

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES' FORUM HELD AT
THE COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON WEDNESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2018
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor R E R Morris (Chair)

COUNCILLORS

Miss M V Chamberlain
Mrs S Z Haq
Mrs S B Morris

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

M Smith (Community Safety & Youth Coordinator)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

D Amliwala (Oadby & Wigston Youth Council)
M McCallister (Reality Youth Project)

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

L Duguid (Oadby & Wigston Youth Council)
D Eckert (Oadby & Wigston Youth Council)

21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2017

RESOLVED THAT:

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 17 October 2017 be taken as read and confirmed.

22. POLICE UPDATE

Due to a Police representative being unavailable this agenda item was deferred until the next meeting of the Forum.

23. IMPACT TEAM UPDATE

Due to an IMPACT Team representative being unavailable this agenda item was deferred until the next meeting of the Forum.

24. REALITY BUS UPDATE

Mike McCallister, from the Reality Youth Project, provided the forum with the following update:

The South Wigston bus sessions on Friday evenings, 7pm – 8.30pm outside South Leicestershire College, remain one of the busiest and most lively sessions, and a great way to finish the week. It is well attended by young people all across the 11-18 age range, with usually an average of 20 plus young people present each week. The older and younger groups get along well with each other and are happy to share space on the bus.

We continue to have a strong rapport with the several members of the older group of young people who come to the bus on a regular basis. They are often there early and run up to the bus as soon as they see us arrive. They are happy to hold conversations with us downstairs and chat to us about their week before they head upstairs to use the DJ decks.

In particular, we have built a strong bond with one of the older girls as well as her group of friends, and her boyfriend and his friendship group. They have told us how much they look forward to our being there and how they view it as one of the best parts of the week. We are planning to have a belated birthday celebration of sorts this week.

While the older group primarily spends most of their time upstairs, the younger group tends to divide itself between using the game consoles and laptops upstairs, chatting with each other and the youth workers downstairs, and making use of the grind rail outside the bus. We have built strong relationships with many of the younger boys who come to the bus every week. Several of them spend most of the session downstairs, drinking hot chocolate and chatting with the youth workers. Many of them frequently express their appreciation for our being there and tell us how much they look forward and enjoy being on the bus. On occasion, we are also able to chat about our motivation as youth workers for working on the bus and running the sessions.

Toward the end of last term, we began to incorporate more holiday-themed crafts into the sessions, such as Thanksgiving "turkeys" made from Oreos, Cola Bottles, and chocolate coins. The crafts were popular with both the older and younger groups, and gave us a chance to discuss more cultural differences between the United States and the United Kingdom. It also fulfilled a desire of the young people in having more than just games consoles but instead having something simple to enjoy doing whilst chatting. We plan to celebrate more holidays on the bus as the year goes on, starting in a couple of weeks with Valentine's Day and Shrove Tuesday.

Mike went on to further explain the facilities and setup of the bus, and explained that the bus is a charity. At present the bus is in use twice a day, 5 days a week for youth sessions, alongside doing lunchtime sessions at some schools and colleges across Leicestershire. Typically the bus is 'deployed' in 10 week blocks to a location.

On 'big nights', such as Halloween, up to 50-60 young people have attended the bus sessions.

Members enquired as to the impact the bus has had on the number of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour in the area since its deployment. Mike confirmed that other areas had previously reported a decrease in anti-social behaviour during the 10 week block of sessions the bus attends.

***ACTION*:** MS to confirm the South Wigston anti-social behaviour figures before, during, and after the Reality Bus session blocks.

Mike went on to state that PCSOs and other beat officers have an open invite to drop in on the bus in order to break down barriers and build rapport between young people and the Police, and that this has regularly occurred. It was noted that it has been particularly useful to have the Police and IMPACT Teams regularly signposting young people during detached sessions in deployment areas to the bus.

Members asked if there were plans for the Reality Bus to hold sessions in Oadby, particularly around the Uplands Park area. Mike stated that the bus had attended some

sessions at Ellis Park in previous years, and that they are currently seeking funding to go back to the location in the future. Members suggested Chicken Alley and Fludes Lane as other potential locations for the bus.

Members stated that the Reality Bus was a "brilliant project", and that it would be wonderful to see "fleets of buses like this in operation". The Forum notes that Leicestershire County Council's '637 Youth Bus' was decommissioned some time ago, and that Blaby District Council has recently decommissioned its own 'BB19 Youth Bus' as the vehicle had reached the end of its serviceable life.

25. YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATE

Devina Amliwala informed members that the Youth Council has recently elected a new Chair, Lauren Duguid, as the existing Chair, Daria Eckert, will be stepping down in February. A new 'executive' side for the Youth Council is also being developed following the adoption of the Terms of Reference for the group.

The Youth Council is now writing to the new Secretary of State for Education, following the cabinet reshuffle, to keep their Curriculum for Life campaign on track. This will be the third Secretary of State for Education that the Youth Council has approached since taking on the campaign. Daria is currently redrafting the letter for this. 'Life at Beauchamp' sessions at Beauchamp College have already started to include aspects of Curriculum for Life items, with Year 13's getting advice around finances etc.

A survey for young people is also being rolled out on the Youth Council's website (www.owyc.co.uk). This will further allow for the opinions of young people in the Borough to provide guidance for the Youth Council's priorities in the coming year.

A Youth Council sub-group is currently in the early stages of planning a Hate Crime Awareness event for young people, with their first meeting having taken place on Tuesday, 23 January. The event, as well as serving a specific purpose around raising awareness of Hate Crime, will be a recruitment opportunity for the Youth Council. Members suggested that sponsorship of the event may be a route worth exploring.

The Youth Council will also be undertaking some basic, accredited first aid training in the near future which Mark is currently sourcing. The Youth Council believe that first aid is a life skill that everyone should have. Members have suggested charging non-Youth Council members to attend the training.

26. LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EARLY HELP BUDGET REVIEW

The forum received a brief overview of the changes to the Early Help service proposed by Leicestershire County Council, as well as having sight of physical copies of the consultation document prepared by the County Council itself. The consultation runs until 22 April 2018.

The Youth Council have received copies of all of the information regarding the proposals released by Leicestershire County Council, and are not comfortable with suggested changes to the Early Help service. The Youth Council will be drafting a formal letter to the County Council highlighting their concerns regarding the proposals.

The main impact to the Borough will be the loss of the SureStart Children's Centre in South Wigston, with only the Wigston centre being retained by the County Council. This is disappointing as County Councillors for the Borough were not immediately informed of this possibility, nor included in any initial consultation, even though South Wigston is

recognised as one of the most deprived areas in the Borough. It would also appear, although speculative, that only a minimal level of consultation and publicising regarding the proposals has taken place at a local level.

A query was raised as to if the Council could formally write to the County Council regarding the proposals, and form a corporate response. In support of this Mark is currently awaiting details regarding the number of families that are currently utilising the centre in South Wigston.

ACTION: MS to discuss with Democratic Services the appropriateness of the Council response, and the process to do so.

Full consultation details can be found at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/earlyhelp>.

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mark reminded the Forum that nominations are now open for the Young Citizen of the Year award, closing on 20 April 2018.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.37 PM



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Chair
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Wednesday, 28 March 2018
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