

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

4 March, 2021

Open Minutes pages 1 – 6

Present:

Youth Councillors:

Kerry Alcock	Isabel Lambourn
Danni Cleeve	Saul McDougall
Aiden Drinkwater	Bianka Pawlowska
Oli Hughes	Alfie Walker
Eva Key	William Winter

Town Councillors: Gill Cleeve

Clerks: Admin Clerk

Press: Absent

Public: Leo Goldenchild, Black Lives Matter Advocate

53) Apologies

Apologies were received by Amelia Betts.

Hope French was absent from the meeting.

54) Declarations of Interest

Alfie declared an interest in item 8 on the agenda, minuted as 59.

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

There were no requests.

56) To grant any requests for dispensation

There were no requests.

57) Public Participation

No one had registered to speak in Public Participation.

58) To Approve Draft Minutes of the Youth Town Council meeting held on 4 February, 2021

RESOLVED: The Draft Minutes of the Youth Town Council meeting held on 4 February, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

59) Stratford Youth Forum (SYF) Feedback

Alfie gave feedback on the projects that SYF have been working on in recent months. These include:

- Co-operation with Lifespace and Stratford Calling for a week surrounding mental health. SYF did not put out as much content as they had originally planned to, so they will continue this over the next couple of weeks. The campaign is called #StayWellStratford;
- Career's project – interviews are being conducted with members of different professions;
- Endometriosis awareness – one post a week will be shared on SYF social media for the next six weeks;
- Women's History Month – social media posts;
- The Spring Annual meeting is coming up shortly.

Cllr Cleeve stated that she is very impressed with the SYF social media posts and encouraged members of the YTC to follow them.

60) Black Lives Matter

Members welcomed Leo to the meeting.

Leo began by giving a bit of information on his background. He informed the group that he is an artist and young carer who faced adversity growing up. He was raised in Handsworth, Birmingham by a single mother and only had one other person of Afro-Caribbean decent that lived in his locality.

Leo recalled that he received a lot of racism at school and often felt that he did not fit in with his peers. He stated that he even considered bleaching his own skin at one point during his teenage years.

Whilst at school, Leo realised that Black History Month was not really touched upon, and even when completing a 'roots' project at school, many teachers debunked his findings as a myth. He did note that one teacher helped him look into his heritage and realise that black is beautiful.

Leo credits writer and poet Benjamin Zephaniah for much of his inspiration growing up. Leo began writing poetry which then led to him wanting to pursue a career in music. In recent years Leo has performed as a support act for X Factor finalists.

The Mayor commented that he suspects Stratford has a lot of similar issues, though possibly not as widely reported as incidents in Birmingham. Leo responded that he has friends in smaller towns such as Stratford that also have to deal with micro-expressions of aggression or passing comments. Oli started that he has also experienced this type of treatment.

Leo reflected that he found it difficult to reach out to teachers at school as they could understand what was going on to a certain level but could not fully relate. Oli agreed that bullies do not get strong enough punishment as many teachers do not realise the severity of the mistreatment, and that more education is needed for both students and teachers on this.

Kerry asked whether Leo had problems making friends at school. He replied that he had to change everything about himself and struggled to make friends. He noted he did not know enough about himself let alone his culture. In secondary school, Leo started to delve into who he was and his culture, and once becoming more comfortable with himself he noticed he started to gradually make new friends.

Eva asked Leo whether he felt his school let him down and noted that history lessons are not diverse enough. For example, classes are taught about Florence Nightingale but not Mary Seacole. Leo agreed with this and said its not just black history that is omitted from the curriculum but all cultural history. Oli noted that if black history is taught in school, its usually focused on the bad, rather than celebrating positive achievements.

Alfie asked how those who are a nonminority can help. Leo replied that people should be open – to asking questions, to trying a wider variety of food, to listening to music and watching films created by those from other ethnicities.

Leo revealed that his grandmother is part of the Windrush generation. He and his brother arrange meetings in their community to try and challenge and raise awareness of this issue.

Issy asked if finding poetry and music aided Leo in coping with his challenges. He replied that it definitely helped, and that discovering Benjamin Zephaniah led to discovering music which then led to doors opening with other musicians and getting into university. He noted that it was a perfect storm, and that some good came out of a difficult situation.

Members thanked Leo for his presentation and for answering their questions.

61) Virtual -v- Face-to-Face Meetings

Members discussed the pros and cons of both meeting methods. Concerned were raised over timing issues, with those who go to school in Alcester for example who may struggle to get to the meeting on time.

Kerry asked whether all members needed to be at every meeting in person or could some still attend via Zoom. It was agreed that if someone could not attend last minute/is going to be late then they could be allowed to attend virtually, but this should not be an official alternative as it is bound to have logistical issues attached to it.

It was AGREED: that the Youth Town Council would alternate between in-person meetings and virtual meetings. The start date for this is dependent on government guidelines.

62) Streaming YTC Meetings

Members discussed the various options for this. These included:

- Continuing to stream meetings live;
- Recording the meeting and posting them in their entirety a day or two later;
- Recording the meeting and editing to share the 'highlights' or most productive elements.

It was AGREED: to not continue streaming meetings. They will however be recorded and uploaded to YouTube within a couple of days.

63) Welcombe Radio

Cllr Cleeve explained that this is planned to be a whole day of programming on Welcombe Radio centred around local youth groups and organisations. Sections will be recorded to interspersed with music. Members agreed that this would be a good opportunity to raise awareness of YTC and get more people involved in our projects.

It was AGREED: that YTC would like to get involved with this. A separate media meeting will be set up to discuss the specifics of this.

64) Topics/Speakers

At the last meeting it was suggested that Claire Thomas from Stratford Music Network could attend our April meeting. Unfortunately, she is not available for this, but may be able to attend our meeting in May.

Cllr Cleeve that she was approached by the Shakespeare Lions who are currently looking into launching a youth version of their charity. They have expressed interest in presenting to YTC.

It was AGREED: that we would invite a representative from Shakespeare Lions to the next meeting.

65) Date of Next Youth Town Council Meeting

The next virtual Meeting of the Youth Town Council will take place at 5:00pm on Thursday 1 April, 2021.

The Chair declared the virtual meeting closed at 6:26 pm.