

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

VIRTUAL YOUTH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

In accordance with s78 of the Local Authorities and Police Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

29 April, 2021

Open Minutes pages 1 – 5

Present:

Youth Councillors:

Kerry Alcock	Eva Key
Danni Cleeve	Bianka Pawlowska
Aiden Drinkwater	Alfie Walker
Oli Hughes	

Town Councillors: Gill Cleeve, Tony Jackson (Mayor)

Clerks: Admin Clerk

Press: Absent

Public: None

Before the meeting began, the Chair noted that William Winter had resigned from the Youth Town Council had thanked him for his contribution to the group.

79) Apologies

Apologies were received by Isabel Lambourn, Saul McDougall.

Amelia Betts was absent from the meeting.

80) Declarations of Interest

Eva declared an interest in agenda item 8, minuted as 85.

81) To receive written requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests

There were no requests.

82) To grant any requests for dispensation

There were no requests.

83) Public Participation

No one had registered to speak in Public Participation.

84) To Approve Draft Minutes of the Youth Town Council meeting held on 1 April, 2021

RESOLVED: The Draft Minutes of the Youth Town Council meeting held on 1 April, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

85) Presentation on Youth Mental Health from Lifespace Trust CEO, Rachel Key

Members welcomed Rachel Key to the meeting.

Rachel began by explaining that Lifespace Trust is a charity based in Stratford-upon-Avon that supports young people aged 8 to 18 in primary, secondary and special schools across South Warwickshire.

She noted that Lifespace train mentors, staff and volunteers, to support young people with a range of issues that are “getting in their way” of their daily lives. This can often include their wellbeing and mental health.

Rachel proudly reported that in 2020 Lifespace mentors supported 450 young people. She advised that Chief Executive of Young Minds, Emma Thomas said: “The pandemic has put a huge strain on many young people who were already struggling with their mental health, because of traumatic experiences, social isolation, a loss of routine and a breakdown in formal and informal support.”

Rachel touched upon the fact that mental health can look and feel different to each individual, with one young person

comparing it to feeling like a swarm of bees in their head and another saying they felt complete emptiness.

Rachel encourages young people to look after their mental health like they would their physical health. E.g.

- Prevention – sleep, water, exercise;
- Self-treatment – finding support online/reading about how you are feeling/speaking with a friend;
- Specialist support/treatment – from a Lifespace mentor, school counsellor, your GP and CAMHS/RISE etc.

Rachel concluded her presentation by advising that it is Mental Health Awareness Week between 10 – 16 May, 2021 and that this year's theme is 'Nature'. She also shared details of other organisations that can offer support with mental health issues.

The Chair asked Rachel what Lifespace specifically do in schools to which Rachel responded they train mentors who will work with individuals in school – this can be for a period as little as six weeks or even as long as a couple of years.

Alfie asked whether Rachel thought it would ever get to a point where no intervention would be needed for mental health, and preventative measures will halt further treatment from becoming necessary. Rachel responded that there will always be people with mental health issues, even if they don't grow into a mental health illness, however she notes that Lifespace's aim is to reduce the amount of people that need to seek that specialist support.

Eva asked how the Youth Town Council could spread awareness on this topic. Rachel suggested talking to schools to see what they are doing to support mental health, social media campaigns and talking to the adult Town Councillors.

The Mayor remarked that when he was at school, mental health was not really discussed. He questioned whether mental health issues have always been around or whether current lifestyles have increased these difficulties. Rachel replied that teenagers feel things very strongly and have always been that way. However, she believes that social media, discrimination, and peer pressure have added to this in recent years.

Cllr Cleeve agreed with this, noting that bullying does not stop when the school day ends now as social media allows for it to continue at any time.

Rachel concluded by emphasising that the sooner young people can get support and treatment the better their mental health will be for the rest of their lives.

The Chair thanked Rachel for her enlightening presentation.

86) Stratford Youth Forum (SYF) Feedback

Alfie updated that the SYF have recently concluded their successful careers project on social media and that they are now preparing for their Annual General Meeting on 17 June.

87) Youth Awards Event

- Youth Awards

At the Youth Town Council Media Group meeting held on 18 March it was agreed that it would be a good idea to hold a Youth Awards Event this year. This could allow other young residents of Stratford-upon-Avon to nominate those who have made an impact in the town. E.g., Youth Small Business of the Year, Youth Eco-Friendly Warrior of the Year.

At the Youth Town Council meeting on 1 April, members were asked to consider this proposal and decide if/how to go forward with it. Members agreed that this would be a great way to spread awareness of the YTC and suggested that it could link in with the 'Youth Awareness Day' that has been discussed previously. Youth bands could then perform during the evening awards ceremony.

Members were asked at this meeting to consider the following points:

- When should this event be held?
- Where should this event be held (Online or at the Town Hall – government restrictions dependant)?
- How many categories of awards would we like?

- What should these categories be?
- How many people should be invited?
- If an in-person event, do we want catering, live music etc?

It was AGREED: that a Task & Finish Group should be set up to discuss plans for this event in more detail.

88) Changing the day of Youth Town Council meetings

This matter was discussed, and it was thought that instead of changing the day these meetings are held on, it was perhaps a better idea to change their frequency. It was agreed that this would allow for more productivity from the group as well as fitting in better with the timetables of those who have exams etc.

It was AGREED: that the Youth Town Council would continue to meet every six weeks instead of four. The new calendar of meetings has been attached as **Appendix 'A'** to these minutes.

89) White Ribbon Campaign

It was AGREED: that more information should be sought on this campaign and that Dr Williams should be invited to a future meeting.

90) Topics/Speakers

It was AGREED: that Claire Thomas from Stratford Music Network should be invited to attend the meeting on 10 June.

91) Date of Next Youth Town Council Meeting

The next virtual Meeting of the Youth Town Council will take place at 5:00pm on Thursday 10 June, 2021.

The Chair declared the virtual meeting closed at 5:54 pm.