

260407 – Item 14 - Youth Forum

Background

Wellmoor has recently established a Youth Forum for young people in Moretonhampstead. The Forum is aimed at teenagers aged 14–18 and is intended to provide a space for young residents to share their ideas, raise issues, and contribute to discussions about their community.

Wellmoor has held two introductory meetings with members of the Youth Club to begin shaping the Forum. They are also inviting other local youth groups, including the Scouts, to take part so that the Forum represents a broad range of young people from the town.

The aim is to create a small group of young people who can represent the views of younger residents of Moretonhampstead. The Forum will encourage participants to:

- Share their ideas about the town
- Give their views on local topics and issues
- Highlight what they would like to see for young people in the area
- Feed their wants and needs into local decision-making and community/place-making

Wellmoor has expressed that it would be very positive to have the Parish Council involved in this initiative.

Proposed Parish Council Involvement

The Clerk is happy to:

- Attend Youth Forum meetings where appropriate
- Provide a short introduction explaining the role of the Parish Council and how decisions are made
- Offer the Council Office as a venue for meetings if required

The next Youth Forum meeting is currently planned for Wednesday 29 April, at which the Clerk will give a short presentation about the work of the Parish Council.

Potential Benefits

Involvement with the Youth Forum could help the Council:

- Better understand the needs and views of younger residents
- Encourage youth engagement with local democracy
- Identify ideas for projects, facilities or activities for young people
- Support community cohesion

Youth forums are often an effective way for councils to hear directly from younger residents and to ensure that their voices are considered in local planning and decision-making.

Possible Topics or Questions for the Youth Forum

Councillors may wish to suggest questions or topics to discuss with the group, for example:

- What do young people like most about living in Moretonhampstead?
- What changes or improvements would they most like to see in the town?
- Are there enough activities, spaces or facilities for teenagers locally?
- How could public spaces be made more welcoming for young people?
- What would encourage young people to stay involved in the community as they get older?
- How can the Parish Council communicate better with young people?
- Are there events or projects they would like to help organise?

Recommendation

That the Council:

1. Notes the creation of the Youth Forum by Wellmoor.
2. Supports participation in the Forum and engagement with young residents.
3. Confirms that the Clerk may attend meetings and provide an introduction to the Parish Council.
4. Suggests any questions or topics that councillors would like raised with the Youth Forum.