

**Surrey Heath Borough Council**  
**Executive**  
**17th October 2023**

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**Youth Council Options**

<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Inclusion & Housing Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke
<b>Strategic Director/Head of Service</b>	Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
<b>Report Author:</b>	Renée France – Community Development Manager Rachel Willis – Democratic Services Manager
<b>PH Sign off:</b>	Yes
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All

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**Summary and purpose**

Following the resolution of the Council on 26 July 2023 (please see Annex A attached for the full resolution), to explore options for the continuation of the Youth Council and the establishment of a ceremonial Young Mayor

**Recommendation**

The Executive is advised to RESOLVE that

- (i) Officers continue to explore options to identify a potential external supplier to support the Youth Council together with funding options and report further progress back to the December Executive Meeting; and
- (ii) The establishment of the Young Mayor be referred to the Governance Working Group for further consideration after the December Executive Meeting (once the outcome to (i) is known).

**1. Background and Supporting Information**

- 1.1 The Youth Council for Surrey Heath Borough Council has previously been run by an external supplier (Eikon) however they have not been able to continue with this service for the 2023-2024 academic year.
- 1.2 Actions from the full Council meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 included the following:

- 1.3 To identify interim funding for the Youth Council to bridge the gap whilst work is undertaken to look for long term options.
- 1.4 The Leader and Executive to explore options for the continuation of the Youth Council and the establishment of a ceremonial Young Mayor with a report to go to the Executive by no later than 31 October 2023.
- 1.5 Please see Annex A for the full resolution wording. Please be aware that the meeting referred to in the resolution (v) took place on 7 August 2023 and following that meeting, Eikon wrote to Youth Council members. Since that time, the Council has also been in contact with Youth Council lead members to continue to keep them engaged whilst options are explored.
- 1.6 This paper explores the supplier options so far identified in order to meet the requirements of part vi) of the Council resolution.

**2. Establishing a criterion for the Youth Council supplier (whether internal or external)**

- 2.1 It is essential that the Youth Council is a safe and positive experience for the participants. Therefore, the following criteria for any future supplier has been developed:

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Experienced in setting up/creating youth groups	Can provide pastoral support
Experts in safeguarding and child protection	Can develop young people (11 – 18)
Inclusive and secular	Are linked into local schools (or with the ability to partnership with schools)
Support the recruitment of younger people to sit on the Council	
Manage the day-to-day administration and running of the Council including enquiries from young people and their parents or guardians	
Resolve any issues and sign post young people to additional support as needed	
Arrange meetings and facilitate them so that younger people genuinely contribute to providing a voice into our administration and have a say in issues that affect them	

Take part in regular contract reviews and provide statistical information to the Council	
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2.2 Were a suitable supplier to be identified, the Council would be able to support the Youth Council by:

- Enabling the Youth Council to have use of the Council Chamber
- Allowing them to address full Council once a year
- Allowing the Youth Council to ask questions at full Council
- Having defined levels of input/engagement with some senior Members and Officers during the year

### **3. Funding and Resourcing**

3.1 Temporary funding has been identified from the UK Prosperity Fund amounting to £15,000 for the 2023 – 2024 financial year only. The Council would need to identify a more long-term source of funding to ensure stability and sustainability.

3.2 Unless external funding can continue to be found, the Executive will need to consider the priority of this item given the base budget reviews that have taken place and the need to provide a balanced Council budget.

3.3 Funding would need to take into account any budget the Council themselves required (for example for training and other materials).

3.4 All options require resourcing in terms of direct costs and officer time that is not currently budgeted for. The extent of the costs needed will be fully documented at the point of supplier options being established and will need to be taken into careful consideration given the current financial climate and that this is discretionary.

### **4. Supplier Options**

4.1 Thirteen potential external suppliers have been approached (including Surrey County Council) to establish whether they would be able to provide the service we require meeting the above criteria and within the funding identified. So far three suppliers have responded saying they cannot support this project, two have responded saying that they may be able to help and we are awaiting a response from the rest.

4.2 An alternative is to provide the service in-house. To do this the Council would need to hire a qualified Youth Worker. This would not be a full-time position (we anticipate it might be 7-15 hours per week) and would be on a casual or fixed term contract basis. The funding available should cover the likely salary costs (Youth Workers attract in the region of £25 - £30k per annum. On-costs would need to be included. This would mean that any budget for the Youth Council themselves to use would be limited. Given the likely time to hire and

that funding is only available until March 2024, this option is not recommended.

## **5. Young Mayor**

- 5.1 The motion to Council also referred to exploring options for establishing a ceremonial Young Mayor. It is suggested that this is explored separately by the Governance Working Group once the status of the Youth Council has been established at the December Executive Meeting as the establishment of the Youth Council and the Young Mayor role overlap.

## **6. Proposal and Alternative Options**

- 6.1 The Executive has the option to:

- i) Resolve to continue to explore options for an external supplier
- ii) Resolve to commence the engagement of a suitably qualified youth worker as above.
- iii) Resolve that this discretionary service can no longer be supported by the Council due to financial pressures and a lack of supplier.

## **7. Contribution to the Council's Five-Year Strategy**

- 7.1 Health and Quality of Life:

7.1.1 Nurturing a strong sense of community across the whole borough lies at the core of the services that the Council provides to its residents fostering a sense of respect and consideration.

7.1.2 We will take a positive approach to supporting all sectors of our community, including those who are most vulnerable. We will promote active and healthy lives for all and a rich programme of cultural and community events.

- 7.2 Responsive Council:

7.2.1 Surrey Heath Borough Council engages meaningfully with our community on all key policies, and is recognised as being one of the best Councils in doing this.

7.2.2 We provide accessible services for all to meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve.

## **8. Resource Implications**

- 8.1 There will be resourcing considerations once the supplier has been identified. The detail of this will be available once the potential supplier is known but is currently unbudgeted for (please see resourcing section).

**9. Section 151 Officer Comments:**

**10. Legal and Governance Issues**

10.1 No matters arising.

**11. Monitoring Officer Comments**

11.1 The development of a Youth Council may require changes to the Constitution, depending on the outcome of discussions from the Governance Working Group.

**12. Other Considerations and Impacts**

**Environment and Climate Change**

12.1 No matters arising.

**Equalities and Human Rights**

12.2 No matters arising

**Risk Management**

12.3 No matters arising.

**Community Engagement**

12.4 No matters arising.

**Annexes** Resolution of the Council 26 July 2023

## **Annex A: Resolution of the Council 26 July 2023**

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Council notes, with regret, that the Eikon Charity stopped supporting the Surrey Heath Youth Council on Thursday 20 July 2023 and as a result, the Youth Council will cease operating unless new funding and support is found;
- (ii) acknowledges that the Youth Council has successfully engaged and represented young people in the Borough and has delivered projects including anti-stigma training days in local schools, charitable fundraising and a campaign to improve Crabtree Skate Park;
- (iii) notes, with regret, that there has not been closer collaboration and joint-working between the Council and the Youth Council in previous years, and that the Council has not appointed a Surrey Heath Young Mayor since 2015;
- (iv) requests that the Mayor of Surrey Heath formally writes to the current Youth Council thanking them for their service to the young people of Surrey Heath;
- (v) requests that the Leader and Chief Executive arrange a meeting with Eikon and the current youth council members to discuss their existing projects and how they could be supported by the Council or other agencies; and
- (vi) requests that the Leader of the Council and the Executive explore the options for the continuation of the Youth Council and the establishment of a ceremonial Young Mayor, with a report to go to Executive by no later than 31 October 2023.