overlooked by the Councils.

- 6.4. That the Systems Leadership work approach being undertaken by Adur and Worthing Councils be welcomed as an effective way to engage with young people to find out more about what they need from their communities.**

Why? - Because this approach is a good way to engage with young people and find out what they need to thrive.

- 6.5 That the findings from the Youth Council Focus Groups/surveys be noted and the Working Group would encourage relevant Council Officers/Service areas to undertake further work with the Youth Council to see if any of their requests can be introduced by the Councils or other stakeholders/businesses.**

Why? - Because the Working Group considers that the views of young people are important and young people should be listened to. It may not be possible to introduce everything that is being requested but further discussions by the Councils and others may lead to long term improvements for young people services.

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

None

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APPENDIX

Report for Youth Engagement Group

Prepared by Adur and Worthing Youth Council

Having just completed a 2yr project about Worthing Pier the Youth Council decided to look at new projects for them to consider for the following year.

It was decided to focus on 1 long term issue and 2/3 short term issues - Theatre concessions for young people, providing activity based street furniture and, the long term project, a concession card for local retail stores.

These are all for students within the Borough and District of Adur and Worthing.

AIMS

Theatre Concessions

- To increase the number of young people attending the cinema/theatre in Worthing.

Street Furniture

- To provide alternate, additional outdoor activity equipment throughout the locality to engage those young people not catered for.
- To expand on the range of social space activities for young people to utilize.

Concession Card

- To expand on young people's use of local businesses, encouraging them to see Worthing as an alternative shopping destination to other bigger towns.
- To encourage businesses to embrace the young people as future consumers of their products.
- To bridge the gap between child concessions and those already in paid employment.

METHODOLOGY

- A survey compiled on google forms, reaching out to students within senior groups (11-18 years old) to gain insight into where to focus our attentions.
- Discussions within friendship groups.
- Research into what is already available in the locality and beyond, gathering information and photos for existing theatre prices, locations of street furniture and up and running card schemes.

FINDINGS

The results from our survey produced the follow outcomes:

- Our targets demographic age is 11-19 years old, which is made up of 81.1% 11—14yr, 10/7% 15-17yr, 8.2% 18+yr. 64% of those surveyed reside within Worthing Borough, 36% reside within Adur.
- Young people told us that available to them currently are the following: play parks (84%), outdoor gym (43%), seating (55%), sheltered seating (32%),

playing fields (68%), skate parks (47%), tennis courts (25%), basketball courts (42%), bins/street furniture (71%) and swimming pools (2%).

- Out of the existing facilities provided 9.1% said they used them all the time, 19.3% frequently, 36.6% sometimes, 25.1% rarely and 9.9% never.
- When asked how they would rate the current facilities we found that only 25.1% would say there are very good or good and found that 32.2% of people would put the facilities on the lower half of the scale 42% called the facilities average.
- 82.5% of those surveyed said that if the facilities were to be updated, better maintained or expanded upon they would be more likely to use them.
- When asked where they would like these facilities we found that most people would like them in Worthing 70.4% or Lancing 41.7%. We found that 27.9% of people would like them in Sompting. 22.9% would like them in Goring and 21.7% in Shoreham.
- Out of the available facilities 52% said they used those on the seafront, 47% in the town, 74% local parks, and 36% travelled out of town to use their facilities.
- When asked whether they would like to see a wider range of facilities provided 89% said they would.
- Suggestions for additional facilities, aimed at 11-19yr, included trampolines (64.7%), better play parks (26.1%), outdoor gyms (39.1%), seating (18.5%), sheltered seating (25.2%), skate parks (31.1%), accessible tennis courts (31.9%), accessible basketball courts (34%), bins and street lighting (21.4%), table tennis (29.8%), table top football (26.9%), outdoor chess (17.6%), musical equipment (20.2%) and adventure courses (51.3%).
- When asked where they go to shop 84.7% said Worthing, 63.6% Brighton, 17.8% Chichester, 2.9% London, and 1.7% online.
- If a concession for young people was offered 79.7% said they would be more likely to shop in Worthing.
- When asked if they would be willing to pay a yearly fee for a concession card 45.1% said they would consider paying £5-10, 31.9% £10-15 and 23% £15-20.
- We wanted to find out which shops the young people frequented. The results were diverse, but New Look and H&M were most popular with the majority of young people shopping for makeup, clothes, fast food, sports shops and gaming stores. Supermarkets were also used although it would have been useful to ask whether this was with family etc.
- When asked how often they go to the cinema in Worthing 28% said once every 3 months, 25% once every 2 months, 20% once a month, 7% twice a month, 20% rarely or never.
- Of those asked 58.3% considered cinema tickets to be too expensive.
- If a young person concession was available on tickets, 63.5% said they would be more likely to spend money on snacks and drinks stands, whilst 29.9% said maybe.

CONCLUSION

Theatre Concession

From our survey results it would appear only a small proportion of young people regular Worthing based cinemas/theatres, as they feel that the cost of tickets is too

high. They did tell us however, if the ticket price was lower the majority of young people would be willing to spend the difference on additional snacks, refreshments or drinks at the venue.

Street Furniture

From the results, it appears that for a variety of reasons, young people consider the current provision is not what they want, however a good proportion said they would use it more often if it was updated and/or maintained or if there were more age-appropriate activities available. The suggestions for different activities was quite diverse and appeared to show that using the Parks was a 'hit' although more lighting and bins were needed along with seating and sheltered seating available.

Concession Card

Access to a concession card could include the theatre concession once up and running and with the costs the youth council have looked at there would be a setting up cost of approx. £2 then a running cost of keeping the data up to date and issuing annual renewal cards to the young people in schools in the locality.

Attached is a PowerPoint presentation of the survey findings.

NEXT STEPS

Meetings with the various Council officers and Councillors with the specific responsibilities for the areas highlighted.

Meeting with Town Centre Initiative (Sharon Clarke)|who could help with approaches to businesses and also Chamber of Commerce CEO. (Tina Tilly)

The Youth Council would value any input to help them achieve a positive outcome for the young people of Adur and Worthing who will be the adults of this town and therefore voters in the not too distant future.

Thank you
Adur and Worthing Youth Council