

Swale Youth Forum



Wednesday 22 March 2017
Council Chamber, Swale Borough Council
09:30am- 12:30pm

Schools:	Delegates from Abbey School, Westlands Academy, Sittingbourne Community College.
In Attendance:	Mayor of Swale Cllr Lesley Ingham, Cllr Nicholas Hampshire, Cllr James Hunt, Sophia Ramm (SBC), Brooke Buttfield (SBC), Donald Grant (Kent Police), Emily Upfield (HeadStart), Emma Wiggins (SBC), Vicky Peake (SBC), Katrina Gadsby (NCS).
Apologies:	Leader of the Council Cllr Andrew Bowles, Cllr David Simmons, Ben Rose (KCC), Oasis Isle of Sheppey Academy, Fulston Manor School, Borden Grammar School, Highsted Grammar School, Queen Elizabeth Grammar School.

NO	ITEM	ACTION
1.	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	The Chairperson of Sittingbourne Community College welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	Minutes and Actions from Last Meeting	
2.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were checked for their accuracy and were agreed as correct.	
3.	Ice Breaker	
3.1	Chairperson Kacy Mannering (Sittingbourne Community College) welcomed everyone to the meeting along with an ice breaker.	
4.	Kent Police	
4.1	<p>Update from Kent Police</p> <p>Donald Grant provided a presentation on the structure of Kent Police, highlighting that Kent Police is split into three divisions, North Division, East Division and West Division, with Swale being in North division. DG discussed the different elements located at Police Headquarters in Maidstone, as well as the different areas of policing such as Community Policing, Motorcycle Unit, Marine Unit, National Police Air Service, Dog Unit and Crime Scene Investigation.</p> <p>DG agreed to enquire in relation to arranging a visit to Police Headquarters for the youth forum.</p> <p>A question was raised regarding contact numbers for local police officers and DG confirmed that '101' is now used in place of these contact numbers to ensure all calls go through to the Control Room at Maidstone.</p>	DG

	<p>Another question was raised regarding forces joining together and working in collaboration. DG highlighted that some aspects of policing are dealt with between different areas, and there is the potential in years to come to merge Kent, Essex and Sussex.</p>	
5.	HeadStart in Swale	
5.1	<p>Building the resilience and emotional wellbeing of young people in Swale.</p> <p>Emily Upfield, Participation Worker, explained that the Big Lottery Fund has funded Kent County Council to support young people's emotional wellbeing and resilience over the next 5 years, following a successful pilot trial in Kent for the last 2 years. HeadStart Kent is part of Early Help and Preventative Services which aims to help young people cope better when faced with difficult circumstances in their lives, preventing them from experiencing common mental health problems.</p> <p>The new funding will enable KentStart to provide an approach that supports young people to develop their own resilience to cope with the everyday pressures they may face throughout their lives, as well as how to help each other. HeadStart Kent aims to make changes through schools, families and within communities and has been designed with young people at its heart.</p> <p>EU highlighted that the team are currently working in Swale within schools and communities. The team are working to set up peer mentoring schemes and 'safe spaces' in the schools they are working with in Sittingbourne and Sheppey. As well as the work in Schools, HeadStart Swale have also set up groups in Sittingbourne and Sheppey, Newhouse Youth Centre and Oasis Isle of Sheppey Academy to enable all young people outside of the HeadStart schools to get involved. Monthly meetings called 'Speak Out' are also taking place in Ashford to incorporate views from young people across the entire County.</p> <p>EU discussed the new fun and creative workshops taking place in Swale which are free to attend for young people aged 10-16, with snacks and drinks provided. For more information regarding workshop dates, please contact Emily Upfield on 07827 278100 or Emily.Upfield@kent.gov.uk.</p>	
6.	National Citizen Service	
6.1	<p>Find out more about the NCS programme and how to get involved.</p> <p>Katrina provided an update on the NCS programme, highlighting that it is a three-part programme for 15-17 year olds. It's perfect for boosting CV experience, personal statements, and UCAS forms. It's also an unforgettable experience which builds confidence and independence. We run the</p>	

	<p>programme during summer, autumn half term, and autumn term time.</p> <p>The programme is a government-funded initiative that brings together schools, community organisations, businesses and individuals to build a stronger and more cohesive society. It <u>never costs more than £50</u>, and financial assistance can be requested. The programme's three parts are:</p> <p>Phase 1 – Adventure Develop confidence, meet new people, and build your team on an outdoor residential.</p> <p>Phase 2 – Skills You and your team work together to learn a new skill in sport, media, photography, music, drama, enterprise or art.</p> <p>Phase 3 – Social Action Each team creates a project and pitches it to local business leaders in our NCS Dragon's Den. You'll then make your project a reality in your local area.</p> <p>The programme varies depending on the time of year. For more information on the different bespoke programmes and how to sign up, please visit http://www.ncsthechallenge.org/</p>	
7.	Refreshment Break	
8.	Sittingbourne Town Centre Regeneration	
8.1	<p>Update on the regeneration plans for Sittingbourne</p> <p>Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration, began by showing a video to the forum which provided detail of the different phases of the overall regeneration scheme.</p> <p>EW discussed that the first phase includes the regeneration of the Depot site to become big box retail park with 3 large format retail units which will produce more shopping opportunities for the people of Sittingbourne. Following this will be a new 8-screen multiplex cinema with four new restaurants and a hotel, attracting up to 400,000 visitors per year and creating a night time economy, which Sittingbourne currently lacks. A new 308-space multi-storey car park will provide central, easy parking close to Sittingbourne's new amenities and public spaces, as well as a new public square providing flexible open space for cultural activities. It will provide a pleasing welcome and connect the train station to the High Street, providing football and a new logical flow to the town centre. 213 high quality apartments will also be constructed across three town centre sites; Cockleshell Walk (60 units), Spring Street (88 units) and Fountain Street (65 units).</p>	

	<p>EW confirmed that the work on the big box retail on the depot site is due to begin in May 2017 and last approximately 1 year. The multi-storey car park will take approximately 9 months to build and the remainder of the leisure activities will follow.</p> <p>EW confirmed that if the project is deemed to be viable, Swale Borough council have agreed to fund the Spirit of Sittingbourne project, resulting in it owning the majority of the new buildings planned for the town centre. Under the plans, SBC would own and receive rental income from a multiplex cinema, four restaurants, a hotel and three retail units.</p>	
9.	Child Sexual Exploitation	
9.1	<p>A chance to improve understanding and knowledge of CSE</p> <p>Vicky Peake, Safeguarding Officer, explained that Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs. Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, including oral and anal rape. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online.</p> <p>With regards to tackling CSE, VP highlighted that there are dedicated teams throughout Kent working to help victims of child abuse. Kent Police have a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Team which is a multi-agency team working to tackle child abuse in Kent. The team are part of Operation Willow which brings Kent Police together with Kent County Council, Medway Council and the NHS to respond to concerns and promote awareness of CSE.</p> <p>The group took part in a task to identify whether statements were illegal or legal, and also watched a video to improve their understanding and knowledge of CSE.</p>	
10.	Hot Topics	
10.1	<p>Opportunities for delegates to raise and discuss key issues affecting young people in their school and wider area.</p> <p>Is pollution/litter getting worse in the local area?</p>	

	<p>Cllr Nicholas Hampshire discussed that national air quality is worsening but there are various air quality zones across the Borough. Litter in Swale is a big issue that is being tackled. The students were advised ring the Council to make sure any litter incidents are logged and dealt with. It was agreed that Vikki Sedgwick, Environmental Projects Officer and Cllr Sue Gent, Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment and Rural Affairs would be invited to attend the next meeting to provide an update.</p> <p>Unhealthy food is being served in the school canteens. Cllr Lesley Ingham advised the pupils to organise a meeting with schools/teachers through school councils to discuss the issue.</p> <p>Why do so many people use cars rather than public transport? Unfortunately, cars have become an easy option for the public. However, there are schemes such as ‘Journey-sharing scheme’ that are advertised through KCC to reduce congestion and pollution, as well as limiting the pressures on parking facilities.</p> <p>There are a lot of potholes/damage to roads in my local area. Cllr Nicholas Hampshire highlighted that problems on the road or pavement can be reported through the KCC website and you can track the problem reported. http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem</p> <p>Is homelessness a huge problem in Swale? Mayor of Swale Cllr Lesley Ingham confirmed that homelessness isn’t a huge problem and the number is not increasing in Swale. SBC’s Housing Team work extremely hard to reduce the number of homeless people offering emergency accommodation and seeking long term solutions. It was suggested that Cllr Ken Pugh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing would be invited to attend the next meeting to provide an update.</p> <p>Why is greenland being destroyed for buildings? The dwelling target is 776 dwellings per annum and the Council should proceed to allocate sufficient additional sites to meet this. This includes brownfield sites but once this has all been allocated, unfortunately greenland needs to be considered.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>SR</p>
11.	AOB	
11.1	The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 3 May 2017 and will be taking place at Swale Borough Council. It was agreed students from Westlands Academy will chair the next meeting.	
12.	Close	
12.1	Chairperson Kacy Mannering thanked all for attending and closed the Youth Forum Meeting.	