

# Youth Council Steering Group

7 October, 2020

5:00pm

Notes

Present:

Cllr Gill Cleeve (GC)  
Lisa Cowley (LC)  
Cllr Philip How (PH)  
Cllr Tony Jackson (TJ) – Mayor  
Cllr Kate Rolfe (KR)

Youth Members:

Kerry Alcock (KA)  
Danielle Cleeve (DC)  
Hope French (HF)  
Oliver Hughes (OH)  
Eva Key (EK)  
Saul McDougall (SM)  
Bianka Pawlowska (BP)  
Alfie Walker (AW)

All members attended the meeting via Zoom

## 1. Apologies

Cllrs Victoria Alcock (VA) and Sarah Summers (SS) gave their apologies.

Apologies were also received from Youth Members Amelia Betts and William Winter (WW).

Aiden Drinkwater and Oliver Lines (OL) were absent from the meeting.

## 2. Stratford-upon-Avon Youth Council Constitution

Youth Members took one further look at the Constitution in order to approve and adopt it.

AW questioned as to whether the Youth Council should allow proxy votes in the case that not all members can attend a meeting where an important vote is expected to take place.

KR responded that the Town Council does not proxy vote, and neither do the District and County Council. She elaborated that this might be a dangerous precedent to set as it means the vote can be influenced ahead of time.

PH agreed with this and explained that the rationale behind this decision is that members should come to the meeting with an open mind and make their decision based on the for and against arguments.

KR also noted that it would be a responsibility of the Chair to ensure that enough members attend the meeting if there is a contentious point of discussion on the agenda. AW understood this reasoning and suggested that items could be deferred to future meetings if not enough members were present.

TJ agreed to talk to the Town Clerk about this matter, as he could understand the desire to have more members present for a vote. This will be revisited at a future meeting.

Apart from this point being investigated more, all Youth Members present voted to approve and adopt the Youth Council Constitution.

### 3. Planning for the Future

The first official meeting of the Youth Council is scheduled for 5:00pm on Thursday 12 November. A few members expressed interest in becoming Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer but understood that they would not be held to this until an official decision is made during the first meeting.

PH advised that members should not be put off by age, and that just because other members are older it does not mean they cannot stand for a role. He noted that going up for any role is good experience and a worthy life skill.

GC asked about ideas for future agenda items.

OH stated that the Stratford Skatepark has started to become quite overcrowded and that new equipment may be required, such as stair sets. KR replied that there is currently a group of people working on plans for the Skatepark and that she will gather further information regarding this. GC suggested that a representative from this group could present at a future meeting.

HF wished for more courses for young people and that these would be more accessible for all.

KA suggested the idea of setting up a group or club for the LGBTQ community. This would be a social club in order to meet likeminded people. GC responded that Warwickshire Pride/Stratford Pride have a Youth Group but agreed that a safe space is needed for these groups to meet. She noted that Foundation House were in the process of setting up a Youth Group, but this was halted by the Covid-19 lockdown.

KR elaborated that Stratford Town Trust are looking for more provisions for young people in the town. She noted that they own buildings in the town and a place for the youth to meet would be great. She suggested that we could invite Sara Aspley from the Town Trust to a future meeting to discuss ideas.

SM expressed his wish for more work around the music industry for the youth, for example making more venues available for performances. KR stated that Stratford Football Club very keen to support the youth by holding concerts, Battle of the Bands etc. She mentioned the possibility of the PlayHouse holding their Open Mic Nights specifically for younger people. GC noted that the Town Hall could also be a suitable venue, when restrictions allow.

OH noted that more education regarding racism is needed in schools. He agreed to research into possible speakers regarding this topic.

HF followed on from this by suggesting a whole theme regarding diversity should be explored. This could include ethnicity, sexuality and disability awareness. OH responded that he did not think that all of these topics should be clubbed together, and that they are all important so deserve sole attention. KA then suggested that we could hold a week of awareness days, with each day dedicated to a different cause.

DC noted that there is not enough awareness regarding mental health in youths and not a lot of advice for youths on how to help themselves when they are struggling.

A couple of members explained that their school have mental health provisions such as contracts with Lifespace etc. but that more focus could definitely be put on this, especially around exam anxiety and uncertainties regarding Coronavirus.

GC reiterated that mental health has become a bigger issue during lockdown and elaborated on the idea above; different speakers for different causes could come to meetings to present. The Youth Council could then then build an event around these different issues.

HF noted that however we do this, we would have to be very interactive with it and target it towards all age ranges and backgrounds.

#### 4. Press/Media

GC explained that she had received a message from Welcombe Radio who would like to do a piece on the Youth Council. She noted that the Stratford Herald and Observer newspapers would probably like to do a piece too. GC asked how members felt about interacting with the press/media.

EK responded that she thought it was a good way to get publicity, encourage others to join in future, and also to get ideas from other youths.

GC suggested that a socially distanced photograph could possibly be taken of the Youth Council following its first official meeting. Members were happy with this idea.

It was agreed that these interactions would take place following the meeting on 12 November at which a Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer would be appointed.

#### 5. Date of the Next Meeting

It was agreed that one more meeting should be scheduled in order to discuss budget and for members to put forward their argument

as to why they should be considered for Chair, Deputy Chair or Treasurer.

HF asked if a description of what is involved in each role could be circulated. TJ gave a brief overview of the main requirements of the Chair:

- To conduct the meeting and stop conversations from going off track;
- To give everyone the opportunity to have their say;
- If using Zoom blue hands and green ticks work well for speaking and voting;
- To know a background on all agenda items. They should do their research and liaise with the Clerk before the meeting.

LC will write a full synopsis of what is involved in each role and distribute this before the next meeting.

The next meeting will take place at 5:00pm on 22 October.

*This meeting closed at 6:03pm.*