

# Children's Services

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting

### March 2023

## Youth Cabinet Update Report

**Purpose of the report:**

The Youth Cabinet would like to provide the committee with an update of their work.



**1.1 Monthly Meetings**

At February's Monthly Meeting our guest speaker was from the Essex Wildlife Trust to speak to us about the Nextdoor Nature programme. They spoke to us about how Thurrock Youth Cabinet can support nature's recovery from the biodiversity crisis linked to the current climate emergency. The aim of the project is to provide people with advice and support they need to help nature on their doorstep and to leave a lasting natural legacy within their communities.

Thurrock Youth Cabinet will be supporting the Nextdoor Nature programme by coming up with and running their very own Nextdoor Nature project in Thurrock. So far, we have identified five potential project locations within the borough and at our next monthly meeting we shall be voting to decide where the project will take place. We look forward to sharing the location with you and further details of our project proposal in the coming months.

**1.2 Working Group Meeting**

In February's Working Group Meeting we continued our interactive workshops with Thurrock Council's Local Plan Manager. Our chosen problem to explore at this meeting was the 'Lakeside Basin'. The format (which is still a work in progress) is that we pick a problem in Thurrock that we think planning could solve. We discuss challenges and opportunities with a focus on considering how other types of people might view the problem and then come up with potential solutions that the Planning Team can look at including in the emerging plan. We find the work to be quite fun and interesting as we get to be as creative as we like when exploring a problem but are also coming up with solutions on how we can improve an area. We feel like our thoughts and views on the future of the borough are being heard, listened to, and included into plans that matter.

### 1.3 **British Youth Council Youthcon Event**

On Saturday 18 February 2023 11 members of the Youth Cabinet, along with two youth workers, travelled up to London to take part in the British Youth Council YouthCon event. It saw over 200 young people come together for a day of discussions, guest speakers, workshops, and campaigns all around Youth Voice and making a positive social impact.

The event enabled us to develop our skills around public speaking, build our confidence and improve our ability to express ourselves verbally. We also got the opportunity to listen to an inspirational guest speaker, who enlightened us on how to grow our self-confidence, fuel a career growth mindset and master good communication skills. And lastly, the new Youth Parliament campaign on the cost of living and health was officially launched. More news on this to follow soon.

The day was extremely valuable to us. We all felt that we took a new skill or insight away to help us on our journey as Youth Cabinet members who advocate on the behalf of other young people in our borough. These events are crucial to our development as we can bring back what we have learnt to our local areas and begin to take action to make positive social change.

### 1.4 **Research Project**

Thurrock Youth Cabinet was recently approached by Tonic, a research company, with an opportunity for them to take part in a research project. The project, commissioned by Ofcom, is about understanding more about young people's experiences with online content that may promote or glamorise eating disorders, self-harm, and suicide.

A few members from the Youth Cabinet were keen to be involved in the co-design workshop stage of this opportunity helping to develop appropriate research tools. The findings gathered are being used, by Ofcom, to help develop policies and guidelines to protect young people from harm online. Youth Cabinet members felt compelled to have a say in this research to aid the work being done to safeguard young people online, which we feel is extremely important.

### 1.5 **Youth Cabinet News and Promotion**

We are pleased to share with you our newly launched Thurrock Youth Cabinet online consultation portal. Please see this link at your convenience [Thurrock Youth Cabinet | Have my say | Thurrock Council](#)

The website is now live! We have been linking with the comms team to launch the webpage and get the message out there. Our aim is to use the page to keep young people of Thurrock up to date with Youth Cabinet happenings and create a two-way conversation about the things that matter in our borough. We'll share news, photos, interviews with

members and send out polls/surveys. We'll encourage young people to get involved in opportunities, let them know what we're working on and take any questions. We are excited to get this going and drawing more young people in to have a say in things that matter in Thurrock, which will help inform and shape the direction of our work.

The Youth Music Survey that we have spoken about in previous meetings is now live. We are running this until Thursday 23 March. We politely request that you support us on our mission to encourage as many young people as possible to complete this survey. Please see the link at your convenience

<https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/embeds/projects/20987/survey-tools/22431>

#### 1.6 **Work on the horizon for Youth Cabinet**

We have been working hard planning our Youth Wellbeing Day for May half-term. Our poster will be released soon for young people to book on to. We are very excited to host the day and promote youth wellbeing.

#### 1.7 **Thurrock 11- 25 Strategy Group**

The Youth Cabinet chair and vice chair continue to attend the 11-25 strategy meeting to update head teachers on the positive work being achieved within the Youth Cabinet and to share this good news within their schools.