

Youth Council Steering Group

24 September, 2020

5:00pm

Notes

Present:

Cllr Gill Cleeve (GC)
Lisa Cowley (LC)
Cllr Tony Jackson (TJ) - Mayor
Cllr Kate Rolfe (KR)
Sarah Summers (SS)

Youth Members:

Kerry Alcock (KA)
Amelia Betts (AB)
Danielle Cleeve (DC)
Aiden Drinkwater (AD)
Oliver Hughes (OH)
Eva Key (EK)
Bianka Pawlowska (BP)
Alfie Walker (AW)
William Winter (WW)

All members attended the meeting via Zoom

1. Apologies

Cllrs Victoria Alcock (VA) and Philip How (PH) gave their apologies.

Apologies were also received from Youth Member Hope French (HF).

Youth Member Oliver Lines (OL) was absent from the meeting.

2. Stratford-upon-Avon Youth Council Constitution

The constitution was partly reviewed at the previous meeting but due to time constraints it was agreed it would continue to be discussed at this meeting.

AD suggested that the following wording:

The Youth Council shall be a democratic body whose membership could be representative of all young people within the boundaries of the town of Stratford upon Avon regardless of gender, ethnic background, disability, race or sexuality.

be changed to:

*The Youth Council shall be **an independent** democratic body whose membership could be representative of all young people within the boundaries of the town of Stratford upon Avon regardless of gender, ethnic background, disability, race, or sexuality.*

Members then went on to discuss the Structure and Membership section of the constitution. They deliberated each point one by one.

- *The Youth Council will comprise of 12 young people representing different localities and organisations within the town;*

Upon discussion members were happy with a membership of 12 but agreed that this could be reviewed every year.

- *Members will serve a (two?) year term*

AF suggested a one-year term may be more suitable. AB agreed with this, noting that tastes and interests tends to change quickly in teens. The workloads of this age group can also fluctuate.

It was agreed that it should be set as a one-year term in the first instance, and those that wish to do so can stand for re-election.

- *To be nominated, members must live within the boundaries of the town and be aged between 11 years and 18 years;*

KA suggested that we could have separate groups for a range of ages. These groups would have different responsibilities from one another based on the interests of their particular age

group. AD responded that you could not necessarily judge someone's maturity on their age.

AB believed that 11 years old is little bit too young, but 18 is a good upper age. SS explained at the age of 18 it is legal to stand for full council. AB responded that as an 18-year old, she would not currently feel ready to take this step but may feel more comfortable to do so having had experience of the Youth Council.

KR also agreed that age 11 was also too young as most 11-year olds will have just started secondary school and therefore will already have new responsibilities to contend with.

TJ made the point that if only allowing membership between the ages of 13 – 18, members would have to be comfortable to represent views of younger residents of the town. AB agreed that it is important to talk to younger residents as they sometimes have many innovative ideas.

It was agreed that membership should be between the ages of 13 and 18, and that a sub-tier level comprising of younger members could be considered.

- *Members will be elected to the post of Youth Councillors. If vacancies remain after elections, the vacancy can be filled by co-option by those elected.*

SS explained that co-option is the process where the Council can choose a member to fill a vacancy, but only if no one else is standing for election for this vacancy. This must be voted for by the whole council and has to be a unanimous decision.

- *Youth Councillors wishing to leave the Youth Council must give written notice of their intention to resign.*

It was agreed that a month/six weeks' notice should be given in writing if a member wishes to resign from the Council. It was thought that an 'election date' should be set, to allow clarity of when resignations would need to be received by. It is most likely that the election date would be set as the date that the first official Youth Council Meeting is held.

- *Vacancies created by a resignation shall be filled by election or co-option.*

Discussion turned to how members of the Youth Council would be elected in the first place. Various suggestions were made such as:

- Voting within schools;
- Proportional representation in wards;
- Voted by all young residents in Stratford-upon-Avon;
- Presenting campaigns to small groups of young residents.

After further conversation it was agreed that this point may have been readdressed as we proceed. SS noted that this is a steep learning curve for us all and we will learn more about what works and does not work as we go along.

Once the meeting had reached an hour it was decided to roll the remaining items on to the next meeting. It was agreed that the adult members of the group should put some proposals together for the younger members to vote on, and this may speed up proceedings.

GC asked that the younger members review the rest of the PowerPoint presentation so that they are ready to come with feedback next week. She also suggested that members should start thinking about whether they would want to be Chairman, Deputy Chairman or Treasurer of the Youth Council as this would be the first agenda item once the Youth Council has its first official meeting.

TJ advised that a full Town Council meeting would be taking place on Tuesday 29 September at 6:00pm and that the Youth Town Council would be discussed. If they wish to, members can watch this meeting live at either:

<https://www.facebook.com/StratforduponAvonTownCouncil>

or

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcUDo4Zx6LvSbALK0KcelQQ?view_as=subscriber

3. Planning for the Future

It is hoped that this agenda item can be discussed at the next meeting.

4. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at 5:00pm on 1 October.

This meeting closed at 6:15pm.