

YOUTH COUNCIL TASK & FINISH GROUP

Notes of the Meeting held on **Monday 15 January 2024** at 4pm via Microsoft Teams

Present

Councillor G Meadows (Chair)

Councillors: J Aitman R Crouch
S Simpson R Smith

Officers: Deputy Town Clerk
Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Communications & Community Engagement Officer
Business Administration Apprentice

1. WITNEY YOUTH COUNCIL SCOPING

The Deputy Town Clerk provided a summary report of the current position following the implementation of the recommendations from the previous meeting on 6 November 2023, namely the results from the consultation responses.

Responses had only been received from Henry Box School; no responses were received from Wood Green School. Overall, 15 responses were received, and members felt that the responses were similar to those from a consultation carried out by WODC and was viewed by the Town Council when considering the Youth Services Grant Funding in 2023.

Members noted that the consultation questionnaire could be re-run in the future, and this could be an idea for once the Youth Council was up and running to gain further feedback.

It was noted from the feedback that the key themes on what young people wanted to achieve from a Youth Council was making their own decisions and bringing these to fruition. Therefore, initial objectives of the Youth Council would be:

Bring about change and make things happen.

- Develop projects which represent young people
- Create and spaces for young people
- Create learning opportunities for young people

There would be an opportunity for these to be built upon once the Youth Council had been established and had Members.

Members asked that consideration be given to the length of service and age of members recruited to the Youth Council. Care would be given to members that are in exam years and their willingness and commitment during key times of those years.

The next steps were to recruit members to the Youth Council and members asked that a short video be prepared which could be shown to school form groups in classrooms, therefore being less intrusive and more effective as teachers could show when they had appropriate free time

rather than a Councillor visiting the schools to present to each year group assembly separately which would be more intrusive on the schools.

The video would include, graphics, stills from activity of the previous Youth Council and information of how an application to join the council can be made. The video would be a maximum of 3 minutes.

Members asked that the (access/route/way) to apply was made as easy as possible, a suggestion was to provide a QR code along with the message to speak to their form tutor for further details. The QR code would also allow Schools to include this information in their own correspondence with students.

Members agreed that Springfield School should be added to the Core Membership group adding to Wood Green, Henry Box and The Kings School. The Core Membership would then be approached to get the recruitment underway in March 2024 with the aim of having the Youth Council running from Easter. Other organisations would then be approached to join.

A concern was raised as to if there was an over subscription of places on the Youth Council. Members agreed that the applications could then be reviewed and prioritised with the possibility of a basic interview or panel which would include the Town Council Youth Mentors. Members were keen to ensure that the Youth Council was inclusive and diverse from its commencement.

Members discussed how meetings could be run in line with Council standing orders and agreed that they would be held in person as the Corn Exchange offered an accessible venue. The Annual Meeting would be held in January to fit best within the school year. It was felt that a 2-year term of service would be appropriate with any leavers being replaced by way of co-opting from the waiting list. Consideration would be given to the terms of remaining a member of the council, non-attendance to three meetings would lead to the members removal.

During the meeting a member reminded the group that “A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit.” It was agreed that this was a useful Proverb to be borne in mind when assessing the success of the Youth Council.

Draft application forms and documents (including safeguarding information) and terms of reference would be prepared for the next meeting.

Recommended:

1. That, the report of the Deputy Town Clerk be noted and,
2. That, the governance of the Youth Council be agreed and,
3. That, Officers produce a recruitment video for with the Core Membership group and,
4. That, recruitment should commence in early March 2024 and close 20 March.

The meeting closed at 4.58pm.

Chair.