

APPOINTMENT OF YOUNG SPEAKERS OF HACKNEY

COUNCIL 24 January 2018	CLASSIFICATION: Open If exempt, the reason will be listed in the main body of this report.
WARD(S) AFFECTED N/A	
GROUP DIRECTOR Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health	

1. MAYOR'S INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Hackney is one of the youngest boroughs in London, with around 68,000 residents (25% of the population) aged 19 or under.
- 1.2 The Council has a history of encouraging and supporting children's and young people's participation in local democracy, through local youth projects and school councils to the Hackney Youth Parliament, and is keen to further promote active citizenship amongst young people.
- 1.3 One month into my role as Mayor, I was honoured to announce the results of the 2016 Hackney Youth Parliament elections, which engaged thousands of young people across the borough. I am committed to working with the Youth Parliament, and I have met with a number of the Youth Parliamentarians since the election to hear their ideas and discuss their work programme, including their valuable work on mental health. This has included a joint meeting of the Hackney Cabinet and Youth Parliament in July 2017, with further joint meetings planned.
- 1.4 This paper takes forward one of my 2016 manifesto commitments around the creation of a Young Mayor, following discussions across the Council it has been decided to take forward this idea for an enhanced borough wide role, by recommending the creation of two Young Speaker roles. These two Young Speakers will represent and promote the Youth Parliament and will champion young people's voices and ideas in new ways.
- 1.5 I am hopeful that the Young Speaker roles will further enhance and promote youth participation in local democracy, with the aim of further improving opportunities for young people in the Borough.
- 1.6 I look forward to working with the first two Young Speakers in the coming months, and commend this report to Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Hackney Youth Parliament is part of the Young Hackney Participation Programme. Young Hackney's aim is that children, young people and families have high ambitions leading to greater independence and resilience. This includes active citizenship and encouraging young leaders to engage with their communities in order to improve outcomes for all.
- 2.2 Hackney Youth Parliament is made up young people who have been elected by their peers and are part of the National UK Youth Parliament programme. The current positions are now held for two years and the current cycle ends in October 2018. The current Youth Parliament meet every week for two hours.
- 2.3 Once a year Hackney Youth Parliament take up their seat at the UK Youth Parliament sitting at the House of Commons to debate and prioritise future campaigns voted on by each borough through a National Campaign called Make Your Mark.
- 2.4 The Youth Parliament also work on promoting democracy and encouraging young people to take part in decision making, especially decision making that effects the services they receive from the local authority. Young People are

encouraged to become active participants in service design, delivery and review through peer led research, peer education, youth led inspections, and staff recruitment panels. They also develop campaigns to highlight awareness of issues that affect young people in the borough in order to promote services or support to improve young people's engagement and outcomes.

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 To take forward the Mayor's manifesto commitment, officers from Young Hackney and members of the Hackney Youth Parliament have engaged with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and worked up a role description for an Elected Young Speaker (EYS) post. It is proposed that two Young Speakers would be elected (one male, one female), and that they would become the official spokespeople of the Youth Parliament. The main objectives of the Young Speaker roles would be as follows:

- To represent Hackney Young People, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, class or sexuality and promote their interests to the council and the wider community, including other public services.
- The EYS will represent and promote the Youth Parliament and will champion young people's voices and participation to improve young people's life in the Borough.
- The EYS will aim to promote local services to Young People and will consult with young people to provide information in order to improve services including those young people whose voice may not often be heard.
- The Elected Young Speakers (EYS) will be part of the Youth Parliament and will be the spokespeople for the Parliament and thus represent the wider views of the young people in Hackney.
- The EYS will meet regularly with the Speaker, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, councillors and council officers.
- The EYS will attend meetings and events alongside the Speaker, Mayor and Deputy Mayor in order to promote the above and encourage young people's participation and consult with them as part of the Mayor's priorities for young people.
- The EYS will be supported to carry out their duties with support from Hackney Youth Parliament, Young Hackney and the Mayor and Speaker's Offices.

3.2 Other London Boroughs have elected Young Mayors, who carry out similar duties. However the current Hackney Youth Parliament consulted its members and they feel that the role of an Elected Young Speaker title more accurately

reflects this role, as the intention is that they are speaking on behalf of the young people from their community.

- 3.3 Any young person who wants to become the EYS from October 2018 will declare their interest in their manifesto pledge of the HYP elections to be held in October 2018. Once elected to the HYP on 18 October the newly elected members will select the two EYS speakers for the next two years of the Youth Parliament lifespan. There will be a fair selection process based on skills and person specification in the role description. The role description (appendix 1) has been drafted by the current Youth Parliament members.
- 3.4 Ahead of the October 2018 elections, it is proposed that 2 EYS are selected now to pilot the new role. The two EYS selected (Rose Ilunga and Kamani Williams) have been agreed by the current HYP members to undertake this pilot. The pilot also supports the main objectives below taken from the Participation Strategy for Young People published in 2014. The young people agreed that by creating two roles this promotes equality and allows for each EYS to share the responsibility as they fit this role into their own life and their school or college commitments.
- 3.5 The main objectives outlined in the Children and Young People's Participation Strategy are to ensure:
- All children and young people from an early age are educated about their rights, society and how to get involved in decision-making, to enable them to develop as active citizens.
 - All children and young people can have influence at a range of levels, with influence over decisions about their personal lives and learning their services, their communities, the borough and beyond.
 - All services working with children and young people involve them in the design, delivery and evaluation of those services.
 - Opportunities for children and young people are provided, to develop as leaders and to take responsibility.
 - Children and young people can take an active role in commissioning.
 - Children and young people are able to give feedback on the services they use.
 - There are effective mechanisms for communicating with children and young people, so that they are aware of the opportunities available to them to get involved; and
 - We will monitor services effectively to measure the quality of children and young people's involvement and the results of involvement.
- 3.6 The young people will also be expected to attend Scrutiny Meetings (currently they attend the Children's and Education Scrutiny Panel), and agreed events with

the Speaker, Mayor and Deputy Mayor, these events will be chosen where young people will be in attendance.

Suggested events include:

- Hackney Youth Awards
- One Carnival
- Election Count 2018
- Local Democracy Week Launch Event
- Hackney Youth Parliament Election Launch
- Hackney Apprentice Scheme events

- 3.7 The EYS will also meet regularly with the Deputy Mayor and/or Mayor to discuss process and agree events and meetings they can attend together. The EYS will also discuss the progress of the HYP campaigns and raise concerns to the Deputy Mayor and Mayor from young people they have consulted with on local issues affecting them.
- 3.8 Future considerations beyond this pilot also include developing a small budget for a Young Speaker Fund that will be granted annually by the EYS to youth projects they have identified that benefit other young people in the community.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that Council:

- Note the appointments of Rose Ilunga and Kamani Williams from Hackney Youth Parliament as the first Young Speakers of Hackney, until October 2018.
- Note the intention to pilot and review the Young Speaker function, ahead of Hackney Youth Parliament elections in October 2018.

4. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES

4.1 This report sets out proposals to establish a pilot in relation to the creation of two Young Speaker roles, as part of the Hackney Youth Parliament. In relation to the pilot any costs arising can be contained within existing resources.

5. COMMENTS OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR, LEGAL

5.1 There are no legal implications arising in this report.

APPENDICES

Draft Job Description

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Has any background papers have been relied upon the drafting of this report

None

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