

## **Notes of Y CAT Meeting**

**Held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

### **Attendance list to be supplied by Y Service.**

- Cllr Woodward talked about the likely upcoming changes to Hampshire County Council's funding of youth services and Fareham Council's proposals for supporting young people locally in the future.
- There was discussion around whether 16 and 17 year olds should be able to vote. One young person felt that political decisions had a big impact on what colleges and universities could offer young people, and felt that having the opportunity to be part of these decisions would be fairer.
- One young person asked whether it would be possible for floodlights to be installed at the football pitch at Fareham North-West to increase young people's opportunity to use this resource in winter evenings.
- One young person asked how more job opportunities could be created for young people. Cllr Woodward spoke about the importance of apprenticeships to help lead young people into work and stated that many local businesses were willing to consider taking on young people if approached positively. He admitted that there were legal restrictions to employing 'children' under 16 years of age in anything other than light work.
- One young person asked if Xperience would still be there in 5 years' time. Cllr Woodward felt there was no reason the building would not remain, although he admitted the exterior needed some improvements.
- One young person asked whether Cllr Woodward considered Y Services to offer a 'vital' service for young people. Cllr Woodward responded that the Council had worked with Y Services for several years and felt they offered very good value for the services they provide.
- One young person asked Cllr Woodward where he thought young people hung out if they didn't go to Youth Centres. Cllr Woodward felt that young people met at friends' houses, on the streets or on open spaces. He commented that often residents became concerned when young people met up because of the sizes of the groups.
- One young person asked how to tackle the negative image that young people have in the community. Cllr Woodward responded that positive reporting of youth events and youth consultation (such as Y CATS) would help.
- One young person asked whether the surface of the football pitch at Fareham North-West and the fencing in this location could be repaired. Cllr Woodward stated this would be looked into.
- Another young person asked whether rugby posts could be installed at Fareham North-West. Cllr Woodward felt that this would be Henry Cort's decision.

- One young person spoke about the difficulty of using Fareham North-West youth club in the winter because the path between the youth club and Privett Road was poorly lit. Many young people spoke about their concerns of the safety of dark places, in particular around Henry Cort, in Blackbrook Park and in the open spaces by Locks Heath Centre. PC Couchman stated that the Police would not support additional lighting in residential areas until young people were encouraging their peers to respect other members of the community.
- The question of whether Fareham is a good place to live was asked to the young people. One young person felt that there were lots of options to get involved. One young person from Paulsgrove stated that he travelled into the Fareham area as there were more opportunities there. Others stated that to make it better there was need for more sheltered and lit up places in open areas where young people could meet up.
- The young people were asked if they attended SNAP. Many responded 'no' as SNAP was seen as being more appropriate for younger ones, between 11 and 13. Several people said they would attend one targeted for the older young people. They were unclear which different activities they would like to see there.
- The young people were asked whether they would like to bring their children up in Fareham. One young person felt there was too much drink and drugs in Fareham for it to be a safe environment. Another young person said they felt it was a nice area that was quite spread out, so didn't feel crowded.
- The young people were asked whether they saw themselves working in Fareham when they were older. Some felt there were not many job opportunities in Fareham. Cllr Woodward suggested that schools could begin making links into locally-based businesses.
- Cllr Woodward was asked his views on crime and why he thought young people committed crime. He stated that not only young people committed crime. PC Couchman added that crime was very low across the Borough but there were still pockets of anti-social behaviour. Cllr Woodward suggested the young people would be best placed to answer the question of why this age group would commit crime. Some suggestions were in retaliation to feelings of discrimination, because they are allowed to get away with minor offences, for attention, because they don't know the law (especially in relation to graffiti), because they have seen similar on TV / internet and this was funny, for popularity, because they feel more protected from any consequences in a group, because of peer pressure and because of boredom.
- One young person asked what was being done to ensure young people would be able to take A' levels in Fareham. Cllr Woodward responded that he was talking to the Heads of schools about opportunities, but he recognised there were difficulties attracting enough students to register for newly established courses.

- One young person asked whether a skate park could be established at Blackbrook Park. Cllr Woodward stated that the community around Blackbrook had been previously consulted about this but many had concerns regarding lack of respect for residents by young people using the park.
- One young person asked whether lighting and toilet facilities could be installed at Titchfield Recreation Ground. PC Couchman stated that young people had caused damage to the toilets in the Titchfield Mill, over the road, and as a result it was unlikely that the Police would support the introduction of more facilities in this area.
- One Youth Worker asked how the work currently being carried out at Youth Centres was being reviewed with particular concern regarding the Health and Wellbeing drop ins. Cllr Woodward stated that vulnerable groups would still be supported by Hampshire County Council but all groups running at the Youth Centres would be surveyed as part of the review.
- One young person asked why facilities are taken away rather than naughty people being targeted. PC Couchman responded that in large groups it is difficult to identify who is responsible, although the Police do try to establish who is causing the problems.
- One young person stated that there are football pitches at Holbrook that are fenced and locked, and wondered why the Council couldn't do the same with skateparks. Cllr Woodward responded that this was not a practical solution if the skatepark was not attached to a staffed facility.
- One young person from Fareham North-West stated that funding for the youth club was due to end in March 2016 and asked what plans there were to continue the project. Cllr Woodward responded that there were no guarantees, that funding reduction was expected, but many youth groups were becoming experts at finding alternative funding sources.
- One young person noted that if youth clubs are not able to run, it will have an impact on other services such as Police and mental health because of the preventative work that takes place.
- One young person commented that the footpaths leading to the Odyssey Centre were very overgrown. Cllr Woodward stated that he would investigate their maintenance.
- One young person asked where the money is going that would have been used for youth services. Cllr Woodward responded that the Government was having to find ways of paying off the interest of the country's debt, and as a result were having to cut back on some services. Luckily, in Fareham, the Borough Council was working to reduce the impact of these funding changes.