

## **Cabinet – 7 December 2017**

[Written Response to Questioner not present at the meeting]

5.

**Questioner:** Radhey Patel

**Asked of:** Councillor Sue Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Resident Engagement

**Question:** “In 2012 you were part of the Redefining Youth Engagement Scrutiny Review which concluded that Harrow Youth Parliament is the recognised voice of young people and recommended that the Youth Parliament be given a representative on a council committee. Why is it then that you denied young people a voice in the ultimate decision making process last Thursday when you went along with your leader and voted against a sensible and reasonable amendment to give a youth representative from the Harrow Youth Parliament a seat on the cabinet?”

**Written Response:** The 2012 Redefining Youth Engagement Scrutiny Review grew out of a determination across the council to give the younger generation inspiration and confidence to get involved in council decision making and community life. It also followed from a call from Government in 2011 on all local authorities to give young people a voice in local decision making. The Government suggested many proven ways for young people to get involved in local decision making, for example youth councils, young mayors, youth parliaments, but they were not prescriptive and believed that it was for local areas to determine and put in place arrangements that best suited their particular needs.

Following the Council’s Scrutiny Review it was agreed that young people should be involved in the democratic mechanisms of the council, for example scrutiny committees and reviews, which the Council put in place and from 2013 a representative of the Youth Parliament was given a seat at the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As someone who has been a scrutiny chair, the role of scrutiny in both developing the Council’s approach to the challenges it faces, as well as scrutinising how the Council has effectively delivered its policy and services is really important, so I think that the approach we have had since 2013 gives young people both voice and influence and as such I think we have delivered what the Review intended.