

# Oadby & Wigston Youth Council

## Terms of Reference

### Context

The Oadby & Wigston Youth Council ('Youth Council') is an open forum for young people to have their say on, and provide suggested direction to Oadby & Wigston Borough Council ('The Council') in relation to, community issues and projects that directly impact upon the quality of life of, or opportunities made available to, young people in the Borough and, where applicable, countywide or nationally. The Youth Council are also the joint lead, alongside the Council, in the planning and delivery of the Borough's annual 'Supersonic Boom' youth festival.

### Membership

Voting Membership of the Youth Council is open to any young person who meets the following criteria;

- Is aged 11-19 (or up to 25 years with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities), **AND**
- Has a local connection to the Borough (Oadby, Wigston, and South Wigston) which could comprise of one or more of the following;
  - The young person lives in the Borough,
  - The young person schools in the Borough,
  - The young person works in the Borough, or
  - The young person attends a youth group or project in the Borough.

**OR**

- Is the Borough's representative(s) on the Leicestershire County Youth Council ('CYCLE'), or
- Are the Member(s) and/or Deputy Member(s) of the UK Youth Parliament for the Borough.

Voting Membership is granted indefinitely until such a time as the above criteria no longer apply to the individual, and has no restrictions on the number of individuals it is granted to.

In addition to the above, indefinite Non-Voting Membership is granted to the following to enable access to the resources made available to the Youth Council by the Council, to support the Youth Council in the undertaking of their work and administration, and to ensure a working relationship between the Youth Council, CYCLE, and the UK Youth Parliament;

- The Council Officer with responsibility for children and young people,
- The Elected Member nominated as 'Young Person's Champion' by the Council, and
- Leicestershire County Council's 'Family Voice Worker'.

Non-Voting Membership is also open to the following, in the interest of the Youth Council remaining politically neutral, but informed of political work within the Borough;

- One Elected Member from both the leading political party within the Borough and the opposition, as nominated by their relevant party group. (This is exclusive of the Council's Young Person's Champion.)

Elected Members of the Council with Non-Voting Membership of the Youth Council may, where necessary, nominate a proxy to attend a scheduled meeting on their behalf if they are unable to attend. The Chairperson, and the Council Officer with responsibility for children and young people, must be made aware of any substitution at least five working days prior to the scheduled meeting.

## Roles

Voting Members will be elected during the Annual General Meeting ('AGM') into the following roles within the Youth Council;

- Chairperson\*
- Vice Chairperson
- Secretary
- Media Officer

Where capacity exists, a Voting Member may hold more than one role within the Youth Council where such a combination is not detrimental to the individual, or to the work of the Youth Council.

Any Voting Member of the Youth Council may put themselves forward as a candidate for any of the roles noted.

(\*The Chairperson will typically be succeeded by the previous year's Vice Chairperson.)

## Voting

All items put to a vote before the Youth Council will be decided upon by a show of hands for those Voting Members 'For' the item, those 'Against' the item, and Abstainers. The number and nature of votes cast will be recorded within the minutes of the meeting.

The process of electing Voting Members to roles within the Youth Council will be undertaken via a secret ballot at the AGM, with the Council Officer with responsibility for children and young people acting as the 'Returning Officer' for votes cast, announcing those duly elected to the roles upon counting the ballot papers. This will also be duly recorded within the minutes of the meeting.

Where the outcome of any vote is hung, whereby there is not a clear result, a second vote may be held following additional representation or debate. Should the result remain unchanged the Chairperson may, at their discretion, allow the matter to be resolved via a 'best of three' 'Rock, Paper, Scissors' challenge undertaken by one 'For' voter, and one 'Against' voter.

For elections to Youth Council roles where there is not a clear result, the same process as outlined above will take place with each contesting candidate for the role participating in the 'best of three' 'Rock, Paper, Scissors' challenge.

## Expectations

As a member of the Youth Council, individuals are expected to;

- Attend meetings on a regular basis (at least eight per year) and actively participate within them,
- Truthfully represent the interests of young people within the Borough,
- Hold a genuine interest in the work and purpose of the Youth Council, and
- Be committed to, and be actively involved in, pursuing the outcomes sought by the Youth Council within its work.

Further to adhering to the above; when a Voting Member has attended six consecutive meetings of, or events on behalf of, the Youth Council they will be provided with a Youth Council hoodie and t-shirt, subject to availability and at no charge. Should either item be unavailable at the time the Voting Member makes this commitment, they will be guaranteed the unavailable item as part of the next stock order.

The Council's Young Persons Champion, and the Council Officer with responsibility for children and young people, and Leicestershire County Council's 'Family Voice Worker', as facilitators for the Youth Council, are also entitled to a hoodie and t-shirt from the start of their related duties.

Where a Voting Member who holds one of the four elected roles of the Youth Council fails to regularly attend meetings without sending apologies in advance, or fails to attend three consecutive meetings without providing due reasoning, their role within the Youth Council will be considered forfeit and an election will be held at the next scheduled meeting, or the AGM should it occur sooner, for a new holder of the forfeit role.

## Quorum Requirements

For a Youth Council meeting to be quorate, a minimum of half plus one of the Voting Members of the Youth Council must be present. In addition to this each meeting, in order to be quorate, must be supported by two Non-Voting Members, at least one of whom is safeguarding trained and DBS checked, to satisfy safeguarding requirements.

Where the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are unavailable to attend, but the meeting would otherwise be quorate, a Voting Member of the Youth Council may be elected as a substitute for this meeting only, and must step down at the end of the meeting.

## **Agenda Items, Minutes and Meeting Papers**

All agenda items will be forwarded to the Council Officer with responsibility for children and young people by the close of business seven working days prior to the next scheduled meeting. The agenda, with attached meeting papers, will be distributed at least five working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

The minutes of the Youth Council will be prepared by the Secretary, and forwarded to the Council Officer with responsibility for children and young people by no later than five working days following each meeting. Full copies of the minutes, including attachments, will be provided to all Youth Council members no later than ten working days following each meeting.

By agreement of the Voting Members, decisions may be required to be made outside of scheduled meetings. Where agreed, all decisions made outside of scheduled meetings will be recorded in the minutes of the next scheduled meeting.

## **Frequency of Meetings**

The Youth Council will meet on the third Monday of each calendar month unless such a meeting would fall on a bank holiday, or within Leicestershire County Council's identified school holiday periods where quorate meetings are unlikely.

An established meeting date can be revised in advance during a scheduled meeting, subject to approval via a quorate vote.

Additional meetings may be called in support of Youth Council projects, and must be arranged at least ten working days in advance of the proposed meeting date.

## **Accountability and Reporting**

Reports on the progress of work undertaken by the Youth Council, as well as the outcomes of its projects, and comments on additional matters will be made to the Council's Children & Young Peoples' Forum by Voting Members of the Youth Council. These reports will, in turn, be delivered to full Council meetings, or other relevant Council Forums, where required.

Deadlines for submissions to be made to these forums will be included on the relevant month's agenda.

## **Terms of Reference Review**

The Terms of Reference for the Youth Council will be reviewed annually, every September during the Youth Council's AGM.