
ISSUES ARISING FROM COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1 REVIEW OF POLICIES AND SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN THE DISTRICT

- 1.1 This item of business was referred by the Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee to this Committee with the recommendation that a young person's edition of Rochford District Matters be published on an annual basis at no additional cost to the Council.
- 1.2 The Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee is undertaking a review of policies and services for young people. At its meeting on the 16 February 2004, when considering the issue of making young people aware of the many and varied services it was discovering were currently available, Members of that Committee were conscious of the fact that the age range being targeted by the review would be unlikely to read the Council's newspaper.
- 1.3 Members agreed that officers investigate the feasibility and costs involved in producing a separate edition of the newspaper targeted specifically at young people, which could publicise all the activities being promoted by various local organisations.
- 1.4 Advertising sponsorship could be sought to assist with funding. The Summer edition would be the most appropriate edition, when the Council's activities programme would normally be published. The format and style would need to be very different from the existing newspaper in order to personalise it for young people.
- 1.5 The Leisure & Contracts Manager subsequently met with the Council's Corporate Communications officer and the Operations Manager from Holmes Place to discuss the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's recommendation.
- 1.6 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 19 March 2004 considered the issue again following the officer's report back.
- 1.7 Members noted that the cost of production would depend on the exact nature of the publication. An 8-page publication with a distribution to approximately 33,000 households would cost in the region of £4,000 including design, production and distribution. Members agreed that it would be necessary to sell approximately 25% of the space in advertising.
- 1.8 The ideal time for publication would be annually around the June/July period. The most important aspect would be to ensure its appeal to young people. A strong element of visual appeal would therefore be necessary, including consideration of producing it on coloured paper.

- 1.9 However, it was noted that production of an 8-page document this year would pose real problems in terms of the timescale. The alternative would be to either produce a smaller version this year as a pilot or to defer production for this first year to the autumn. This would still be a good time to promote available activities during the darker evenings.
- 1.10 Members noted that there were various design companies that Holmes Place would be able to contact and proofs could be provided for Members' approval. Members would need to agree whether the document would be included as a pull-out supplement to the main newspaper or as a completely separate publication.
- 1.11 If included as a pull-out, clear reference to it would need to be included on the front page of the main newspaper. Whilst the age range of the review was 11-17 years, it was recognised that the Council's activities for young people were from around the age of 8 and information on these would need to be included.
- 1.12 The objective would be to promote what is available, particularly during school holiday periods and to provide information about events. Members were advised that it should be possible to provide a summary of "What's on" in time for production this summer, with the aim of producing a much more detailed version for next summer.
- 1.13 A mechanism would need to be put in place to monitor how well received the publication had been.
- 1.14 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That a young person's edition of Rochford District Matters be published on an annual basis at no additional cost to the Council.

Sarah Fowler

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Background Papers:

None

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