

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Paper submitted by Cllr. Bond – 06.07.22

The Young People of Thurston

I have been thinking long and hard about the issues raised at various meetings concerning the behaviour of young people in the village of Thurston. I have heard many ideas put forward about how to tackle various situations, ranging around loud music, general poor behaviour, littering, graffiti etc.

I wonder if the Parish Council would consider employing 2 youth workers, one to spend at least 10 hours each week working in the village, the other at least 6 hours per week.

Why 2 youth workers? Whilst working outside in the community, at the youth shelter for instance, this would ensure the Safety of both the adults concerned and the young people. For instance, it is easy for allegations to be made and this must be taken seriously. Working in pairs would be a way of helping control many potential situations including allegations.

2 Youth Workers:-

Both working at least 6 hours each week in the community. The Youth Workers (YWs) would be in a position to meet with young people where the young people decide to spend their own time i.e. at the youth shelter, and obviously many other areas in the village. Through this process the YWs would be able to build up relationships with the young people and build up trust to a point where meaningful work would be achieved.

6 hours per week would give them the flexibility to work at different hours i.e. covering after school one day, later in the evening another day etc.

For the purpose of this paper, I have used the graffiti in the village as an example of what the staff would be gainfully used for. The YWs would be able to work with the young people to help them understand what is "artistic" and what is not. As the removal of the graffiti from around the village currently is costing the local tax payer on a regular basis, the YWs would be able to speak to the young people about the cost of removing graffiti once it has been applied and help them understand the consequences of their actions and who ultimately picks up the costs. This may make some young people take ownership over what is appropriate behaviour in the village and what is not.

1 Youth Worker:-

I suggested more hours for one of the members of staff than the other. My suggestion would be for the extra 4 hours to be used in Thurston Community College each week. Whilst working within the confines of TCC one member of staff, working alone, would be considered appropriate.

It might be possible for the YW, in the school environment, with the support of the School to meet with a group of young people who actually live in the village of Thurston and meet with them regularly to understand exactly what provision they would like in the village. Also, to find out exactly what their issues are regarding living in the village. This approach would mean that there would be someone with the appropriate skills to meet face to face with young people and work out with them exactly what their needs are in the village. Often young people don't actually know what their needs are they just know that they want something and hopefully through discussion with an appropriately trained member of staff it would be possible to understand their needs.

What happens next?:-

Having built up relationships and found out what young people in the village would like to be engaged with, the YWs would involve the young people in planning and moving the ideas forward. It would not be entirely up to the YWs to implement what young people want but to work alongside the young people to encourage them to participate in developing ideas. For the young people to learn skills associated with planning and developing a project - whatever that project may be. This may involve the YWs supporting the young people to meet with appropriate adults, for instance, the Parish Council or any other body, to discuss and negotiate their needs themselves. This results in developing both projects and young people themselves. Without knowing what young people will identify it is obviously difficult to try to envisage the level and depth of the work required. However, the outcome should be a successful project and educated young people.

Management:-

I would be happy to meet regularly with the YWs and "manage" them from the point of their engagement in the Community. Hopefully if we were able to link in with an organisation, the YWs would be able to use their Policy and Procedures, including Child Protection, to inform their conduct during their work in the village. This would also ensure that the YWs have the appropriate Police checks etc. and are safe to work with young people.

Research:-

I have found an organisation who in principle would be very happy to work with us and they are local too. I have explained fully that at this point in time no firm arrangements are being made as the concept needs to be discussed in full initially at the Parish Council meeting.

The Organisation is called Pushforward and is based on Moreton Hall. I have had a conversation with the person who manages Pushforward and they are interested in being involved if such a project goes ahead. The manager has

worked for many years in youth work in London and Birmingham and informs me that all of their Policies and Procedures have been agreed with Suffolk County Council.

Initial costs could be around £30.00 per hour per person. However, it was suggested using one fully trained worker and the second member of staff being a trainee. Discussions can be had further on this matter depending on the outcome of the discussions at the Council Meeting. We could initially be looking at around £15,000 per year.

Below is the link for Pushforward: Pushforward Education & Youth Work - An alternative provision specialising in the behaviour and wellbeing of young people through practical application of skills and project lead community engagement.

https://pushforward.org.uk/contact?fbclid=IwAR2S4S2j1rZkgzjXZG75QH8j5Iy9PWQfb4vOs6_sMgHdwD8rFdFg7AGK2Q

Proposal:

- a) Council to consider exploring further the proposal to discuss the provision of youth workers with Pushforward to ascertain whether the service offered could positively engage and benefit young people in Thurston.**
- b) If a) is approved, Council to consider engaging with the inclusion department at Thurston Community College with regards to the support that could be given to students, particularly those who are flagging up concerns of risk of anti-social behaviour.**