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| <b>Good Relations Let's Talk Event</b>                               | <b>11<sup>th</sup> September 2018</b> |
| <b>To: The Leisure and Development Committee<br/>For Information</b> |                                       |

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| <b>Linkage to Council Strategy 2015-19</b> |   |
| <b>Strategic Theme</b>                     | Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities  |
| <b>Outcome</b>                             | Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough |
| <b>Lead Officer</b>                        | Head of Service Community and Culture<br>Good Relations Manager                             |
| <b>Cost: (If applicable)</b>               | N/A   |

**The purpose of the report is to request participation from elected representatives from all parties and independent's in Council's annual Let's Talk event which is included as part of its Good Relations Plan.**

### **Background**

As outlined in Council's Corporate Plan under Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities, the event is a youth citizenship project delivered as part of Council's Good Relations strategic theme for Our Children and Young People. The project is delivered as a Let's Talk event which aims to increase awareness on local citizenship and increase awareness of cultural diversity.

The overall purpose of the event is to help build the confidence of young people, to encourage engagement with civic leaders and to assist young people in making informed choices.

The event involves post primary schools from across the Borough coming together to engage with political leaders via round table discussions along with panel question and answer sessions, with participants voting for their preferred political parties taking place at the beginning and end of the event.

### **Current position**

The Let's Talk local democracy event will once again be hosted by the BBC's Mark Carruthers and will take place in the Lodge Hotel on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018 from 9.30am – 2.30pm.

The event will provide an opportunity for young people to discuss issues of importance and engage with Members as political leaders in a meaningful way.

Past events have seen good participation from the young people across the Borough with more schools confirming attendance this year.

The recent Good Relations Audit identified the need for youth / civic engagement. Survey responses from young people within the Borough said that they felt they have little influence on any decisions making at a local or regional level. This demonstrates a need to increase the engagement with young people locally. The Let's Talk event provides the initial opportunity to do this.

Feedback from Councillors who have previously participated indicates that they consider this to be a worthwhile event.

Officers ask council to consider nominating elected representatives from all parties as well as independents to participate in the event.

### **Next Steps**

To ensure broad representation from Council, it is requested that each party nominate two members to participate in the Let's Talk Event. Where there is only one party representative, or should a Councillor be an Independent Member, officers would request participation from these Members in the event.

Names of the Councillors who are nominated to participate should be forwarded to Joy Wisener, Good Relations Officer by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018.

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