

REPORT OF SCRUTINY AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT COORDINATOR

CONSULTATION WITH THE YOUTH COUNCIL

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To consider feedback from a meeting with representatives from the Youth Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting in October 2021, the Committee heard from young people from range of participation and engagement groups on the key issues facing young people in the city.
- 2.2 At that meeting, it was agreed that a working group be established in order to meet with and discuss issues with young people in a more informal setting.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 On 9 March 2022, a meeting was held with young people belonging to the Sunderland Youth Council (SYC). The Youth Council is a group of young people that aim to represent the voices of young people in Sunderland, working to make change on specific issues voted for by young people. The SYC is responsible for hosting the Young People's State of the City debate that takes place in November each year.
- 3.2 Members in attendance included Councillors Pat Smith, Josh McKeith, Margaret Crosby and Katherine Mason-Gage.
- 3.3 The meeting involved an open discussion between members and the Youth Council representatives. Members will feedback on the issues raised at the session. These included:-
- Transport system needs to be sustainable and future proofed in terms of cost of travel for both education and leisure. In terms of 16 to 18 year olds a 'middle' type of group ticket or pop card for single journey's would help;
 - General feeling that metro stations are unsafe / inhospitable (particularly Stadium of Light). This could be an issue as to location of any city centre hub i.e. its dark early and how long can people stay. Park Lane is unwelcoming at night and don't feel safe waiting for buses;
 - A multifunctional hub in city centre would be welcome to create an energy in the city centre for young people e.g. the ping pong room was very popular;
 - Communications could be better in helping to inform when/where activities are being held – text alerts or apps;

- Interest in politics and democracy is crucial and should be encouraged by schools;
- Jobs were seen as a high priority arising out of the Make Your Mark ballot;
- Schools should look at ways to increase the promotion and take up of the Make Your Mark ballot. Can Cllrs have a role as governors to encourage schools to increase engagement?
- Mental health and waiting lists and the quality of service to minimise trauma;
- Assistance for young carers while waiting for MH treatment is important.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the feedback from young people belonging to the Youth Council.