

**Wiltshire Council**

**Children's Select Committee**

**20 September 2022**

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## **Child and Youth Voice Update**

### **Youth Council Activity**

#### **Salisbury Youth Pride**

After consulting with young people from the LGBTQ+ community in Wiltshire, we were told that there were not enough opportunities for children and young people who identify as LGBTQ+ to socialise within their community.

As a result of this, The Wiltshire Youth Council wanted to hold an event for children and young people who identify as LGBTQ+, the goals for this event were.

- To gain the views and Voice of Children and Young people both in and out of the LGBTQ+ community.
- To offer support to children and young people coming out or transitioning.
- To support young people who have family members or friends in the LGBTQ+ community.
- To show support and celebrate Equality and diversity

The Youth Council worked with the organisers of Salisbury Pride and helped run the family zone at Salisbury Pride on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The event was a success as many young people from the LGBTQ+ community attended, lots of those were either with their friends or with their families. The participants were given a means to express themselves in creative ways which included tagging a pride flag and making bracelets which colours corresponded with their LGBTQ+ identity.

#### **Mental Health First Aid**

A subgroup of the Wiltshire Youth Council has been working with the Healthy Schools Lead Nick Bolton to become trained as Mental Health First Aiders. The training is due to take place in October, after this has been completed the Youth Councillors will be able to use the skills they have learned to set up peer support networks and groups in their schools. The trained Youth Councillors will be able to offer advice to their peers and also find out what the main issues affecting children in their schools are, these can then be fed back to the wider Wiltshire Youth Council group.

#### **Healthy Schools Awards Auditors**

Some of the Wiltshire Youth Councillors have been selected to audit schools that are taking part in the Healthy School's Awards. They will hold focus groups with students

around health and wellbeing and ensure that pupil voice is heard through this process.

### **Shadow Youth Cabinet Members**

The Shadow Youth Cabinet Members have now all met with their Cabinet Member counterparts and have started to form a work plan. The Shadow Youth Cabinet Members will now meet to see how they can work together to fulfil their commitments and ensure that young people have their views heard in all areas of the council.

### **Member of Youth Parliament (MYP)**

The Child and Youth Voice Team has supported our MYPs to attend a weekend annual conference in Coventry, they met with MYPs from the whole of the United Kingdom and debated on policy motions to take forward to be put into their manifesto. They will now attend a debate in the Houses of Commons in November to agree the final 3 issues that the Youth Parliament will focus on over the next year.

### **Youth Voice Residential to PGL**

The Child and Youth Voice Team is hosting a residential experience to PGL . We are taking 25 young people from all the groups that we work with, including the Children in Care Council, Wiltshire Youth Council and young people that are on Child in Need/ Child Protection Plans. The young people will get to enjoy activities such as climbing, giant swing, archery, and water sports. This opportunity will give all those young people we work with a chance to meet between their different groups and is a treat for the excellent contribution they have made. Feedback will also be gathered throughout the weekend to help us better understand what young people feel about the support they are getting from Wiltshire Council.

### **Children in Care Council**

In July, 14 children in care attended a 5-day residential trip to Cornwall. This was run by the charity Go Beyond, who specialise in giving disadvantaged young people a holiday. The participants took part in surfing, football, golf and lots of other activities.

We have also facilitated a bubble football event. The conversation theme for this activity was staying safe. The participants fed back that they are confident with online safety as this is covered at school regularly. They also said some Social Workers are better than others at getting to know them and if they felt unsafe they would not speak to someone who only turns up for social care meetings (i.e. they would speak to someone with whom they had formed a close relationship). Key messages about how young people want to be worked with will be fed back to social work teams when we visit them in September and October.

## **Mind of My Own App**

We have booked to attend social care team meetings in September and October. We are planning on providing an update on Mind of My Own, talking through each teams' usage statistics and giving advice about how they can use it with children and young people.

Staff members from the Child and Youth Voice Team will now be co-located with the Children in Care Teams 2 days per week, which will enable them to give support to practitioners around the use of the app and also share other initiatives that we run.

Wiltshire Council has won a Mind of My Own 'Hidden Gem' award and was highly commended in the 'Best User' category.

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