



COUNCIL: 18th October 2023

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Coughlan (Youth Champion)

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SUBJECT: West Lancashire Youth Mayor/Ambassador

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an update position on the future of a Youth Mayor/Ambassador

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That further work be undertaken to explore best value options to promote youth involvement in decision making and youth related activities within the borough whether that be via a Youth Mayor/Ambassador or other role/mechanism. .

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 During Councillor Marilyn Westley's term in office as WLBC Mayor, it was requested that officers explore the possibility of creating the role of Youth Mayor for West Lancashire.

3.2 Officers from both Legal and Democratic Services in partnership with Wellbeing and Place, jointly benchmarked local authorities across Lancashire who have had experience of a Youth Mayor.

3.3 Officers established a relationship with colleagues in Wyre Council who had experience of managing Youth Mayors. The role of Youth Mayor was created jointly by Wyre Council and Lancashire County Council to help identify the needs of young people 13 to 17 years old and what is important to them.

3.4 Wyre Council officers shared all processes and documentation that had been established to recruit the Youth Mayor, including application forms, engagement letters, job descriptions and person specifications.

3.5 In addition, a clear understanding of ongoing officer support that would effectively manage and develop a Youth Mayor was developed.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The intention for a Youth Mayor/Ambassador in West Lancashire would be to provide an opportunity for young people to participate in local decision making and to feed in to and tailor services to meet the needs of young people in West Lancashire.
- 4.2 The Youth Mayor/Ambassador for West Lancashire would also be invited to attend several civic occasions throughout the year, along with the Mayor and champion their own areas of focus and priority. They would be asked to work in collaboration with the Youth Champion.
- 4.3 The research highlighted that the work and financial resources needed to support a Youth Mayor/Ambassador would require significant support from officers. Currently officers who would be expected to support this role do not have the capacity to absorb the additional duties.
- 4.4 Additional resources would be required to build capacity and sustainability within the existing staffing structures to support a Youth Mayor/Ambassador and ensure they have the opportunity to thrive in the role.
- 4.5 Given early indications regarding the financial/resource implications it is felt that further consideration needs to be given as to the most effective and efficient way of providing the borough with the benefits seen in other organisations of having a Youth Mayor/Ambassador. As this work was not envisaged as part of the 22/23 Service Action Planning Process or Budget Setting Process this would have to be accommodated in the following years work programme.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are sustainability impacts associated with this report and no direct significant impact on crime and disorder. Sustainability impacts in relation to staff and ability to manage the Youth Mayor without adequate internal capacity building.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The staffing resources required to support a Youth Mayor/Ambassador will add an additional revenue pressure to the medium-term financial forecast. It is recommended that this proposal be fully costed and considered in line with the 2024/5 budget setting process.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The risks associated with this report have not been included in Democratic & Members Services risk register. As identified earlier the main risks are staff capacity to support the role and the consequential financial pressures.

8.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The proposal to consider a Youth Mayor in February will not significantly impact on health and wellbeing implications for the following themes:
- *Promote good health and wellbeing and enable people to flourish*
 - *Empower people in vulnerable, deprived, and disadvantaged communities to realise their full health potential.*
 - *Encourage and enable all people to take a role in identifying and addressing barriers to improve health and wellbeing.*
- 8.2 The Community Connector and Wellbeing Team are minimising any potential negative impacts of not having a Youth Mayor in post by working in partnership with young people across the borough, to understand their challenges and facilitate positive action. The team are working with Lancashire County Council and have engaged with members of the Youth Council and Young People at the Youth Zone to gather insight and implement initiatives.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Appendices

'None'