

West Northants Youth Council
Memorandum of Understanding

Scope: This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is between West Northamptonshire Council, Northampton Secondary Schools or local youth organisations, Parents and the Young People representing the Youth Council.

It is understood that the Youth Council will be elected, by their School or Youth Organisation. The MoU sets out responsibilities, frequency of meetings, support and management arrangements and principles, and purposes of the agreement for the Youth Council.

Principles and Purposes: The MoU has the key principle of creating an understandable and clear agreement on operational arrangements for the Youth Forum. The MoU will establish an open communication channel between young people, the Council, other statutory organisations and community and voluntary organisations, representing and supporting young people.

The purposes of the Youth Council:

1. Ensure that all young people in Northampton have a voice
2. Young people are not just representing themselves but providing a voice for young people's thoughts on issues locally
3. To engage young people (aged 13-19 yrs) in a consultative process that empowers them to share their views, interests and needs with each other so that their collective voice will inform Service Providers, and contribute to the decision making process in relation to service planning and the deployment of identified resources
4. Ensure political leaders and officers engage proactively with young people via consultation and engagement
5. To promote equality for young people
6. To stimulate and improve communication between WNC, young people and other organisations in the West Northants
7. To act on issues that are, important to young people accessing our services and in the local community
8. To feed back information from meetings and projects to their school and peers, and promote public youth council events

Frequency of meetings

Youth Council meetings will take place on the second Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise stated, from 4.30pm to 6.30pm. Meetings will take place face to face at the Guildhall with an option to join virtually. Where meetings take place in holidays a full day meeting/activity will be arranged between 10am and 3pm.

Opportunities to participate in other activities/meetings may arise and will be communicated to the members by email.

There is an expectation that members attend as many meetings as possible and send apologies if unable to attend. If two consecutive meetings are missed, a valid reason will be requested.

Staff Support

This involves ensuring the youth forum is influential within the Council and that their voices are heard and acted upon. An officer from West Northamptonshire Council will be present at each meeting. They will help co-ordinate, guide and support the young group by giving them confidence to make positive contribution to the meetings.

It is the role of the staff to promote the forum across West Northants, while acting as an advocate for the forum and establishing links with other youth and community programmes. All officers will have DBS clearance.

Chair and other Responsibilities

The aim is for the group to be run by the youth members with staff present for support. The members will take on responsibilities such as chairing the meeting and taking notes. These roles will rotate each meeting.

Areas of work:

The Youth Council will develop a 12 month rolling action plan, focusing on issues that matter most to young people. These issues will be collated through a number of channels including surveys.

Refreshments

Tea, coffee and cold drinks will be provided at each meeting. There will be an expectation for youth council members to bring lunch with them, or money to purchase lunch where appropriate. However, if there is a difficulty with these, please get in touch with us to discuss alternative arrangements. No refreshments can be provided for virtual meetings.

Travel

There will be an expectation that youth council members arrange suitable travel arrangements to and from face to face meetings and forum led events. However, if there is a difficulty in arranging travel to and from meetings, please get in touch with us to discuss alternative arrangements.

Review: This document will be reviewed annually, along with the action plan.

This is a copy for you to keep.

If you would like to discuss further, please contact Aimee Luck (Community Safety and Engagement Project Officer) on 07557496415 or email aimee.luck@westnorthants.gov.uk