

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 17 October 2024
Subject: Youth Natural Environment Board Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Engaging diverse communities, creating a thriving destination, promoting sustainability and net-zero
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: N/A	For Information
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Summary

This report provides an update on the progress of the City of London Natural Environment Youth Board (YNEB) since its initial proposal was endorsed on 17th April 2024. The YNEB has made significant strides, including setting a provisional date for its first meeting on 8th November 2024 at the Hampstead Heath Outdoor Education Centre. This initiative aims to empower students and alumni from City of London schools to engage actively in environmental decision-making. A successful outreach campaign has garnered a positive response from several schools, and collaborative projects have been initiated to enhance sustainability education across the City of London Family of Schools.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

The establishment of the YNEB was proposed in April 2024 to address the need for youth involvement in sustainability discussions at the City of London Corporation.

Following the approval, the Environmental and Outdoor Learning Network coordinated efforts to integrate youth voices into the existing Natural Environment Board's decision-making processes.

Current Position

The YNEB has set a provisional date for its inaugural meeting on 8th November 2024 at the Hampstead Heath Outdoor Education Centre. The meeting has been advertised through the Family of Schools newsletter, yielding a positive response from several schools that have confirmed their participation. Confirmed representatives will attend from the following schools: City of London School for Girls, Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre, City Academy, City of London Freeman's School, and King Edward's School, Witley. Efforts will continue to ensure representation from state schools, which is critical to the board's mission.

The YNEB has also facilitated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Surrey University Institute of Sustainability and the City of London, with the Bridewell Royal Hospital Trust acting as a facilitator. This partnership aims to leverage the institute's research to support various initiatives across the City of London Family of Schools, positioning the group as leaders in education for sustainable development.

Options

1. Continue Developing the Youth Board

- *Cost Implications:* Minimal, mainly related to administrative support.
- *Benefits:* Increased youth engagement and representation in environmental decision-making.
- *Risks:* Low, primarily concerning member participation and retention.

2. Enhance Outreach to Ensure Diverse Representation

- *Cost Implications:* Low costs associated with outreach activities.
- *Benefits:* Broader representation from various communities, enriching discussions and initiatives.
- *Risks:* Moderate, related to logistical challenges in reaching underrepresented groups.

Proposals

We propose to continue developing the YNEB by focusing on member engagement and refining its governance structure. This approach will facilitate youth-led initiatives that contribute to the City of London's sustainability goals while ensuring that diverse perspectives are included.

Additionally, the YNEB is developing collaborative projects, including:

A partnership with the Royal Commonwealth Society to support their ocean cleanup initiatives through a Thames River cleanup activity.

Discussions about facilitating an online youth empowerment conference for students across the Commonwealth, fostering environmental action exchanges.

An urban sustainability photography competition in collaboration with the International Garden Photographer Competition.

Representation at the Golden Jubilee celebrations for the Duke of Gloucester in his role as Ranger of Epping Forest.

Key Data

- **Engagement Metrics:**
 - Number of interested participants: 12
 - Confirmed school representatives: City of London School for Girls, Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre, City Academy, City of London Freeman's School, King Edward's School, Witley.
 - Proposed project ideas: Thames River cleanup, online empowerment conference, photography competition.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

- This initiative strongly aligns with the City Corporation's Corporate Plan by fostering youth involvement in environmental advocacy and supporting sustainable practices.

Financial implications

- There are no financial implications anticipated as the initiative is volunteer-driven.

Resource implications

- The project will utilize existing resources for coordination and support.

Legal implications

- None identified at this stage.

Risk implications

- The main risk involves varying levels of engagement from youth members. Strategies will be put in place to ensure sustained participation.

Equalities implications

- The initiative is designed to promote inclusivity and ensure diverse representation in environmental discussions.

Climate implications

- The YNEB's activities will contribute to the City of London's Climate Action Strategy by empowering youth to advocate for sustainable practices.

Security implications

- None identified.

Conclusion

The ongoing development of the City of London Natural Environment Youth Board represents a significant opportunity to leverage youth engagement in driving environmental action. With the upcoming inaugural meeting and various collaborative initiatives in the pipeline, the YNEB is poised to make meaningful contributions to sustainability education and advocacy in the City of London.

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