

Committee(s)	Dated:
Community and Children's Services Policy and Resources	13 February 2015 19 February 2015
Subject: Chairman of the City Youth Forum	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For information

Summary

A proposal regarding the creation of a Young Lord Mayor was discussed at the December Policy and Resources and Community and Children's Services committees. Members of both committees agreed the formation in principle but raised a number of questions regarding the post and requested further information prior to formal approval.

All Members' queries have been addressed by officers working with City Gateway. In order to meet British Youth Council (BYC) deadlines to enable the Chairman of the City Youth Forum (Young Lord Mayor) to be a member of the British Youth Parliament in 2015/16, your Chairman agreed for the Policy and Resources Committee Members to receive a verbal update at the January committee. Members subsequently agreed that elections could proceed during the February half term subject to a more detailed 'for information' report being produced which responded to Members' original queries.

This report sets out the key changes to the proposal, including a change of name from Young Lord Mayor to Chairman of the City Youth Forum, the development of a youth forum structure, more detail about the election process and the introduction of a code of conduct for youth forum representatives.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to: note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. A proposal regarding the creation of a Young Lord Mayor was discussed at the December Policy and Resources and Community and Children's Services committees. Members of both committees agreed the formation in principle but raised a number of questions regarding the post and requested further information prior to formal approval.

Current Position

2. Officers have worked alongside City Gateway (the City's provider of youth service provision) since the December meetings to further develop the proposal following Members' comments. In order to meet BYC deadlines for eligibility as a Member of the British Youth Parliament, voting must take place before the end of February. The best time to undertake voting is during February half term (16–20 February) with counting taking place on Friday 20th February. In light of these timescales, and with the next Policy and Resources Committee taking place during half term, your Chairman agreed for the Policy and Resources Committee Members to receive a verbal update at the January committee.
3. Members of the Policy and Resources Committee agreed that, due to time constraints, the revised proposals for a City Youth Forum and Chairman could proceed. They agreed that the proposals be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman subject to the report detailing the proposals being circulated to the committee for information. Any comments from Members will be considered for inclusion in the finalised documentation. The proposals will also be reviewed at the end of the pilot year and Members will have a further opportunity to give their input regarding the future proposals at that point.

Proposals

4. Members' concerns and queries, alongside the proposed resolutions, are set out below.

Members were keen to have a council or forum to represent young people in the City

5. A youth forum structure has been developed including a number of specific roles or leads which would be filled either through elections or through an application/interview process. The forum will have representatives from all areas of City of London Corporation youth provision, and current proposals include a schools representative, a Children and Care Council (CiCC) representative and a City fringe representative (a young person who is not a City resident but who uses City provision). The composition of the forum will be reviewed after the pilot year.
6. Terms of reference for the forum have been drafted and will be developed further with the forum members. Job descriptions and codes of conduct have been drafted for each role to clarify expectations of the role and forum.
7. Adjustments to the forum structure, job descriptions and terms of reference can be considered following Members' feedback, as part of the review at the end of the pilot year.

The Young Lord Mayor title

8. The elected young person will be known as the Chairman of the City Youth Forum for all City of London Corporation activities. The British Youth Parliament consists of Young MPs or Young Mayors and is supported by the BYC. As the

City shares an MP with Westminster, the BYC has afforded the City special dispensation to have a City-specific young person represented in the Youth Parliament and has agreed that the City's political system can be represented by a Young Lord Mayor. While at the BYC, the elected young person will be working alongside other Young Mayors, and will therefore use the ceremonial and official title of Young Lord Mayor and will be recognised as such. The BYC stipulates that the City representative in the British Youth Parliament must have a City postcode (otherwise there would be overlap with other Young MPs from other areas).

9. There will also be a Deputy Chairman of the City Youth Forum/Deputy Young Lord Mayor, who will be an elected Member of the City Youth Forum. This young person could attend any meetings on behalf of the Chairman.

The election process

10. All City young people aged 10 to 19 who reside in the City are eligible to vote for the Chairman of the City Youth Forum. Other youth forum posts will have an electorate appropriate for the post (for example, for schools or Greenbox session representatives). The City's electoral team will support the process, including with the loan of a ballot box and printing of ballot papers. A number of named staff (City of London Corporation or City Gateway) will be overseeing the issuing of ballot papers. The Department of Community and Children's Services will provide publicity for the elections by sending letters to all known young people's addresses. In order to vote in this pilot year, young people will need to be registered with City Gateway, to enable a single voter list to be generated.

Management of risk

11. In addition to the job descriptions for each forum member, young people would sign an agreement (similar to a volunteering agreement) and a code of conduct. Any infringements of the code of conduct would either necessitate a warning or dismissal from the post – similar to any employment role. The forum is a learning environment and young people will be mentored in their roles by City Gateway and City of London staff.
12. Any official social media contact from the Chairman of the Youth Forum would be completed alongside a City Gateway participation officer. Some contacts (for example, tweets) can be programmed ahead of time and linked to Facebook. While there will be no regulation of personal social media sites, any breach of the code of conduct will be dealt with as outlined in the previous paragraph. An e-safety training event is planned alongside a 'perceptions and portrayals' event to help young people understand their impact on social media.
13. With regards to funding, City Gateway has a funding resource called 'our club' of up to £500 per term, for which anyone can submit a bid. The City Youth Forum may wish to consider a future bid and would not request funding for projects directly from the City of London Corporation. They could however apply for grant funding streams in line with other City volunteer groups.

14. The Chairman and forum would have access to public documents only; they would not have access to sensitive data or any confidential issues.
15. The City Youth Forum is a learning environment and is intended to complement rather than conflict with statutory learning. The BYC sits only at weekends and during school holidays. The CiCC meets only in the school holidays at times agreed by CiCC members. The current proposal is for the City Youth Forum to meet once per half term, but this will be reviewed and revised as necessary. Officers will consider how the forum (and Chairman) can participate in decision-making forums and make any proposals to the relevant body.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

16. The creation of a City Youth Forum has a positive impact on the work of the City of London Corporation. There are no additional financial implications, as all costs associated with the proposal are contained within the current youth services contract cost.

Conclusion

17. The creation of a City Youth Forum and Chairman will demonstrate that the City of London Corporation is committed to engaging with its young people and will allow them to be represented at regional and national forums alongside our neighbouring London boroughs. The election of the Chairman and the forum members will be promoted at City Gateway's Crystal Gala celebrating their 15-year anniversary in March at the Guildhall.

Appendices

none

Background Papers

Young Lord Mayor: Community and Children's Services Committee December 2014
and Policy and Resources Committee December 2014

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