

**YOUTH SERVICES WORKING PARTY MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 24 February 2020

At 4.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor L Ashbourne (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman T Ashby	D Enright A Prosser
Officers:	Sharon Groth Adam Clapton Polly Inness	Town Clerk Office Manager Communications & Events Officer
Others:	Councillor Laura Price	Oxfordshire County Council

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Mr R Walker and Got2B. Subsequently apologies were received from Synolos.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

3 MINUTES

The Working Party received and considered the minutes of the Working Party meeting held on 20 January 2020.

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 EXISTING PROVISION AND GAPS IN EXISTING PROVISION

Members received a verbal update from the Chair outlining the Town Council's previous decision to identify gaps in support for varying age ranges of children in Witney, and to financially assist organisations in providing specialist services by way of grant funding.

The Community Wellbeing Manager from West Oxfordshire District Council had provided the beginnings of a youth mapping document and it was reiterated that there were no youth drop-ins available which was a concern. Members heard that funding was still available for youth crisis support and there was agreement that the Town Council funding may be more beneficial in supporting hard to reach groups and for offering discretionary benefits to young people. It was

important to understand what had happened to get to this point, for example lack of other services, activities and venue space.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Working Party continues to identify gaps in provision and consolidates the mapping document already started.

5 **TOWN COUNCIL ASSISTANCE**

There was consensus that, with the recognition of the scale of the problem, the Town Council was already well placed to open access to preventative services. It could interact with the community for example and provide use of its premises for a youth drop in for varying partners if it chose to do so. The greatest impact would be to pitch at supporting open access and opportunities for small groups for activities.

The allocated Town Council funding could be used for rental space, signposting and a map of services to start with. Understanding what's available and letting people know this was happening was key and should be deiminated via noticeboards, social media and the Town Council's annual survey.

Funding criteria was a further key priority and who the Town Council wanted to fund, by how much and how to attract them. It was agreed that this should be formed from the Town Council's existing policies and from other Councils who were providing youth funding.

Members referred to the Working Party's vision and approach to youth and agreed the need to create a physical document outlining this. It was suggested that 'Oxfordshire Youth' may have the capacity to create the most accessible youth friendly signposting guide and had already done this across the County.

RECOMMENDED:

1. Consideration on how to reach people regarding this project be delegated to the Chair and Officers,
2. That contact is made with Oxfordshire Youth regarding a signposting document,
3. That Officers research criteria for the Town Council's youth grant funding, with a first draft being issued to members ahead of the next meeting of this Working Party. The final draft to be signed off at the next meeting.
4. That the Town Council issues a Press Release regarding the above positively promoting young people.

The meeting closed at: 5.10 pm

Chair