

REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date:	30 May 2012
Subject:	Redefining Youth Engagement – Report from Scrutiny Review Group
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director, Partnership Development & Performance
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Policy and Performance Leads for Children and Young People
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Report from the Engaging with Young People Scrutiny Review Group

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The attached report sets out the findings and recommendations from the scrutiny review which explored ways in which the council can most effectively communicate with young people in decision making and community activity.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

1. Agree the report of the review group
2. Forward the report to Cabinet for consideration

Section 2 – Report

In September 2011, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the scope for this review (as included in the final report under Appendix D).

The review looked at how the Council can most effectively communicate and engage with young people in involving them in decision making and helping them be more effective in making a contribution to community life. By bringing together what the Council already knows about young people including their perceptions of the Council and opportunities to volunteer, this review also aimed to stimulate debate about how the Council, in times of austerity, can find new ways to involve young people in decision making as well as offer them opportunities to develop employability skills through volunteering.

This review undertook a number of different activities in order to build its evidence base:

- Desktop research
- Going out to talk to a number of national experts
- Visiting other local authorities
- Meeting with a number of local voluntary groups and stakeholders
- Holding a drop-in session for young people at the youth centre
- Running a focus group with young people
- Smaller meetings with members of Harrow Youth Parliament
- Meetings with key workers in Children's Services and services for young people
- Discussions with the corporate director and portfolio holder
- Written survey for young people, distributed through a school council
- Survey used as a basis of conversations between youth workers and young people
- Social media – using scrutiny's facebook and twitter accounts
- Residents' panel survey
- Focus groups with young people with disabilities and their carers

The review was conducted in partnership with young people from the Harrow Youth Parliament and Harrow Mencap. The review group would like to thank all the young people of Harrow and everyone else who contributed to this review for their collective knowledge, stories and insight that has enabled the group to draw together its findings and develop its recommendations.

Financial Implications

Not required at this stage. Cabinet will need to consider whether there are any financial implications when it decides whether to accept the recommendations.

Performance Issues

There are no performance issues specifically associated with this report.

Environmental Impact

There is no specific environmental impact associated to this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are none specific to this report.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No

Equalities implications

As included in its scope, the review considered during the course of its work, how equality implications had been taken into account in current policy and practice and considered the possible implications of any changes it recommends.

In carrying out the review, the review group also considered its own practices and how it could facilitate all relevant stakeholders in the borough to have their voices heard.

Corporate Priorities

The review relates to the Corporate Priorities 2011/12 of:

- United and involved communities: a council that listens and leads
- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required at this stage.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background

Papers

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Background Papers: Details of background documents are referenced within the body of the review group's report.