

## Youth Forum

Minutes of a meeting of the Youth Forum held at on Wednesday 5 April 2023 at 10.00 am.

### 1. **Welcomes, Introductions and Apologies**

**Present:** Lissy (NA), Kamron (BC), Kayla (WPS), Haroon (NSB), Finley (DSL), Hannah (KC), Skye (NA), Bella (GA), Lilybo (GA), Henry (Chenderit), Michaela (WPS) Kyla (NIA)

**Officers/support:** Aimee (WNC), Debs (WNC), Morcea (adult co-chair)

**Apologies:** Tracy (NSG), Lola (NSG), Dan (WPS), Beatriz (GA), Cllr Baker, Cllr Smith, Cllr King, Jamie (WNC)

**Absent:** April, Eirinn, Archie, Ruva, Honey, Jessica, Lia

### 2. **Memorandum of Understanding – shared to members**

Reminder that apologies should be sent if not attending.

### 3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

We did not have time to cover but one previous action is carried over for next time:

- Jamie Wells to request Market square plans and update from Regeneration to share with the forum.

### 4. **Icebreakers**

To start to get to know each other and build relationships the group took on the challenge of building the tallest card tower in two teams. Winners got first pick of the sweets.

On arrival each person filled in a post it with something about them that others wouldn't know. Later in the session everyone filled in a sheet to guess who's fact was whose. Conclusion was that we have a group of interesting and talented young people in the room!

### 5. **Overview of Youth Forum from current members**

The long-standing youth forum members talked about a number of events and projects they have worked on through the Youth Forum including;

- Perspectives Report – a set of recommendations created by the group for their vision of the future of Northampton town that was supported by Cabinet members and was shared to the regeneration team responsible for delivering major projects.

- International Youth Day – annual youth event led by the forum that has taken place in the shopping centre and in local parks showcasing youth activities and services and has included a West Northants social media take over by the young people.
- UK Parliament Week – an event held each year to engage young people in democracy. Last year we held a ‘cake and debate’ session with local councillors.
- Youth summit – The group created and delivered a workshop to other young people on Hate Crime at the last conference.
- Holocaust Memorial Day – The forum support annually by attending, reading statements and handing out the challah bread (which they also enjoy eating!). This year the event took place during school hours and Lissy represented the forum by being the event host, and recordings from the forum were played out.

## 6. Youth Forum training

### **Being a representative**

As a youth forum member you represent young people from lots of different communities across [West Northamptonshire](#) (click for map); where you live, at your school/youth club, siblings, where you work. Anywhere that you belong to, or where you speak to other young people.

Your role is to share not just your views but the views of other young people.

We discussed ways to capture views including;

- Sharing information with a teacher for wider sharing
- Using your student council to share information
- Using online forms, surveys or polls
- Talk to people in your communities

### **Chairing a meeting**

The youth forum will have a rotating chair and secretary so that everyone gets to have a go at chairing the meeting. As a group we agreed that chairing a meeting would consist of;

- Going through the agenda items and introducing any guests
- Reading out the actions from the last meeting and getting an update
- Making sure everyone gets the opportunity to speak
- Keeping the meeting to time\*
- Making sure the secretary has noted any points or actions.

### **What the Youth Forum need from Officers;**

- To send the agenda out with enough time to read through and know what's coming up
- Include approx. timings on the agenda as a guide for time keeping.
- Provide support during meetings if you are unsure of anything.

## 7. Photos & ID badges

Everyone will all be given an ID badge and lanyard to show they are a Youth Forum member. Young people had photos taken for their ID badges during the session. If you were not at the session please send a photo in to [Aimee.luck@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:Aimee.luck@westnorthants.gov.uk) (Plain background, no filters.)

Group agreed they would like a bright blue lanyard and would prefer to have the council or forum logo on this if possible.

8. **Lunch break**

9. **Forum logo development**

Several months ago the forum worked with WNC graphic designer for a new logo design. Feedback was given and revised versions were created and shared to the group in the session.

The Forum debated over a couple of options but agreed that a mix of Options 1 & 2 would be best. They requested some versions with different fonts and use of colours in the speech bubble letters were offered for them to compare.

Simon (Graphic design) to bring back revised designs to future meeting for final decision.

Question raised over branding and the name of the group and discussion took place. 'Forum' feels like an online chat room, or very casual/older. Many of the schools run Student Councils and the young people stated a preference for the term 'Youth Council' as to them, this reflects being taken seriously, having ability to influence and have a real impact.

10. **Health & Wellbeing Strategy input**

Public Health were unable to make the session but will be rescheduled to attend for this item.

11. **Youth Identified Priorities**

**Aimee read a statement from the Police out to the young people in relation to the murder of a 16 year old boy in Northampton two weeks ago. Group were asked if they needed any support, had any concerns and offered a space to speak if they needed. Statement to be shared with minutes.**

The Forum broke into two groups to come up with all of the issues that they think/know young people are facing in West Northants.

Each group then decided on 3 priority issues from their lists and presented these to the wider group:

- Drugs – distribution of drugs in vulnerable areas, young people taking drugs and also being pulled into dealing drugs.
- Knife Crime – Gangs and use of rural areas
- Transportation – Safeguarding issue; buses not turning up, leaving young people stranded, vulnerable and unable to get to school.

- Abuse – wide range of abuse issues including domestic, sexual, FGM discussed.
- Sexual Health/Education – female and male products including sanitary products and period poverty, queer relationships and FGM awareness.
- Addiction – alcohol and drugs are the priority concerns as well as vaping and unknown consequences, peer pressure and need for more help not punishment.

Everyone was given 4 sticky dots and a round of voting took place to agree top 2 priorities:

1. Sexual Health/Education
2. Addiction\*

\*Drugs came in at number 3 and was agreed to sit with wider addiction topic.

The group were asked what positive action they would like to take, what would they want to ask for in terms of change/addressing these issues?

The following items were agreed:

- Period poverty; Improve access to sanitary products (primarily in school, but also in other public spaces. Action: make a request for schools to make this much easier to access, without formal procedures.
- Make a poster for a) young people and b) education staff about how to talk about sanitary products. Lilybo offered to provide graphic design skills on this item.
- Write a letter to the MP to petition the government for better regulated sex education.
- Create a resource or deliver sessions for schools about sexual health and how to deliver these sessions to young people. Action: Jamie to discuss a project for the Youth Programme with the group. Opportunity to create a resource as part of this package.

Unfortunately, we ran out of time to explore the second topic which will have to be picked up in a future meeting.

## 12. **Future Meetings**

The next Youth Forum meeting is on:

**Wednesday 10 May, 4.30pm to 6.30pm at Northampton Guildhall**

There will be a hybrid option for anyone who cannot attend in person. Most agreed they expect to attend in person. Some people do have exam revision and will confirm nearer the time.

After this we will have an activity and problem-solving day at Northampton Mereway Fire Station on Wednesday 31 May, from 10am to 3pm. Additional permission forms to follow.

**The Forum also uses a Whatsapp chat to keep everyone up to date. If you are happy to be added to this please send your phone number to**

**[Aimee.luck@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:Aimee.luck@westnorthants.gov.uk)**

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The meeting closed at 15:05

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_Aimee Luck\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_5.4.2023\_\_\_\_\_