

Minutes of the Gedling Youth Council Meeting

Monday 20th November 2023

5.30 - 7.30pm in the Chappell Room, Civic Centre

1. Welcome, refreshments, apologies received.

Apologies were received from incoming new member Lydia Yates.

In Attendance: Muhammad Malik, Fatimah Malik, Freddie Vokes, Stella Clarke, Leyla Abass, incoming new members Alex Eggleston (CLW Academy) and Alex Millar (Lambley Primary School), Councillors Kathryn Fox and Sandra Bates, Jane Ansell GBC, Amy Beckworth NCC Youth Service.

Guests: Gedling Policing Team representatives Inspector Mark Stanley and PCSOs Stephanie and Frazer.

2. Minutes of last meeting, actions arising

Minutes of the meeting held Monday 18th September were accepted as a true record.

3. Group chat discussions: subjects members want to raise.

Muhammad flagged the upcoming MYP elections, and the need for NCC Youth Service to promote them in school assemblies. Freddie proposed that some posters are provided and put up in schools. Alex suggested Youth Council members promote the opportunity to their networks in schools.

Guest Speakers: Inspector Mark Stanley and Gedling Policing Team

colleagues (Niki Pekal, GBC Community Safety Officer is unavailable to attend this meeting).

Inspector Stanly gave an overview of the key issues that policing teams are identifying and responding to, and Young People made observations. The discussion included:

Insp Stanley advised that more issues of ASB, substance misuse and other safety matters are evident in the City Centre, and the Police perception is that people feel safer when out and about in Gedling than they do when they are in the City.

He asked members to share any issues they are experiencing or observing in Gedling. Members flagged incidences of young people carrying knives in school, inappropriate or abusive use of social media, peer pressure to join in or not to snitch, widespread vaping, use of low - level drugs; and that these issues are 'normalised' amongst pupils.

The Carlton area was flagged as an area where the Police are doing proactive work to address these emerging issues. Criminal exploitation of young people can be a factor, with Police aiming to target known activity around the 'County Line'. Intelligence – led approaches are the best way to tackle violent crime and drug dealing. Cheap alcohol marketed to young people was identified as a factor.

Insp Stanley and colleagues talked about the 'nudge theory', i.e. approaches that the Police take to tackle the issues - by drawing attention to those negative consequences and side effects that mean something to young people, i.e. the high calorific content of alcohol/impact on young people's appearance, mental health and self - esteem.

Muhammad asked about PCSO engagement in schools to build trust with young people and create routes to safe raising of concerns. Cllr Barnes asked whether the Police are able to carry out searches in schools.

Insp. Stanley advised that where evidence / intelligence is available, targeted searches can be conducted. Specialist Police officers can and do work with parents and schools to resolve issues. The incident is investigated, and the route is around consent/age/are they aware of consent – a victim led approach looking at addressing the root cause rather than immediate sanction.

Once a YP is in the Youth Justice system, the Youth Justice service takes a similar developmental approach, the aim being to engage young people in rehabilitation and making better choices, raising awareness of consent and the forms of peer influence to avoid, seek help to resolve etc. Often a young person has had no positive role models and is experiencing social factors that are impacting on the decisions that he/she makes. Prison is seen as a last resort by the Police and other agencies – resolution of root causes is a far more effective long term solution.

Insp Stanley confirmed that cannabis is a significant social issue which has been decriminalised in people's perceptions in recent years. Police are guided down the route of proportionality of response, in the case of drug possession, depending on whether personal use, level of use or dealing. Stop and Search powers can be used, where there is firm intelligence/evidence. Insp Stanley advised that a number of factors must be assessed in taking this action.

Some members flagged that they feel very unsafe when going into the City Centre – citing the widespread smell of weed, young people and adults vaping and smoking, alcohol and drug intoxication, intimidating behaviour.

Driving whilst under the influence of drink or drugs was discussed, and Insp. Stanley confirmed that Police have powers to stop and test suspected cases. The Police have instigated a proactive 'Drink and Drugs' campaign.

Stella flagged incidents of sexual harassment in schools, in the main targeting girls. She raised the need for safe spaces and private ways that girls can disclose and ask

for help, without the details becoming common knowledge on the pupil grapevine, leaving the pupil open to further bullying and exposure.

Insp. Stanley advised on the need for a variety of sensitive approaches to address issues developing with young people, or that put young people at risk, and the need for schools to work with the Police. Local intelligence and tip offs are important to enable the Police and other agencies to make interventions and protect young people.

Insp Stanley and colleagues confirmed that this issue is a priority for the Police and other agencies, raising the question 'How are we in Gedling going to improve the safety of young women and girls?'

PCSOs Steph and colleague Zoe are doing some work in Carlton on the Safety and Wellbeing of young people and would like the Youth Council to act as champions for this, and for wider plans to support the safety of young people. These include helping to identify unsafe spaces and inform/help design Police walkabouts in those areas, to enable Officers to engage with young women/girls and deter offenders.

It was AGREED that JA would reconnect with the officers post – meeting regarding the 'reporting of concern' processes regarding observations by young people of others at risk, and particularly the officer leading on safety of women and girls that attended the meeting, to identify ways that the Youth Council can champion the Nottm City Council 5 pillars of the Notts Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, and ways in which the Council can support that through its partnerships and work programmes.

4. Guest Speaker Expressions of Interest to attend future meetings (if received).

None received.

Comfort break – 15 minutes

5. Gedling Young People's Consultation Action Plan update:

Completed:

- **Communications** – GBC Comms Team Lead Rob McCleary
- **Social Mobility (link to Employability, Entrepreneurship Equality and diversity in Consultation Action Plan)** - Lance Juby, Head of Service, Communities and Leisure – **Action arising:** nominate YC representative onto Gedling Social Mobility Commission)
- **Environmental Sustainability** - Sim Duhra, GBC Climate Change Office
- **Young People's Safety** – Mark Stanley, Gedling Policing Team Lead, Niki Pekal, GBC Community Safety Officer, Environment

Remaining:

- **Activities for Young People** – NCC Youth Service Sean Ryan - Gedling Team Lead / Pom Bhogal. Group Manager
- **Equality and Diversity** – Cllrs Fox and Barnes (feedback and discussion, Arnold Summer Fair Sat 24th June, Strategic Equalities Group priorities)

AGREED: NCC Youth Services to be invited to attend the next meeting, to discuss the following Action Plan mission statement

‘The Council will work with its partners to provide and promote a range of activities during school holidays that is accessible and engaging to young people of all ages and abilities’

AGREED: The **Equality and Diversity** theme could potentially be addressed at the next meeting in Feb 2024, or carried forward into the new Youth Council’s work programme.

Other actions:

- **‘You Said, We Did’ Presentation to Council** and invitation to attend Gedling Corporate Management Team meeting (CMT)
- **Review of Youth Mayor role**

AGREED:

The YP Consultation Outcomes Action Plan to be updated with details of Youth Council scrutiny that has taken place over the last two years, and also with actions that the Council has taken under the key themes and mission statements set out in the plan. Youth Council then to agree how and when this will be presented.

Current and former Youth Mayors Muhammad, Fatimah and Freddie to email Jane with their experiences, observations and recommendations for improvement, to be reviewed and agreed actions noted at the next meeting.

6. Member of Youth Parliament / Countywide Youth Parliament Updates and feedback – Amy Beckworth.

Amy reported on the timelines for the County Youth Parliament Elections and Make Your Mark Awards.

7. Any Other Business.

9. Future meeting dates:

5.30 – 7.30pm in the Chappell Room, 1st floor, unless otherwise stated on the agenda:

2024

19th February

22nd April (Inaugural meeting of incoming Youth Council 2024 – 2027/8)