

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

YOUTH ELECTIONS PROJECT 2013

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet of the progress in relation to the Youth Elections Project 2013.
- 1.2 To seek continued support for the process and the roles of Young Mayor and Member of Youth Parliament.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 During Local Takeover Week 2011, a paper was co-presented at Cabinet by a young person and a Council officer to establish a Young Mayor in North Lincolnshire alongside a Member of Youth Parliament.
- 2.2 The Youth Elections Project 2012 culminated in May 2012 when Kal Alcock-Murtagh was elected as North Lincolnshire's first Young Mayor and Keaton Robinson was elected as the first elected Member of Youth Parliament. 5724 young people voted in the elections which constituted 59% of voting turnout (of young people 11 to 18 eligible to vote).
- 2.3 The role of a local Young Mayor was championed by the People Cabinet Member, with support from Cabinet Members and Children's Trust Board members who welcomed the developments to establish the roles of an elected Young Mayor and Member of Youth Parliament. Cabinet Members and Children's Trust Board members have supported them during their term in office. Health and Wellbeing Board members have also recognised the roles of the Young Mayor and Member of Youth Parliament and they have been identified as members on the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 2.4 The Youth Elections Project planned for the election in 2012 to be timed around the election of the North Lincolnshire Mayor. It is proposed that the Youth Elections 2013 culminate in Local Democracy Week which takes place between 14 to 20 October 2013. This emphasises the importance of the Youth Elections Project as part of our local democracy. This also ensures that we are able to maximise the contribution of the current Young Mayor and Member of Youth Parliament to the 2013 election.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 A Youth Elections Project 2013 working group has been established and is made up of colleagues from People Directorate and Policy and Resources Directorate as well young people. A workplan has been developed for the project, which takes account of the learning from the inaugural Youth Elections Project in 2012. The timeline for the workplan is as follows:

Timeline/Overview

- w/c 3 June – schools, colleges and settings communications and marketing (ongoing throughout the length of the project)
- w/e 21 June – closing date for expressions of interest by young people to be candidates
- end June/beginning July – elections training and support to young people who have expressed an interest by members of the working group
- w/e 5 July – closing date for confirmation of candidates
- mid July – candidates develop election ‘soundbites’
- late July/August/September – candidate marketing, promotion, hustings, attendance at activities
- 30 September to 11 October – ballot boxes in schools
- 18 October – Youth Elections Count

The schools and settings communications and marketing will be crucial to the success of the project, in terms of encouraging young people to put themselves forward as a candidate, but also in terms of supporting the voting process, and as such, it will be ongoing throughout the duration of the project.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 There is a focussed plan in place to manage the Youth Elections Project 2013 and a new Young Mayor and Member of Youth Parliament will be re-elected in October 2013.
- 4.2 Marketing materials will be distributed into schools, colleges and settings for distribution in the physical environment i.e. on notice boards in communal areas, but also via virtual and electronic means i.e. through internal email systems and screens in communal areas. Additionally, colleagues from the working group will be visiting schools to undertake face to face marketing and promotion in school assemblies and school council meetings, alongside the Young Mayor (and other young people colleagues). The People Cabinet Member has also committed to supporting the marketing and promotion of the project and dates are being secured for him to visit schools and colleges.
- 4.3 Once young people have expressed an interest in becoming a candidate, they will be given sufficient training and support to raise their awareness of local democracy and support to complete their candidate packs which includes their election statement. Once the candidates are confirmed, there will be an opportunity for the young people to film their ‘soundbites’ which will be another means of promotion.

- 4.4 Work is underway with colleagues responsible for the commissioning of young people's positive activities to develop links between the Youth Elections Project 2013 and the programme of positive activities. It is anticipated that this will help to provide opportunities for candidates to hold 'hustings', surgeries and encourage other young people to vote. It will also have the added advantage of promoting the programme of positive activities through the young voice network.
- 4.5 Ballot boxes will be in schools, colleges and settings for a two week period (30 September to 11 October). It is anticipated that some schools and colleges may choose to focus their voting on one or two days during the two week period, while others will have a more open voting process over the full two weeks. Members of the working group will support schools and colleges to manage the voting process as much as possible.
- 4.6 The Youth Elections Count will be held on 18 October in the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre and the decision will be made via the 'first past the post' voting system. Members of the Children's Trust Board, Health and Well Being Board and other elected members and senior colleagues will be invited to the event along with all candidates and their supporters.
- 4.7 Following the announcement of the new Young Mayor and Member of Youth Parliament, there will be a period of induction and support will be offered throughout their term in office.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 There are resource implications associated with the co-ordination of the project, though these are met from existing resources.
- 5.2 Members of the People Directorate Participation Team are leading on the co-ordination of the project with support from colleagues in the Stronger Communities Team (Policy and Resources Directorate).
- 5.3 We will build on the involvement of and engagement with schools and colleges last year which will contribute to the success of this project and work is ongoing to develop relationships to ensure the success of the project in 2013.
- 5.4 The marketing and promotional materials from 2012 are being revised and updated and as such, the Youth Elections will benefit from a recognised brand and there will also be less design costs involved.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1 No integrated impact assessment has been undertaken. However, 'Celebrate and Engage Children and Young People' is one of the six strategic priorities within our Children and Young People's Plan 2010/13 and forms the basis of the Children's Trust Celebrate and Engage Strategy 2011/13. The importance and effectiveness of young people's voice (including vulnerable and hard to reach groups), participation and their perceptions are included in evaluation criteria for Ofsted and HMIP Inspections.

6.2 The continuation of an elected Member of Youth Parliament and Young Mayor reinforces the ongoing commitment to 'celebrating and engaging' with young people and contributes to the Council (and Children's Trust partners) commitment to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and in particular Article 12.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 Young people have been involved in the project since its inception and they continue to be involved as developers and recipients of the project.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Cabinet notes the progress in relation to the Youth Elections Project 2013 and continues to support the process.

DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE
AND
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND RESOURCES

Civic Centre
Ashby Road
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1AB

Author: Julie Poole

Date: May 2013

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None