

Children's Services

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting

Tuesday 12 March 2024

Youth Cabinet Update



Purpose of the report: The Youth Cabinet would like to provide members with an update of their work.

1.1 **Make Your Mark 2024**

On Monday 29 January, the Make Your Mark 2024 campaign kicked-off with the aim of inspiring young people across the borough to take part in the UK's largest youth consultation.

Make Your Mark gives young people aged 11-18 the opportunity to vote for the topics they feel are the most important to them locally and across the UK.

To kick-off the campaign, USP College in Grays was visited by Thurrock's Member of Youth Parliament, who was on-hand to explain the importance of voting to the students. *See Appendix A images.*

A replica polling station was opened-up at the college to give students the opportunity to cast their vote and have a taste of what it will be like to participate in elections once they turn 18. For Make Your Mark, young people are asked to vote on one topic from a list of 10 themes.

Thurrock's Member of Youth Parliament said: *"It was a pleasure to visit USP College to raise awareness of the biggest youth consultation in the UK. Hopefully the campaign will inspire more young people to get involved and have a say so that we can ensure that the issues that are affecting our generation the most can be addressed in parliament."*

After the closing date on 8 March, Thurrock submitted its results to the British Youth Council which will feed into the overall national results. The winning topic will be announced at the end of March and will become one of the Youth Cabinet's campaign focuses for the next two years.

1.2 SEND Youth Voice

On Wednesday 21 February 2024, the first SEND Youth Voice Meeting took place at Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre with the support of Thurrock Youth Cabinet.

The day saw 5 young people take part in the activities to encourage them to find their voice and develop their views and opinions. Activities on the day included, bushcraft and team building to break down barriers to communication, and to build rapport as a group.

The next meeting date is in July and the young people are looking forward to coming together as a group to continue this work.

One of the young people said, *“I have really enjoyed today, getting to know a new group of people, and taking part in the activities. I’m looking forward to the next youth voice day”*.

We are still looking for more sign ups. Please promote the opportunity within your networks and encourage eligible students to sign up. See *Appendix B image*.

Work on the horizon

1.3 2024 Work Focus

At the end of 2023, Thurrock Youth Cabinet voted on the themes they would like to focus on and work towards in 2024. The top three issues identified as the most important were:

1. Youth Crime and Safety
2. Improving Wellbeing
3. The Environment

An overarching theme this year is to increase SEND youth voice, supporting and developing a key group of young people that are representative of their peers. Together with the Youth Cabinet they will be involved in the 3 chosen areas plus the topic of the Make Your Mark outcome.

Over the course of this year, Thurrock Youth Cabinet plan to run projects, activities and campaigns that will bring awareness to these themes, and plan to involve other young people from across the borough in their work. The Youth Cabinet believes that these three issues are currently affecting young people the most in Thurrock.

If you would like to work in partnership with Thurrock Youth Cabinet on one of these themes, then please contact us at youthcabinet@thurrock.gov.uk.

The Youth Cabinet can support in many ways to ensure that you include youth voice in plans and developments that affect them. This may be in the creation and dissemination of surveys in schools and colleges, by scrutinising papers and plans to give their views and opinions, by hosting guest speakers at their monthly meetings and by attending meetings (where possible) to represent the Youth Cabinet.

1.4 **Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) Elections**

Elections for Thurrock's new Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) will take place mid-March. Thurrock has six MYP candidates. The successful candidate will be announced at the end of March alongside the Make Your Mark national result. We shall update you at the next meeting.

Appendix

Appendix A

Thurrock's MYP, Lionel, visiting USP College in Grays to launch Make Your Mark 2024





Appendix B

New Youth Voice Group supported by Thurrock Youth Cabinet



THURROCK
COUNCIL



YOUTH VOICE GROUP SUPPORTED BY THURROCK YOUTH CABINET

Are you 16-25 years old?

Would you like to have a say on life,
learning and living in Thurrock?

If so, Thurrock Youth Cabinet would
like to hear from you!

Do you identify
as neurodiverse,
additional needs,
special needs, SEND
(Special Educational
Needs and Disabilities) ?

Join a new Youth Voice group and turn your ideas into action.

- Attend three times a year at Grangewaters in South Ockendon
- Lunch, drinks and an activity provided
- Meet new people (16-25 olds with additional needs)
- Collaborate with Thurrock Youth Cabinet members and staff
- Have your say and be listened to!



To sign up or find
out more, email today at
youthvoice@thurrock.gov.uk