

Lichfield District Youth Council – Policy Proposal



Leader of the Council

Date: _____
Agenda Item: _____
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Key Decision? Yes
Local Ward Full Council
Members

CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At its meeting on March 8, 2022, Cabinet approved a new Community Power Strategy. The strategy outlines a vision to better understand, engage and involve our communities in what we do on the basis that, by improving how we engage our communities we can deliver services that matter to them, more effectively.
- 1.2 Our community power objectives stress that we want to ‘develop reciprocal relationships and combine institutional and community expertise’. This paper outlines a proposal to achieve the same objectives but with a traditionally ‘hard to reach’ part of our community, through a Lichfield District Youth Council.
- 1.3 We want to give young people a space and platform to discuss issues that matter to them - helping provide younger residents with a say over the places in which they live and the services they access and interact with.
- 1.4 A ‘Youth Council’ is a mechanism for achieving this, ensuring that policies and strategies consider their impact on young people and empower young people in their communities to feel part of the solution to local problems – supporting them to be active citizens and leaders of the future. A youth council would be a strong representative body and sounding board, to be consulted on decisions impacting young people in the district, as well as reporting up to Full Council on issues on an informal.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the creation of a District Youth Council for Lichfield District, providing young people with representation and encouraging active citizenship.
- 2.2 Recommends to Council to approve a £60,000 increase in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy over the next three financial years to provide a budget for the District Youth Council, as set out in the financial implications section of this report.
- 2.3 Recommend to Youth Council that some of their budget is used to fund transport for those children that want to be involved but may not otherwise be able to access the opportunity due to personal/home circumstances.

3. Background

- 3.1 The ambition behind this proposal is to provide all young people in our district, regardless of background, with the opportunity to represent their school, peers and community. We hope to

empower students by providing them with the platform and resources required to build relationships with each other and tackle the issues that matter to them. This will benefit our local schools who will see their young people grow in confidence and become active citizens; developing skills such as debating – while also attending educational workshops and building relationships with other young people. In achieving this, we will fulfil our community power objectives and provide representation to a group that is commonly underrepresented politically.

- 3.2 A very practical benefit of having the Youth Council will be the ability for the council to sense check policies and strategies while they are being developed to understand the impact on this important part of our community.
- 3.3 Youth Councils are common across the country with numerous local authorities successfully supporting them in their area. Subject to Cabinet’s support, our aim is to pilot a Youth Council with two secondary schools, initially, and to develop from there to incorporate all senior schools in the district. We would like to launch the Youth Council by the start of the new academic year, in September 2022.
- 3.4 The Youth Council will be driven by the aspirations and aims of the young people that are elected to it. Officers will support the young people in the management of the council but will commit to not dictate what young people choose to discuss or cover at their meetings.
- 3.5 Subject to Cabinet supporting the proposal to create a Youth Council, officers will seek to recruit the first two or three schools from across the District to become founding members and help establish the new forum. Our aim would then be to engage with other schools to ensure all parts of the district are represented through the Youth Council within the first three years of its operation.
- 3.6 Following research and consultation with Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services, it is recommended that youth councillors are aged 11-18 and elections are held in our local schools every two years. Schools will manage the election process with the support of LDC officers. As a result, we propose that youth councillors serve 2-year terms. Council meetings will take place on a regular basis in our council chamber or other suitable venues.
- 3.7 Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services has pledged to support the Youth Council with campaigns, resources, and to help develop a relationship between our youth councillors and the existing Youth Union and national Youth Parliament. The Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services strategic plan aims to ensure that all children and young people thrive across the country. They have expressed that they want to support us in achieving this in Lichfield District.
- 3.8 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed constitution for the Youth Council.

Alternative Options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet suggests amendments to the proposed format and running of Youth Council. 2. Cabinet decides against adopting a Youth Council.
Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delivery and structure of Youth Council has been discussed with some schools representatives to understand the level of support likely for this forum. 2. Delivery and structure have also been discussed with a representative of Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services on April 1st. 3. Further consultation with other schools will take place as we aim to incorporate all schools in our district.
Financial Implications	<p>The Proposed Medium-Term Financial Strategy over the next three financial years for Youth Council:</p> <p>This budget anticipates yearly growth in the number of schools and councillors sitting on Youth Council. The proposed allocation of budget over the next three years is</p>

	outlined below:								
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Financial Year</th> <th>Budget</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022-2023</td> <td>£10,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023-2024</td> <td>£20,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2024-2025</td> <td>£30,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Financial Year	Budget	2022-2023	£10,000	2023-2024	£20,000	2024-2025	£30,000
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Approved by Section 151 Officer	Yes
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Legal Implications	1. Non identified at this stage
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Approved by Monitoring Officer	Yes
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Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	Youth Council would enable young people to help themselves and others, collaborate and engage with us, and live active lives through their active citizenship.
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Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion and belonging must be at the forefront of Youth Council. All young people must have access to support to help them run for and/or attend Youth Council. We must be committed to pursuing equality of opportunity for all. All those involved in the work of Youth Council will be expected to promote equality and justice at all opportunities and will ensure that no-one is treated unfairly or discriminated against. All those working with Youth Council will be expected to challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination. We must ensure equality of opportunity between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not. An Equality Impact Assessment must be conducted prior to launch.
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Crime & Safety Issues	1. Potential to assist in supporting and resolving crime and safety issues by providing young people with a voice in their community.
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Environmental Impact	1. At this stage of the process there are no Environmental Impacts.\
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GDPR / Privacy Impact Assessment	2. Non identified at this stage
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	Risk Description & Risk Owner	Original Score (RYG)	How We Manage It	Current Score (RYG)
A	The inability of some students to attend Council at Frog Lane due to a lack of available transport resulting in failure to deliver an inclusive and accessible council.	Red likelihood And red impact assessment	Use Youth Council budget or provide a separate budget for the running of minibus transport to and from schools. This will ensure that all children have an opportunity to get to and from the Council House.	Red likelihood And red impact assessment
B	The proposal does not adequately reflect the ambitions of young people. As a result, we have	Yellow likelihood and yellow impact	Actively engaged young people through a promotional campaign in our local schools. Allow Youth Councillors to shape how their	Green likelihood and green impact

	limited candidates and councillors.	assessment	council operates.	assessment
C	Failure to consult all schools in the district before launch resulting in limited representation and consideration for underrepresented groups/areas	Red likelihood and red impact assessment	Before official launch lead a district-wide consultation process to invite all schools to join LDYC.	Red likelihood and red impact assessment
D				
E				

Background documents

- [Community Power Strategy](#)
- SCYVS Strategic Plan:
- Youth Council Constitution

SCVYS Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023



Relevant web links

[Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services](#)