

UTTLESFORD YOUTH COUNCIL held at COMMITTEE ROOM - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX CB11 4ER, on THURSDAY, 11 JULY 2019 at 5.30 pm

Present: Councillor M Wolter (Chairperson)
Councillors H Ataparmakova, J Balchin, T Birkbeck, J Cornwall-Jones, N Davies, A Haus, L Smith and F Wolter.

Officers in attendance: B Ferguson (Democratic Services Officer) and J Starr (Community Officer).

Also in attendance: Councillors P Fairhurst and B Light.

YC30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Youth Councillors Brown, Perry, Reid and Widdock.

YC31 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (TO FOLLOW)

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 March 2019 were agreed as a true and correct record.

YC32 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Members considered the nominations of Councillor M Wolter for the position of Chair of the Youth Council, and Councillor Birkbeck for the position of Vice-Chair.

No further nominations were received.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor M Wolter as Chair and Councillor Birkbeck Vice-Chair of the Youth Council.

YC33 WORKING GROUP FEEDBACK

Constitution

Councillor Ataparmakova updated the Youth Council on the proposed changes to the Constitution. She said the next step was to have the amendments reviewed by the Assistant Director – Governance and Legal Services to ensure the changes were in line with Full Council's constitution.

Mental Health

Councillor F Wolter said the Mental Health theatre group project, in which youth councillors had contracted a professional theatre group to deliver mental health workshops in primary schools across the district, was progressing well and the working group would be meeting with Hybrid Fusion in the coming weeks to finalise the plan. She said the Youth Council had been presented with two options in terms of how the workshops would be staffed. The first was to employ professional actors to carry out the workshops, but this was dependent on the amount of funding available; the second option was to have young people trained by Hybrid Fusion and to staff the workshop themselves. This would be more cost effective.

Councillor Fairhurst said it would be worth exploring a combined approach in which the workshops were delivered by both professionals and young people.

The Community Officer said it would be a good idea to investigate whether a mental health workshop could be staged at Crucial Crew next year. This would give the project increased exposure at reduced costs. He said he would speak to the organisers to facilitate a meeting.

Communications

Members were informed of the work of the Communications working group, who had recently setup Twitter and Instagram feeds, with the aim of promoting the Youth Council. An article was to be written by Councillor Brown on the environment and the Chair requested that a meeting between the Environment and Communication working groups be scheduled to allow for a collective approach.

In response to a question from Councillor Birkbeck regarding a Youth Council 'induction leaflet', the Community Officer said he would facilitate a meeting with a local printing company.

Housing

Members discussed whether it would be appropriate to send a letter to every household in the district requesting young people to come forward and express interest in representing the youth of Uttlesford on the proposed Garden Community Forums.

Councillor Balchin said this method would be expensive; he asked why the Youth Council could not be promoted in schools.

Councillor Birkbeck said the Youth Council had previously focused on schools but had achieved little success. He said if the message came from District councillors, there was more chance of a high response rate.

Members discussed the possibility of allocating district councillors to schools.

RESOLVED to request Full Council to explore the potential of allocating district councillors to schools across Uttlesford.

Councillor Fairhurst said the examination of the Local Plan was currently underway and would be held in the Council Chamber next week. He said it would be of great educational value if members could attend.

The Chair said she could write to schools requesting authorised absence for those members who wished to attend.

RESOLVED that the Chair of Uttlesford Youth Council send correspondence to schools requesting authorised absence for pupils wanting to sit-in on the Local Plan examination.

Members discussed the development of a dedicated app that would be used to canvass the opinion of young people across Uttlesford.

The Community Officer said he had been in discussion with an IT supplier and would circulate the proposals with members. The supplier had said a website would be more cost effective than an app, but could still fulfil the specification the members had provided.

Councillor Balchin said an app would not be worthwhile if it came at great expense.

Members discussed whether the development of the app should be pursued.

RESOLVED to pursue development of an app and to arrange a meeting with the software developer.

Police

Councillor Balchin said the Police working group had yet to meet and it would be worth resetting the membership. He said he intended to pick up this work during the summer break.

The Chair asked for a progress update at the next meeting.

Environment

The Chair presented an update in Councillor Widdock's absence. She said the group were working on an Environment Treaty, which asked schools to make a number of environmentally friendly commitments. Currently, four schools had signed the treaty and a meeting had been scheduled with SWCHS.

Councillor Light said an environment working group was likely to be setup by Full Council and various sub-groups could be established to take on individual projects. She hoped there was scope for engagement with Youth Council members.

YC34 **NOTICE OF MOTION RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR BIRKBECK - REQUESTS TO FULL COUNCIL**

The Chair moved item 10 forward in proceedings.

Councillor Birkbeck presented his three motions to members. The first proposed integration with Full Council, including cooperating on shared Working Group interests and a permanent seat at Council meetings. Members discussed the proposal and there was agreement that this would be a positive development for the Youth Council.

RESOLVED to request the Portfolio Holder of Youth Services to request Council to review the Youth Council's integration with Full Council

The second proposal requested greater access to officer resources for the Youth Council. There was unanimous agreement that this was required if the work of the Youth Council was to continue.

RESOLVED to request Full Council review officer provision for the Youth Council.

The third motion requested the Assistant Director – Legal and Governance to review the amended Constitution. Members discussed whether it would be appropriate to send the Constitution to the next Full Council meeting for approval, or if it should be deferred to allow further changes to be adopted.

RESOLVED to request the Assistant Director – Governance and Legal to review the Youth Council's Constitution before sending to Full Council for approval.

YC35 **PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINING**

Members discussed the proposal to provide professional public speaking training for members of the Youth Council.

RESOLVED to request the Community Officer to explore the potential for public speaking training

YC36 **PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATION**

Members discussed the proposal to have a youth seat on parish councils in the district.

Councillor Birkbeck said this would be problematic, as the Youth Council could not place a member in each parish. It would also have implications for the Constitution.

Councillor Ataparmakova said it would be a good opportunity for young people to have a say at local level and those that sat on the parish councils did not necessarily have to be members of the Youth Council. She agreed it would have an impact on the Constitution and requested a delay to its verification at Full Council.

Councillor Birkbeck asked Councillor Fairhurst to setup a meeting between the Cabinet Member for Communities and the Constitution Working Group to explore integration of the YC with parish councils.

YC37 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Light said a Libraries Working Group was to be established and she wanted input from Youth Councillors. Members discussed the idea and agreed that a Youth Council Libraries Working Group should also be setup to allow engagement with Full Council's equivalent WG.

RESOLVED to establish a Libraries Working Group with Councillor F Wolter as Chair.

Councillor Birkbeck said in his role as Vice-Chair he wanted to hold a regular meeting with the Chairs of working groups to coordinate their activity and workload. He said he would contact WG Chairs after the meeting.

The Chair said she had been in correspondence with Kemi Badenoch MP and would be drafting a formal letter inviting her to the next Youth Council meeting to discuss environmental issues.

YC38 **NOTICE OF MOTION RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLOR BIRKBECK - INVITATION OF DISTRICT COUNCILLORS TO MEETINGS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL**

Members discussed the proposal that established a standing invitation to Councillors to Youth Council meetings. There was unanimous agreement that councillor attendance was welcomed and beneficial to the Youth Council's work.

RESOLVED that:

A standing invitation to Youth Council meetings be extended to the elected body of Uttlesford District Council, such that any District Councillor would be welcome to attend and observe a Youth Council meeting with the capacity to speak if called on by the Chair, or if itemised on the agenda beforehand. The Youth Council would encourage representatives from all parties to attend.

YC39 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 10 September 2019.

The meeting ended at 7.55pm.