

Town Clerk
Les Trigg

15 Station Road
Stone
ST15 8JP

Tel: 01785 619740
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12 October 2021

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE** will be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2021 at 7:10pm**, or upon the rising of the Environment Sub-Committee, if later.

The Agenda is set out below, and I trust you will be able to attend.

Attendees are asked to wear face masks other than when taking part in the meeting.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

Councillors: J. Davies (Chairman), I. Fordham (Vice Chairman), K. Argyle, Mrs A. Burgess,
Mrs L. Davies, M. Green and T. Kelt

AGENDA

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations Received**
3. **Representations from Members of the Public**

To consider representations from members of the public on items to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation.

4. Community Involvement with Young People

To consider the options for better representing young people and promoting youth engagement in the Town Council's activities.

A copy of Councillor Mrs Dawson's Youth Council Research Summary is attached. A copy of the Protocol for the Appointment of Student Advisors in Association with Ringwood School, and NALC publication 'Whatever, yeah?' Is attached to the electronic version of the agenda.

Will any Councillors who wish to speak at this meeting, but are not members of the Sub-Committee, please inform the Chairman before the start of the meeting.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the Management Sub-Committee Meeting as observers and/or to make representations to the committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of public participation. Details of this scheme are displayed in the Council's notice boards and website.

Youth Council

List of documents

1. Summary of research
2. Student Advisor role description
3. Suggestion for application form
4. NALC 'Yeah, whatever' publication
5. Ringwood TC Protocol

Cllr K Dawson

Getting young people more involved and interested in the Council and what it does is a question/issue that has been floated around for a while. I have taken it upon myself to do some research and came across a NALC case study which details the process that Ringwood Town Council went through before arriving at the decision to appoint Student Advisors.

Ringwood looked at 3 possible options:

Youth Council

To act as an advisory committee to the Council. The YC wouldn't be able to have a say in the final recommendations or take part in direct presentations/debates with the Council or associated committees. There was concern that this would be a token gesture so the Council could be seen to be doing something to involve local young people, but nothing would really be achieved, and young people would quickly lose interest.

- not able to cast votes
- opportunity to put ideas forward for consideration
- unable to take an active part in the Council/Committee meetings
- further formal consultation would be required on each objective before decisions are made thereby lengthening the process unnecessarily.

Persons with a special interest

These would be individuals co-opted as members of the various committees.

- would be able to engage in proper debate and present to committee/Council
- wouldn't be able to vote
- wouldn't be able to include anyone under the age of 18
- students would want equal rights to Councillors and not getting that may demotivate the young people.

Student Advisors

This would consist of 2 students per committee from local secondary schools.

- advisory role only
- would be able to present to the committee and take part in active debate to form recommendations to take forward to GP/Council
- unable to vote
- no age bar (can be under 18)

I strongly believe that we should consider appointing 2 student advisors to the following committees:

- Town and Tourism
- Environment
- Heritage Centre Working Group
- Possibly GP

I would recommend opening the roles up to young people aged 12 and over and making sure to include those young people who are home educated too.

I would expect the process to be similar to the protocol outlined by Ringwood Town Council (attached), modified to suit our own Council.

I urge the Council seeks to adopt the Student Advisor option as championed by Ringwood Town Council. Next steps should be:

- Agree the scheme within the Council – what committees, how many SAs, when should it start?
- Organise a working party of 2-3 Councillors to meet with the head teachers of Christ Church Academy, Walton Priory and Alleyne's. Hold a youth meeting (Frank Jordan Centre?) to include all young people who live in the town but don't attend those schools (JCB Academy, home educated young people).
- Press campaign/social medial posts when applications go live. Set a deadline.

Each Student Advisor should get a certificate of appointment for their time in the role – this could be given out at the annual meeting.

Student Advisor Role Description

Student Advisors will be required to:

- Abide by the Council's Code of Conduct
- Consult with young people about current issues
- Bring these views to Stone Town Council to help shape local policy and plans
- Attend monthly meetings of the various committees
- Comment on and influence issues in Stone that affect young people

Benefits of the role:

- SAs will have a greater understanding of how local councils work
- Meet new people and try new things
- Better understand local government
- Looks great on your CV/university application
- Develop new skills and a sense of business

Cost

- There will be no immediate cost to the SAs
- Meetings take place locally in Town Council offices or a Council-owned building
- Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed (bus/taxi fare)

Student Advisor Application

Name

Date of Birth

Address

Postcode

Contact No

Email

Do you attend any youth groups or clubs? YES/NO

If yes, please list them:

Are you:

☐ **In school?**

☐ **Receiving an education other than at school?**

If you're in school, please tell us which one:

Which committee are you interested in?

☐ **Town & Tourism**

☐ **Stone Heritage Centre Working Group**

☐ **Environment**

☐ **General Purposes**

Why do you want to be a Student Advisor? What skills/qualities could you bring to the role?

**Meetings will usually take place on Evenings. Are you available?
Will you need support with transport?**

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

PROTOCOL FOR APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT ADVISORS IN ASSOCIATION WITH RINGWOOD SCHOOL

1. The Town Council believes it should embrace all sections of the community in its decision-making processes. To achieve this it has already implemented extensive consultation arrangements that involve the public on specific schemes and through questionnaires. In addition it has public participation arrangements that enable the public to speak on general issues prior to each meeting and during meetings on Agenda items. However these arrangements tend to provide an opportunity for the public to attend meetings or be involved on single issues and not on the overall decision-making processes of the Council. It is rare for young people to take advantage of the opportunities provided under these arrangements.
2. Councillors have also noted that for a variety of reasons, membership of the Council tends to comprise of the older generation. It appears that family and career requirements make it difficult for younger generations to give the level of commitment necessary to properly fulfil the role of a Town Councillor. This often means that the views of those young children and teenagers living at home are not put directly to the Council.
3. Notwithstanding the extensive networking by existing Councillors within the town and the community and the existing public involvement arrangements, Town Councillors recognise that as their own children have grown up, it becomes more and more difficult for them to be aware of the needs, requirements and aspirations of the younger generation. This can lead to claims of the Council being “out of touch” and not providing the services required.
4. The Town Council therefore looked at a number of options which would bring young people’s views into debates on a continuing basis prior to decisions being taken.
5. The easiest solution would have been to appoint a Youth Council serviced by the Town Council or indeed separately but comprising solely of young people. At best, this could only have been an advisory committee and would make recommendations to the Council. Its members would not, therefore, have been able to make direct presentations to Councillors or as a matter of course be present when final decisions are taken. The need to carry out further formal consultation before decisions are made would mean lengthening the decision-making process and the extra meetings would have required additional resource input from the Council and divert funding from service provision.
6. As an alternative the Council looked at co-opting young people as persons with a special interest to each of the Council’s committees. However, this was rejected on two counts. Firstly, if any of the students are under 18 they would be disqualified from being a Member since under the provisions of Sections 101 and 102 and also Section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972, persons under the age of 18 are not eligible for

membership of the Town Council. Secondly, persons co-opted to membership of a committee, as opposed to those co-opted to Council as a full member of the Council as a result of a casual vacancy, are not entitled to vote at decision-making committees of the Council. Therefore, any students over the age of 18 and co-opted to a decision-making committee would not be able to vote on any issue coming before that meeting. The Council believes that it would be difficult to persuade young people that having been co-opted to a committee they would not have equal rights with Councillors. Co-option with no right to vote would undermine the general principles of trying to involve young people in the Council's affairs. The Council believes it would certainly de-motivate the young people and therefore was not a route that it wished to follow.

7. Having rejected advisory Committees made up of young people and co-option to existing Committees the Council looked at other options. Its culture provides for officers to advise Councillors and Committee before decisions are taken. Decisions are not taken without regard to Officers advice. Councillors rely heavily on Officers, at all levels and others to give advice appropriate to their knowledge and experience.
8. For the past two years the Town Council has been working with students of Ringwood (Secondary) School on an ad hoc basis on accreditation for Fairtrade status and the Market Town Healthcheck for preparation of a Town Plan. The students role in these exercises was to give a young persons perspective on the issues. Councillors had been impressed with the level of knowledge, commitment and enthusiasm shown by the students on that work. It therefore became a sensible and natural progression for the Council to consider formalising the existing arrangement throughout the Council's decision making structures.
9. After careful thought about the issues, the Council decided that as there is no age bar or other restrictions affecting its ability to appoint advisors, this role would be more appropriate. It is specifically designed to enable young people to represent the views of the younger generation and provide their professional and knowledgeable input in exactly the same manner as Council officers. Importantly this arrangement will enable students to be present at the meetings at which decisions are taken, the timeframe for decision-making is not extended and there is little or no additional resource requirement placed upon the Town Council.
10. Some Councillors needed re-assurance that the roles were advisory, not decision making. Equally for existing staff it was important to define the role as one of putting a young person's viewpoint rather than the pure professional view provided by existing officers.
11. In order to implement its proposals the Council has decided to appoint two Student Advisors to each of its four main programme committees. The basis of the appointments are as follows:-
 - i) The appointment of the eight Student Advisors would be handled on behalf of the Town Council by Ringwood (Secondary) School (Ringwood School). Students apply for the posts and the school interviews, selects and nominates Students for formal appointment by the Town Council. Generally it is expected that the Town Council will simply ratify such appointments.

- ii) In the first instance, the appointments were for the period of 1 October 2007 to 31 July 2008 i.e. the end of the academic school year. In May 2008 and following a review of the benefits obtained during the pilot period the Council agreed to the annual appointment of Student Advisors to Committees as a permanent feature of its decision making processes.
- iii) On the review in May 2008 and for the purpose of clarity the Council confirmed that there should be no age limit for the appointment of Student Advisors subject to the School recognising that those nominated should be capable of undertaking the student advisors full role.
- iv) In order to ensure a proper balance of views of residents a new requirement was introduced in May 2008 about residential qualifications of advisors. This states that at the time of appointment, at least six student advisors are resident within the town boundary and the remaining two be appointed from any students attending the school irrespective of their place of residence and also that non-resident students should only advise a Committee along with a resident.
- v) Whilst the students are appointed by Ringwood School, they will be expected to represent the views of all young people in Ringwood, including those who have not reached an age to attend Ringwood School and also those who have left the school. The students will also be required to represent the views of former students who are currently resident outside the town.
- vi) The students' role will be as advisors to the committee in the same way as any other specialist and professional is appointed to advise Members. They are encouraged to give their views in the same way as Town Council officers or any other person appointed to assist Members coming to reasoned conclusions and decisions.
- vii) As advisors the students will not always have to leave when confidential matters are discussed. However, there will be some occasions when students will be requested to leave particularly, when certain staffing and perhaps other confidential items are discussed. This is no different from the practice adopted for the Council's staff.
- viii) Student Advisors will receive copies of agenda, minutes and reports in exactly the same way as Councillors and other officers.
- ix) The students will be expected to discuss issues with other young people but they must also comply with the same confidentiality rules as applied to officers and Councillors. When the new National Code of Conduct for Officers is brought into force, this will also apply to Student Advisors.
- x) Student Advisors will be provided with a copy of the Council's Members' Handbook for their personal use.
- xi) Whilst Student Advisors will not be remunerated, the Town Council will be meeting travel costs to enable them to attend meetings.

- xii) Details of Student Advisors will be published on the Council's website. However, the Students home addresses and telephone numbers will not be disclosed without the consent of the students and their parents.
12. For ease of reference and a more detailed explanation of the process leading up to the selection of Student Advisors, the following documents are appended to this Protocol:-

Appendix 1 – Extract from Minutes of the Town Council's Policy & Finance Committee held on 17 May 2006.

Appendix 2 – Copy of the Town Clerk's report to Policy & Finance Committee held on 30 May 2007.

Appendix 3 – Extract from the Minutes of Policy & Finance Committee held on 30 May 2007.

Appendix 4 – Copy of email dated 25 July 2007 to Assistant Head Teacher, Ringwood School, setting out formal invitation to School to appoint Student Advisors.

Appendix 5 – Copy of Press Release number 14/07 issued by the Town Council on 31 July 2007.

Appendix 6 – Extract from Ringwood School's website together with a letter sent to all Year 12 and Year 13 students inviting those students to apply for posts as Student Advisors.

Appendix 7 – Extract from the autumn half-term 2007 Ringwood School News celebrating the appointment of Students.

September 2007 (updated Jan 2010)

Ref: P&F 21.05.13 F/4268

Terry Simpson
Town Clerk
Ringwood Town Council
Greenways
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APPENDIX 1**Extract from Policy & Finance Committee on 17 May 2006****F/3935****STUDENT / ELDERLY ADVISORS**

The Town Clerk suggested to members that, as a further way of engaging with the community, the Council could take the initiative and invite interested persons to advise committees on agenda items. Advisors would not be co-opted as members of a committee but would be able to contribute to the discussion, with final decisions still being made by members. The Town Clerk felt that such a scheme could generate goodwill in the town and would be a learning experience for both members and advisors. However, before any investigations were carried out on such an arrangement, he sought members' views on an initiative of this type. There was some concern as to how such a scheme would be operated and it was agreed that the Town Clerk should bring a report to a future meeting outlining the suggested scheme in more detail.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Clerk prepare a report outlining in detail a scheme to appoint advisors to all or some of the Council's committees.

Appendix 2

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 30 MAY 2007

STUDENT/YOUNG PEOPLE ADVISORS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members of the old Council will recall that in May 2006, the Town Clerk reported on a possible initiative to further involve the community in the Council's business. A copy of minute number F/3935 of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 17 May 2006, is attached as an Appendix to this report.
- 1.2 Unfortunately, owing to other pressures, it has not been possible to bring further details to the Town Council until this meeting. Paragraph 2 below outlines a possible way forward for Members' consideration.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- 2.1 Over the past few years, the Town Council has moved steadily to a position where there is more formal involvement of members of the public in the Council's decision-making process. Councillors have always had informal contact with residents but increasingly the Government and indeed the public are looking for a much more formal arrangement, which enables the public to be consulted and involved in the decision-making before local authorities make those decisions.
- 2.2 In general terms, the majority of Councillors throughout the country and indeed in Ringwood are in the 50+ age group. There are, however, a number of Councillors younger than this but these are in the minority. This is not surprising as the younger adults usually have very heavy family and professional commitments, which mean that they do not have the time to carry out Council duties.
- 2.3 One group which is totally under represented is the under 20 age group. However, over the past two years particularly, the Town Council has worked more closely with young people. It has young people on both the Fairtrade Working Party and the Youth and Community Focus Group for the Town Plan. As those young people have become more confident, they have made significant contributions in both of these areas and the Council has benefited from their involvement.
- 2.4 The conventional route for involvement of young people is by the establishment of Youth Councils. The difficulty with this type of Council is that they are made up solely of young people who have purely an advisory role. Those Youth Councils tend to be advised by Council officers and they themselves simply make recommendations through to the conventional decision-making body on which the young people are not represented. Inevitably this reduces the benefits of the young people's involvement as they are not present when the final decisions are made. In addition, it calls for the creation of another body which will need to be serviced, provided with reports and given appropriate administrative support. This has significant resource implications.
- 2.5 A crucial element of involvement of any group of persons is the ability to be involved when decisions are taken. The persons concerned do not necessarily need to feel that they have made the decision but that they have

been involved in the decision-making process and their views have been considered. A more direct approach would be to put young people into a position of giving their advice and perspective on issues considered by Councillors at the decision-making Committees. In order to achieve this it would be possible to treat the young people as specialist advisors and invite them to attend Committee meetings as young people advisors. They would receive the same agendas and papers as Councillors (except confidential items). The only additional cost to the Council will be the cost of printing and any payment that the Town Council might wish to make towards their expenses in attending meetings.

- 2.6 The benefit of this arrangement is that the young people have direct access to and are involved in a decision-making process. Councillors receive their advice direct and they hear the reasons for decisions taken. Importantly, however, they will not be asked to vote on any proposal and their involvement will be as advisors and not decision-makers, which latter function will continue to properly rest with Councillors.
- 2.7 The proposal for the involvement of young people in the Council's Committee structure has been discussed briefly with the Headteacher of Ringwood School. She is excited about the proposal and would be happy to facilitate this further link-up between the Council and the School. There are issues which would need to be determined, particularly with regard to the arrangements for the appointment of any advisors and the number of those advisors. For example, it might be better for two young people to be appointed to each Committee since this will be less daunting to the individuals themselves if they attend together rather than on their own. There is also the question of appointment of those young people. Traditionally, the Council would appoint its own advisors. In the case of young people, a decision would need to be taken as to whether they are nominated by the School and appointed by the Council or whether they are directly appointed by the School.
- 2.8 Clearly there are advantages to the Town Council in the involvement of more members of the community in the decision-making process. In so far as the involvement of young people is concerned, the continuing improvement in working arrangements between the Council and Ringwood School gives the opportunity to take advantage of the knowledge and views of young people. However, it will be important for any arrangements to have the total support of the School as well as the Council.

3. **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 In view of the comments at paragraph 2 above, it is suggested that it would be appropriate for further discussions to be undertaken with the School prior to any final decisions being taken and it is **RECOMMENDED** that a small Working Party of say two Councillors, together with the Town Clerk, be appointed to meet with the Headteacher of Ringwood School to discuss the possible appointment of young people advisors to each of the Council's Committees.

For further information, please contact:

Terry Simpson
Town Clerk
Tel: 01425 473883

Extract from Policy & Finance Committee Minutes on 30 May 2007

F/4114

STUDENT ADVISORS

Members considered the Town Clerk's report (Annex 'C'), which recommended that young people be invited to attend Committee meetings as specialist advisors, to enable them to become more involved in the decision-making process and allow Members to hear their views.

RECOMMENDED: That Cllr Heron and Cllr Ford be appointed to meet with the Town Clerk and the Headteacher of Ringwood School to discuss the possible appointment of young people advisors to each of the Council's Committees.

Subject: FW: Student Advisors

From: Town Council
Sent: 25 July 2007 12:46
To: 'Margaret Olive'
Cc: 'office@ringwood.hants.sch.uk'; Christine Ford; Jeremy Heron
Subject: Student Advisors

Dear Margaret,

We were very pleased to meet with you on Thursday and for the very positive response to the Town Council's initiative to try to involve students of the School in Council business.

As you know, Councillors Mrs Ford and Jeremy Heron were asked to meet with you to discuss the arrangements, which were generally set out in the report previously copied to you. They will now report back to Council in September when I expect that the arrangements we discussed will be agreed so that students can be appointed to attend meetings from 1 October.

In terms of operational details, we would expect to move the appointments forward on the following basis:-

- 1) Two students would be appointed as student advisors to each of our four main committees which are Policy & Finance; Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces; Planning, Town & Environment; and Town Plan Co-ordinating Committee. In addition, the student advisors would be encouraged to attend Council meetings as members of the public, although physically they would not normally take any part in proceedings at those meetings. Attached is a copy of the programme of meetings for the current municipal year through to May 2008, together with a further copy of the Terms of Reference of each committee. The programme of meetings beyond May 2008 will be fixed in the spring of that year.
- 2) The School will be responsible for interviewing and selecting the eight students who will take part in this initiative. Members of the Town Council will subsequently meet with the selected students to give a general overview of the work we are doing and our expectations of the involvement of the students in the Council's affairs. The Town Council will expect students to be appointed for the whole of the period from October through to July 2008 and clearly that will mean that the students will need to have a commitment to be involved. I would emphasise that the Town Council understands that the students may not be able to make every meeting, indeed there are occasions when Councillors have to apologise for non-attendance. However, we would expect students to attend most of the meetings of the committee to which they have been appointed.
- 3) Whilst the students will be appointed by the School they will be expected to represent the views of all the young people of Ringwood, including those who have not reached an age to attend the School and also those who left the School. They will also need to represent the views of students who attend the School but are resident outside the town.
- 4) The students will not be formal co-opted members of the committee and will not have voting rights. However, they will act in the capacity of advisors to the committee in the same way as any other specialist is appointed to advise Members. They will, therefore, be encouraged to give their views on proposals in the same way as Town Council officers or other professional staff appointed to assist Members coming to reasoned conclusions and decisions.
- 5) As advisors to a committee, the students will not always have to leave when confidential matters are discussed. However, there will be some occasions when we will need to ask the students to leave. I hope that they will understand the position especially as some staff also have to leave meetings when confidential items are discussed.
- 6) Student advisors will receive copies of agendas, minutes and reports in exactly the same way as Councillors and for this purpose, we will of course need to have an address to which we can send the papers.
- 7) Whilst the Council expects the students to discuss issues with other young people, any information received of a confidential nature must not be disclosed. As advisors, they will

generally be expected to abide by the same rules of conduct as Council staff. A new national Code is being prepared and for the moment we would normally apply to staff the same Code of Conduct as applies to Councillors and copies of that will be made available as part of the Handbook.

- 8) Whilst the Town Council would not ordinarily remunerate student advisors we would want to make sure that the students could get to the meetings and home from meetings safely. If this necessitates the use of a taxi then the cost would be met by the Town Council. We will discuss this with each student as necessary.
- ☐ We will provide all student advisors with a copy of our Members' Handbook, which is an A4 loose leaf folder containing various rules, protocols and documents relating to the administration of the Town Council.
- 10) In recognition of the work that the students will be undertaking, the Town Council will present each one with a Certificate of Appointment as an advisor and which we hope will be of use to them in future years and indeed as recognition of the work that they have put into the community within the town.

I hope I have covered all of the main points of our discussion and indeed of the arrangements that we will need to put in place. I believe that the Town Council is probably one of the first, if not the first, Town Council to involve students in its affairs in such a detailed manner and in particular at committee meetings which make decisions. The Town Council believes that this is good for the community and it will help Councillors to understand the needs and aspirations of young people and will lead to better decision-making. I am currently working on a short press release to issue in the next week about the arrangement and intend to follow that up at the end of September with another one with a photograph of the students meeting the Council and formally launching the initiative. I will let you have a copy of the draft of the first press release as it will need to emphasise our partnership working and will, therefore, need to have some quotes from both the Town Council and the School to reflect our respective thoughts on the arrangement.

☐ours sincerely,

Terry Simpson



Ringwood Town Council

TOWN CLERK GONE MAD?

“He’s mad, very mad – or perhaps visionary” said Cllr Jeremy Heron, Chairman of Ringwood Town Council’s Policy Committee. “First he persuaded us to let the public speak at all of our meetings – heresy to some – and now he has got us to agree to appoint two young students as Youth Advisors to every one of our Committees to tell us what the young people really want! But whether mad or visionary I think we have made a good decision. The students will effectively be young officers and like other officers, they advise us and we will consider that advice before decisions are made.”

“Visionary” mused Cllr Mrs Ford, the other Town Councillor appointed to oversee implementation of the scheme. “Most Councillors are now of an age where our children have grown up and left home. We don’t therefore have the same everyday contact with young people as we do with the older generation. We recognise that and are simply doing something about it. Our former Mayor Cllr Danny Cracknell has long urged us to listen to young people and hopefully this is a step in that direction. The students will represent all young people resident in the area and not just those who attend Ringwood School.”

Margaret Olive, Assistant Head of Ringwood School has welcomed the initiative. “Over the past couple of years the Town Council has been asking students to attend various meetings such as their Fairtrade Working Party, the Festival Committee and also their Town Plan Focus Groups. Clearly Councillors feel that young people have something to contribute and the School is delighted that it will be appointing, not just nominating, two young people to each of the Town Council’s programme Committees. The eight students will be appointed from September through to next July and will receive all of the same papers as Councillors and will speak at Committees in exactly the same way as the Town Council’s own Officers. The scheme fits in with the new broad based teaching curriculum adopted at the School and we are very proud to be involved in this partnership initiative. We think we are probably one of the first, if not the first School, that has been given such a major role in Town Council business, which surely shows that the Town Council believe that young people have a valuable contribution to make to the wellbeing of the town”.

Further information please contact:

Mr Terry Simpson
Town Clerk
Ringwood Town Council
“Greenways”
71 Christchurch Road
Ringwood BH24 1DH
Tel: 01425 473883

Email : town.council@ringwood.gov.uk

14/07

To view the rss news feed you need an rss reader or a CSS 2 compliant web browser e.g. **Firefox 2** or **Internet Explorer 7**

Third prize for "Global Dawning"



Over six months of planning and hard work paid off as the school's "Global Dawning" float was awarded 3rd prize in the topical, humorous and feature category at the Ringwood Carnival. Through her endless amount of enthusiasm, CTA in Expressive Arts, Mrs Lax, organised the group of students and staff involved with putting the float together. She said: "It was a fantastic day and all the students really enjoyed themselves. The atmosphere was tremendous and

Beyond The Classroom • Student Voice

Information	Global Interactions	Active Minds	World With Words	Creativity	Numerical Networking	Horizons	Beyond The Classroom
PTA	Languages	HSC	English	Technology	Business	Enterprise/WRE	Student Voice
Sixth Form	RE	PE	Geography	Art	ICT	Careers/JRC	Creative Writing
Parent Information		Science	Media	Drama	Mathematics	VLE	EcoSchools
Student Support/LRC			Psychology	Music		Citizenship	
School Information						of E	
School Policies							

Ringwood Town Council • Your Future In Europe • Global Young Leaders • Debates • Court Competitions • NFYC/HCYC



Student Voice

There is an opportunity for 8 students to represent all the young people in Ringwood as Student Advisors on the four main Town Council Committees. Two students would be appointed as student advisors to each of our four main committees which are:

- Policy & Finance;
- Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces; Planning;
- Town & Environment;
- Town Plan Co-ordinating Committee.

In addition, the student advisors would be encouraged to attend Full Council meetings as members of the public.

"Ringwood Town Council is probably one of the first, if not the first, Town Council to involve students in its affairs in such a detailed manner and in particular at committee meetings which make decisions. The Town Council believes that this is good for the community and it will help Councillors to understand the needs and aspirations of young people and will lead to better decision-making. We will, therefore, want to try to put Ringwood more on the map again."
(Terry Simpson, Clerk to the Council)

The School will be responsible for interviewing and selecting the eight students who will take part in this initiative. Members of the Town Council will subsequently meet with the selected students to give a general overview of the work we are doing and our expectations of the involvement of the students in the Council's affairs. The Town Council will expect students to be appointed for the whole of the period from October through to July 2008 and clearly that will mean that the students will need to have a commitment to be involved. I would emphasise that the Town Council understands that the students may not be able to make every meeting; indeed there are occasions when Councillors have to apologise for non-attendance. However, we would expect students to attend most of the meetings of the committee to which they have been appointed.





Ringwood in the News

All the latest news from
Ringwood School
~Specialist Language College~



Autumn half term 2007

In this edition...

Pirates, community projects,
cricket, sailing and more!



Students join council to share their views

Students will get to have their say on the future of Ringwood as part of a pioneering initiative by the Town Council to allow young people to sit as advisors on its committees.

Two Sixth Form students will be joining each of four committees: Harriet King and Amy Lowry Carter will be sitting on the Planning Town and Environment Committee, Rachel Giles and James Fullick will be sitting on the Policy and Finance Committee, Corrina Groves and Ryan Montgomery will be sitting on the Town Plan Coordinating Committee, and Charlotte Fleming and Beth Scrivens will be sitting on the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee.

Town Clerk, Terry Simpson, said: "This is all new ground. But it is vital to have the youth of Ringwood have their say on matters and policies which could ultimately shape the future.

"I believe that the Town Council is probably one of the first, if not the first, Town Council to involve students in its affairs in such a detailed manner and in particular at committee meetings which make decisions. The Town Council believes that this is good for the community and it will help Councillors to understand the needs and aspirations of young people and lead to better decision-making."

As advisors to the council, the students will be expected to attend committee



meetings and represent the views of all young people in Ringwood, including those who have not reached school age and those who have left. Ryan Montgomery said: "I believe it is a fantastic opportunity to put both my views as well as those of my peers to the Town Council. I feel that often the views of young people are overlooked and wish to prove that young people can, in fact, make a positive contribution to the development of the community as well as a positive contribution to society as a whole." ■



Whatever, yeah?

Local councils and youth provision

Supported by the Commission for Rural Communities

Commision for Rural Communities

The Commission for Rural Communities acts as the advocate for England's rural communities, as an expert adviser to the government, and as a watchdog to ensure that government actions, policies and programmes recognise and respond effectively to rural needs, with a particular focus on disadvantage. It has three key functions:

- Rural advocate: the voice for rural people, business and communities;
- Expert advisor: giving evidence-based, objective advice to government and others;
- Independent watchdog: monitoring, reporting on and seeking to mainstream rural into the delivery of policies nationally, regionally and locally.

National Association of Local Councils

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) is the national representative body for 10,000 local councils throughout England and Wales. In all, there are over 100,000 community, parish and town councillors throughout England and Wales. These councillors, who serve electorates ranging from small rural communities to major cities, are all independently elected. The councils have powers to raise their own funds through council tax. Local councils provide employment for over 25,000 staff while their annual expenditure exceeds £500m. Together, they can be identified as one of the nation's single most influential grouping of grassroots opinion formers. Over 15 million people live in communities served by local councils nationally – this represents up to 30% of the population. Over 200 new local councils have been created since 1997.

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Introduction

Throughout England, parish, town, community and neighbourhood councils (local councils) work towards improving community well-being and providing better services at a local level. They are the tier of local government closest to the people. The term 'local councils' refers to parish, town, community, neighbourhood and village councils and not principal authorities – the district, borough, unitary or county council tier of local government.

Local councils represent the local community, deliver services to meet local needs and strive to improve the quality of life in the local area. They provide, maintain or contribute to a great many different services. These services include, leisure facilities, allotments, car parks, local illuminations, litter bins, community centres, community safety schemes, parks and open spaces, community transport schemes, crime reduction measures, street lighting, street cleaning, cycle paths, tourism activities, festivals and celebrations, traffic calming measures and local youth projects.

Local councils have the advantage of being close to the community; their councillors will be part of that community and thus representing the needs of their neighbours. Therefore, local councils will be much more likely to understand the needs of the local community and be able to respond to them. Engaging young people is a key consideration for many local councils and they are at the forefront in ensuring that the needs of young people are more fully represented.

The purpose of this booklet is to highlight and celebrate just some of the excellent activities aimed at young people being undertaken by local councils across the country. Local councils are ensuring that young people are entertained, kept active, made to feel that their needs are catered for and made to feel that they are listened to. The examples in this booklet are illustrative of the wider work that local councils undertake to better represent younger people but the booklet only scratches the surface. Local councils across the country provide or support a wide range of activities including playgrounds, youth councils, youth clubs, youth cafes, transport schemes, skate parks, sports facilities, advice and information centres, arts and crafts, youth outreach and voluntary activities.

The case studies included within this booklet show just some of the innovative approaches that local councils take in order to better represent young people in their communities.



Number of electors:

11,148

Population:

13,700

Precept:

£350,080

Project: Community Involvement – Student Advisors

Ringwood town is situated in the south west corner of Hampshire in New Forest district. Part of the town is within the New Forest National Park and is bisected by the A31 that links the M27/M3 with Bournemouth and the south.

The idea of Student Advisors was initiated by the town clerk to enable councillors to have a better understanding of the needs, hopes and aspirations of the younger generations. The underlying reason for the proposal was that, as most of the councillors children had left home they were no longer in regular contact with young people. Councillors were therefore seeking a structured arrangement that would give them direct access to young people to enable them to obtain their views on a regular basis. They were acutely aware that they were making decisions that would often have more effect on these young people in the future than on themselves.

The proposal was simple in concept; built on the premise that sensible people gather all the relevant facts before making decisions. The council has always sought advice on relevant issues and as the decisions being taken will affect the future of the town's young people, councillors believed that they should seek the views of young people in the town. They felt that their views and advice should be treated in exactly the same way as the expert views sought on other issues.

The council had already built good relations with the local secondary school, working in partnership on a number of projects. It approached the school and offered it the opportunity to appoint two Student Advisors to each of the council's committees. The council determined the overall arrangements, which were agreed with the school and incorporated in a Protocol that sets out roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the initiative. There is no age bar for Student Advisors with the emphasis being on appointing the most suitable applicants irrespective of age. The arrangements enable Student Advisors to be present at council meetings and contribute at that time to debates before decisions are made.

Ringwood Town Council

The council now has two Student Advisors for each of its four main programme committees whose role is to provide views and advice. In order to assist members in coming to reasoned conclusions and decisions, the students are encouraged to give their views in the same way that officers or any other specialists would.

While the students are appointed by Ringwood School, they are expected to represent the views of all young people in Ringwood, including those who have not reached an age to attend Ringwood School, and also those who have left school. The students are also required to represent the views of former students who currently reside outside the area.

There are a number of reasons the council feels that the initiative is working, from the start it was honest about what would be expected from all parties and made sure that the initiative was achievable. It was made clear early on that the Student Advisors would not be able to vote at council meetings but that an advisory role would bring about greater benefits to the council's decision making. The council started with smaller partnership-working with the school to build trust and understanding and, perhaps most importantly, recognised that without the support and enthusiasm of councillors, the clerk and head teacher the initiative would fail.

The council see the initiative as helping to bridge the gap between young people and their elected representatives, and are keen to emphasise that young people have a very important stake in the future of the town. Councillors accepted the students from the beginning and the students have risen to the responsibilities entrusted to them. The council feels that the initiative has revealed views they did not have access to before and has added an extra dimension to the decision-making process. Importantly, the council feels that it is making a contribution in getting young people interested and engaged in democratic decision making.

Website: www.ringwood.gov.uk

Number of electors:

8,061

Population:

11,700

Precept:

£336,000

Project: Outreach Youth Worker

Iver is a rural parish on the outskirts of London. At the southern tip of Buckinghamshire it comprises three very distinctive areas: Richings Park, Iver Village and Iver Heath. The parish is relatively affluent but includes a number of pockets of deprivation, particularly in regard to access to services and levels of education.

There are certain factors that limit the number of activities that young people in the parish can engage in. There is no local secondary school so children have to travel several miles by school bus to attend school elsewhere. This makes it difficult for them to participate in after-school activities. There is a railway station in the south of the parish, however, it is situated five miles away from the population in the north of the parish. Bus services out of the parish are limited and services do not run later than 7pm. The public transport situation means that many young people cannot realistically leave the village during the evening and at weekends.

In recent years, the parish has seen increased incidents of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage by young people. Although the county council run a youth club in the centre of the parish it is still a long way away from many young people in the area. The youth club itself was suffering from anti-social behaviour, which meant bans being imposed on some young people. This in turn resulted in some of these young people finding themselves on the streets during the evening with little to do. Coupled with the limited access young people have to activities in nearby towns, the council was prompted to consider how it could better provide for the needs of young people in the parish while cutting down the instances of anti-social behaviour.

The local church employs its own youth worker but this is done through a charity called the Iver Educational Trust that allows the youth worker to access funding the church would not be eligible for. The council felt that a similar approach, whereby a youth worker was employed on the council's behalf, would be beneficial. This also meant that the area would now

Iver Parish Council

have two youth workers working through the educational trust that could share ideas and volunteer help and funding information. The youth worker would also have access to funding that the parish council would not. The charity agreed to a proposal that the council provide a grant to the charity to cover the salary of the youth worker but that the charity and youth worker secure funding for their activities.

Initially, the youth worker took to the streets in an effort to build a relationship with young people in the area. This was done through a drop-in facility one night a week where free doughnuts and hot chocolate, provided by local businesses, were supplied. It gave young people the opportunity to articulate their needs, voice concerns and engage in dialogue, which helped them to feel more part of the community. As the role has developed, the youth worker has built links with the county council outreach workers, the county council youth club, the District Council Community Safety Team and with the police. There are now three drop-in facilities (covering each part of the parish) and activities are provided during school holidays, including arts and crafts and sporting activities.

The youth worker has also had success in a number of other areas. Graffiti has grown to be a problem in the parish and together with council-driven initiatives to tackle the problem the youth worker works with young people on arts projects.

Another positive to come out of the initiative was that some young people came forward expressing concern that they were all being treated as if they were anti-social and asked if they could organise a clean-up day. This was facilitated by the youth worker and parish council and saw young people cleaning graffiti, painting walls and litter picking.

The council assert that it is vital to get the right person for the job. The individual needs to be able to communicate and build trust with young people. However, it also requires work behind the scenes. The youth worker needs to be able to work with a variety of partners, pitch for funding and motivate others.

Website: www.iverparishcouncil.gov.uk





Number of electors:

1,397

Population:

1,700

Precept:

£12,000

Project: Mobile Cinema

The parish of Awre in Gloucestershire is set in a rural area between the River Severn and the Forest of Dean proper. Neighbouring the Forest of Dean, designated as England's first National Park in 1938, the area sees a great number of tourists each year. The parish lies around four miles from the town of Lydney, five miles from the town of Cinderford and 18 miles from the city of Gloucester.

The parish has a fairly stable population with a significant number of senior citizens and a significant number of young people. There is little provision for young people who would have to travel to Gloucester for any significant nightlife for which the transport links are poor. The lack of provisions for young people lead to issues with anti-social behaviour in the parish.

The parish council was only too aware of the lack of facilities for young people and was concerned when the local youth club, run mainly by volunteers, closed.

In 2004, the council conducted a Parish Plan survey and as part of this included a specific questionnaire aimed at young people in the community. The responses from young people in the parish were very clear: there was nothing to do, and nowhere to go (the nearest towns are quite a distance away and public transport is limited). The responses overwhelmingly called for more activities.

The council was lucky enough to be able to call on a newly elected 21 year old councillor who took on the brief to liaise with the young people in the community and with the other councillors to find out exactly what they wanted and how they could improve things for the young people in the parish. A mobile cinema equipped with modern powerful systems, capable of showing the latest films was identified as the priority.

The youth club had subsequently reopened for younger children in the parish and it was felt that once set up in the

Awre Parish Council

club the cinema would attract the older young people back to the club.

A funding source was identified through the Acorn Trust, administered by the district council and equipment hired from Monmouthshire County Council. The provision of a cinema proved to be very popular, attracting an average of around 40 people to each monthly showing.

However, it has not all been plain sailing and the parish council has been required to be proactive to ensure the continued provision of a cinema service.

Monmouthshire County Council decided not to continue hiring its equipment. This resulted in the parish council having to discontinue the cinema service and take time to consider how they could get around this problem. Enquiries were made and a suitable commercial equipment supplier was identified, which enabled the council to restart the screenings. Hiring equipment through a commercial supplier inevitably meant that costs were higher and eventually the initial grant was used up.

The council secured alternative funding to help support the service into the future and is now making plans to purchase its own equipment. There are a number of benefits to this approach, not least the fact that this will enable the council to ensure that the scheme becomes self supporting. The council also envisage further funding to support the service coming from the hire of the equipment, which would become a parish resource.

In hindsight, the parish council would have given serious thought to purchasing its own equipment much sooner. However, at the outset of the project the parish council was understandably unsure of the longer term demand for the facility and felt that the source available seemed to be the best.

Website: www.awre-parish-council.org.uk

Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council

Number of electors:

9,500

Population:

12,500

Precept:

£128,000

Project: Skate park

Sprotbrough & Cusworth is situated two miles from Doncaster near to the A1 and consists of two large residential areas: Cusworth/Scawsby and Sprotbrough.

The parish council undertook consultation via a community-led plan that identified a wish for a Skate/BMX Park. Provision for young people in the parish is excellent with four recreation sites, four young children's playgrounds, four basketball courts and senior and junior football pitches with pavilions. In addition the parish council runs a community centre and jointly runs another with a neighbouring parish, which caters for a wide range of groups and organisations. However, it was recognised that the area did not have a great deal of 'non-structured' activity available. Therefore, given the wish for a skate park, identified in the community-led plan, the parish council decided to act.

The first step the parish council took was to take advice from a play/sport consultant and the landscape architect section of the local principal authority, which helped to identify a project manager/coordinator – the Groundwork Trust. Groundwork then helped to identify a suitable location in the parish. A consultation exercise was carried out with local schools and local residents given the opportunity to have their say. Councillors and young people also visited existing skate parks to determine what might work in Sprotbrough & Cusworth. A consultation day was then held where young people could have their say on the proposed design. Groundwork assisted with issues such as planning and helped to secure around 50% of costs in grant funding.

As the project took shape, the parish council set up a small project team consisting of members of Groundwork, the parish council and the contractor who met weekly. There was also a twice weekly liaison with 'Friends of the Skate Park' group represented by young people and residents. The group is still active and meets with the parish council once a month.

There were a number of issues that needed to be addressed as the project progressed, not least the concerns of local

Sprotbrough & Cusworth Parish Council

residents with regard to the potential for anti-social behaviour and noise. The parish council liaised throughout with local police and community wardens and has ensured a visible presence with patrols both targeted and ongoing.

As a result of the partnership with the Groundwork Trust, an additional grant was secured to be paid over three years for sports development. The costs associated with the project needed careful planning as the parish council was not eligible for certain regeneration funds. Therefore, the parish council had to commit reserve funding. Operation costs were also assessed for future budget implications, as were the implications for increased staff time. An allowance for damage, vandalism and insurance was also considered.

The skate park has been a great success since opening in 2005; the project won 'Regional best village venture', an award given by the Yorkshire Rural Community Council and the parish council is already consulting with the User Group about the possibility of upgrading and extending the park. These considerations have been brought on by its huge popularity within the parish and across the region as a whole. However, the parish council has a responsibility to all of its young people and a current priority is to upgrade its playgrounds aimed at younger children.

The parish council has learnt that good partnerships, time spent brainstorming and project planning and community consultation really pays off. Equally valuable is keeping in touch with the roots or driving force within the community, in the case of Sprotbrough & Cusworth, the User Group, made up of local young people and parents.

It has also been vital that the parish council have adequate insurance cover for what is considered an extreme sport with high risk injury status, that regular risk assessments are undertaken and that instances of vandalism are budgeted for. But while vandalism does occur, the vast majority of young people value the facility and contribute to its maintenance.

Website: www.sc-pc.co.uk





Number of electors:

14,240

Population:

17,585

Precept:

£252,000

Project: Skatepark and Buddy System

Beverley is a traditional market town in the East Riding of Yorkshire some eight miles north west of the city of Hull. It has an overall population of about 30,000 covering the three parishes of Beverley Town Council and Molescroft and Woodmansey parish councils. While the town has been categorised nationally as the most affordably affluent town in the country, there are hidden pockets of significant deprivation in terms of educational attainment, employment and mobility. The area has a high proportion of young people who either live or are educated in the town and there has been much discussion on the lack of youth provision within the town.

The project to provide a skatepark facility evolved following representation from a group of avid local skateboarders who had nowhere to skate other than the town centre. The group had identified a number of facilities elsewhere, however, access to these facilities was limited by poor mobility and a lack of public transport. The young people agreed to help in the consultation, design and build, and fund-raising for the facility.

Consultation was undertaken with residents of the town and with its young people to establish the type of facility required and also, given that the town council did not own any land, the location within the town. Much of the funding was secured through Sport England in conjunction with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Sports Development Unit and young people were involved in the design and build of the facility and continue to be actively involved in suggesting ideas for improvements and importantly, self policing of the area.

Beverley Skatepark was completed in 2005. Designed to help solve the youth problems in the town it actually became a focus for different youth factions and became the central point for the groups to meet and cause unrest. The genuine skatepark users were aware that they were becoming the scapegoats for the unrest at a facility they had lobbied to be built. As a result they decided to take ownership of the project and the Beverley Skatepark Buddies was

Beverley Town Council

formed. They monitor activity at the site, provide technical assistance to users of the facility and are the eyes and ears for those organisations charged with the welfare of young people. The group operates a timetable system whereby at least one buddy is on site during the core hours of usage, are in regular contact with each other and regular skatepark users and with the assistance of the local authority are able to access key personnel that would assist in the event of an unwanted disturbance, for example leisure centre staff, youth workers and Police Community Support Officers.

The buddies system has been instrumental in reducing disturbance and introducing some of the harder to reach youth groups to the facility. They have provided valuable information to the authorities and, having been trained in the use of basic first aid, have been able to assist young people who have been injured on the site. The buddies have been well received locally and, perhaps more importantly, have been well received by their peers as a positive step by young people to address the issues of young people.

The buddies system has been so successful that in 2007 it was recognised by the Home Office, which awarded the Skatepark Buddies a Respect Award. Not only did it recognise the positive work the group has carried out, it also awarded them £1,000 that has gone towards further training, an expansion of the scheme and information boards.

The project has been a great success. The town council stress that the choice of contractor is vital and that securing the funding can at times be fraught, with goalposts being moved and challenging conditions being set. It also stresses the importance of involving young people at the conception stage and keeping them involved throughout, thus giving them a greater sense of ownership.

Overall, the project was hard work but ultimately very rewarding. The skatepark is a well used facility now run with minimal intervention by the town council.

Website: www.beverley.gov.uk

Number of electors:

15,499

Population:

20,500

Precept:

£316,905

Project: Youth Support

Halewood is located within the Merseyside area. A largely urban area surrounded to the north and east by farmland, the last 20 years have seen the area grow from an overspill council estate area of the city of Liverpool into a much larger town. The town has also seen a great deal of new build homes, which has created a great deal of diversity both socially and economically.

Halewood Town Council is a proactive council dedicated to improving the lives of local people including those of its younger residents. A Quality town council, its dedicated approach led to it being awarded the NALC/AON Council of the Year award in 2008.

Halewood Town Council has led on a diverse range of activities aimed at young people in the town: a youth council to ensure they remain in touch with the views of young people in the area, play areas for younger children, sports facilities and cultural opportunities.

An inclusive approach led to the creation of a youth council for the town in October 2007 during 'local democracy week'. The purpose of the youth council is to provide young people in the town with a voice. Representatives for the youth council are drawn from all of the primary schools in the town as well as representatives from the Centre of Learning. Still in its infancy it has proven to be an invaluable way of tapping into the thinking of young people in the town for the town council but also for a number of groups linked to the local principal authority, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

The youngest members of the community are not forgotten. The town council provides open spaces and playparks and completely refurbished the toddler playground in 2004. In addition to this, the council has, for the last five years, funded a pantomime (Oh no it hasn't! Oh yes it has!).

The annual pantomime now takes place at four separate venues on the first weekend in December. A minimal

Halewood Town Council

admission charge per child covers drink, crisps and a selection box, all presented, of course, by Father Christmas. However, the local community do not take a back seat decorating all four venues as grottos.

Successful partnership-working was the key to securing a 'home' for the Halewood Junior Football League. Over a decade ago the sports centre, which was run by the town council that hosted the league, was bulldozed and a state-of-the-art leisure complex was built by the principal authority. The new leisure centre did not leave enough land to allow for the number of games that were needed. The town council allowed the league to continue on land it owned but this land did not have toilet facilities and running water and required the children to change in portakabins.

Everton Football Club made a bid to Barclays4Sport through the Football Foundation and with the support of Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council the existing Arncliffe Sports and Community Centre was extended. Working in partnership, a grant of £600,000 was secured from Barclays and the Football Federation while the borough council and town council each contributed £150,000. The work included additional changing facilities, the provision of two synthetic training pitches, a drainage system for the grass pitches and office space for both the league and for its sister organisation the Halewood Town Sports Association. The Halewood Junior Football League now has a place to call home.

The town council also seeks to engender cultural awareness and has previously worked with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra organising a Christmas concert, which included a choir consisting of pupils from local schools.

The example of Halewood Town Council shows the diverse service requirements of young people and how local councils can work to meet them.

Website: www.halewoodtowncouncil.gov.uk



Further Information

Here are just a few organisations that can provide information, advice and guidance on a variety of issues that affect young people.

British Youth Council

www.byc.org.uk

Rural Youth Network

www.ruralyouth.com

UK Youth Parliament

www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk

The Citizenship Foundation

www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk

The National Youth Agency

www.nya.org.uk

Whizz-Kids

www.whizz-kidz.org.uk

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

The Children's Trust

www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk

Every Child Matters

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Directgov

www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople

The Electoral Commission

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

If you are inspired by the examples in this booklet or work hard to support young people in your local area, NALC would be delighted to hear from you.

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