

BRECKLAND YOUTH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2009 at 4.30 p.m.

Present

Jordan Bailey
Billy Brown
Chloe Brown
Lisa Clayton
Luke Dawson
Sally Eastwood
Stuart Green

Amy Head
Nathan Jolly
Lauren Rowland
Jordan Sacharczuk
Candice Sears
Sean Ward
James Whitehead
Alistair Wright

Also Present

Councillors Diana Irving, Mark Kiddle-Morris and John Labouchere.

In attendance

Caroline Cox – Youth Engagement Officer
Sheila Cresswell – Acting Secretary
Shendy Farman – Marketing and Publications Officer
Mike Onassis – Pride Coordinator
Kevin Taylor – Head of ICT
Rob Walker – Sustainable Communities Manager

Action

- 1.0 Introduction and Apologies (Agenda Item 1)
- 1.1 As there was a tight timetable and some members of the Youth Council had not yet arrived, Caroline Cox opened the meeting. She welcomed everyone and then announced that the Agenda items on the Constitution and the formal appointment of positions would be dealt with at the end of the meeting. In the mean time, she asked Members to bear this in mind and to give some consideration about who they would like to represent them.
- 1.2 John Labouchere (Chairman of the Council) expressed his delight at the formation of the Youth Council. He said that this was an exciting project and hoped that it would grow and flourish over the years, helping to make Breckland an even better place to live in. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting, including Councillor Diana Irving for her support. He hoped that the various school Councils would grow alongside the Youth Council, and wished them every success for the future.
- 1.3 Apologies for absence were received from Cat Lang.

2.0 Communication Survey (Agenda Item 4)

- 2.1 Shendy Farman gave a short presentation about a forthcoming survey on communication with young people. This aimed to find the best method of establishing and maintaining communication links between the youth of Norfolk and their Youth Council representatives, in order to give them the opportunity to air their views about a wide range of subjects. She handed out a set of suggested questions, explaining that the idea was to produce an electronic survey which could be sent to various schools, clubs and other youth associations.
- 2.2 Members of the Youth Council felt that this was a good idea and welcomed the idea of a questionnaire and the two-way communication that this would offer.
- 2.3 Shendy added that the questions themselves would need to be carefully designed and set in context. She would welcome any suggestions once Youth Council Members had had a chance to consider the list she had given them.
- 2.4 She also said that there would be a reward offered for participation in the questionnaire, and it was generally agreed that this would be a good incentive

All to note

3.0 Update for Norfolk Leadership Forum (Agenda Item 5)

- 3.1 Kevin Taylor spoke about a project aimed at bringing together approximately 200 senior managers across Norfolk to focus on a range of community improvement projects.
- 3.2 He was keen to have a youth perspective feed in to this project, and asked Youth Council members to think about how best they could do so. A key starting point was to think about how to get groups of people who did not normally talk to one another actually communicating in a positive way. For example, it would be a good idea to get pensioners and younger people working together on some local projects. This would then help to make their local area a better place to live in, as well as help everyone to feel more positive about their community.
- 3.3 One way to brainstorm ideas was to use the *Rich Picture* method, whereby a blank piece of A3 paper was used to illustrate key impressions and views. For this project, he was looking for ideas about:
- how Youth Council Members saw their current role in the community;
 - how Members would like to see their roles develop, so that they could have more influence on what was going on; and
 - what Members think could – and should – be done to help make improvements in their local community.

- 3.4 “Local community” could mean the area where individual members lived; their schools, or perhaps the wider county. He was looking for ideas about what young people thought could be done to improve some of the problems, and how some of these ideas could be put into action. What sort of communication or support might be needed? What sort of projects could be set up?
- 3.5 The idea was to fill an A3 sheet of paper with basic images in order to give a general impression. There was no need for them to be beautifully or accurately drawn. ‘Stick-men’ were good! He held up some examples of Rich Pictures, which used lots of colour to help get their messages across. Arrows, lines, stair drawings, balloons, flags, banners and other symbols, could all be used to help express how things are, how they could be, and to illustrate how young people believed some of the desired, or necessary, changes could be made. The images could also show the resources, including people or contacts, which might be needed in order to try to achieve some of those changes.
- 3.6 Kevin spoke about the power that young people can sometimes have if they work positively together. He mentioned an Under-18 disco in Norwich which had been threatened with closure. Apparently a group of young people had got together on Facebook and had managed to have the decision turned around.
- 3.7 He said that he would appreciate it if members could give this some thought and have some Rich Pictures ready for the next meeting. There could then be some useful discussion about the various problems and ideas which had come to the surface.

All to note

4.0 Pride Funding (Agenda Item 6)

- 4.1 Mike Onassis gave a short introduction about the Pride in Breckland Campaign. He explained that the aim was to get people throughout the district to focus on positive achievements and projects which would make them feel proud about their local communities. The forthcoming “Pride in Breckland Awards” were part of the overall Pride in Breckland scheme. They had just started this year and the idea was that this would be an annual acknowledgement of individuals and groups who had worked hard to make a positive difference in their local communities.
- 4.2 Pride funding was being used to help deal with a range of positive projects, which relied on the help and support of local volunteers, as well as some land owners, local businesses, and fire/police/other specialist agency workers. He gave some examples, including:
- Clearance and monitoring of fly tipping in Swaffham.
 - Community Rangers working with the fire service to

spread the word about the importance of smoke detectors etc. (He said he was hopeful that later this year there may be some Youth Rangers too.)

- Bird boxes – materials were provided so that some local people could make boxes and take them home with them.
- Community clear-up projects, such as removing litter and graffiti etc, as well as planting trees and bulbs.

4.3 In response to a question, he said that the Pride in Breckland project had been running since last year. It was planned to run for about three years but, if it continued to be a success, it was likely to continue for much longer.

4.4 He then spoke about a new project, which was to be launched in April, called 'Breckland Blitz'. This aimed to encourage and motivate as many people as possible to help with community clear-ups in their villages, schools, towns etc. The idea was to do something of a 'Spring Clean' across the district by taking some simple, but not too expensive, steps to help people feel good and to achieve some positive improvements to local environments.

4.5 Other activities the Council was planning:

- various St George's Day activities (23 April);
- participation in National Volunteer Week (1-7 June);
- the launch of Youth Rangers in September;
- the planting of trees and bulbs in the autumn.

4.6 He said that part of the Council's overall Pride in Breckland budget would be handed to the Youth Council for distribution in its own name. He said he would welcome ideas at the next meeting about how best to distribute the £1,000 fairly across the district.

4.7 Rob Walker explained that if this project worked well, then further funding might be made available in the future. He asked the Youth Council to nominate three members for each of the key towns. These Members should then get together to do some research on:

All to note

- the sort of projects they feel would be worthwhile for their community;
- who they could get involved;
- the costs involved;
- any equipment they might need to achieve their goals, and where this might come from.

4.8 The challenge for the Youth Council was to think about the sort of projects that they would like to get under way with this funding.

4.9 Caroline Cox suggested that ideas could be emailed to Mike Onassis, who would then be able to help by offering

All to note

advice and information. Rob Walker added that he and his colleagues had many contacts with the police, fire service, town councils etc, and Members might like to draw upon them for more specialist help, information or support.

- 4.10 It was agreed that Mike Onassis should be invited to attend the next meeting to hear the ideas proposed from each town. Plans could then be made and funds released. **Mike Onassis**

5.0 Breckland Youth Council Logo (Agenda Item 7)

- 5.1 Shendy Farman handed out a sheet showing some sample logos. She said that the Youth Council was an exciting project and it would be important to have its own unique and recognisable logo. She suggested that members might like to do some research to get some ideas e.g. colours, typeface etc.

- 5.2 She reminded everyone that there were a few things to bear in mind when designing a logo:

- Name : Did members want to use “Breckland Youth Council” or keep it to “BYC”, or some other form? Or perhaps it could just be a stand-alone image?
- Easy to read : Sometimes the logo would need to be dramatically reduced in size. So the format needed to remain fairly simple but not too small.
- Variety of Publications : The logo would appear on all Breckland Youth Council stationery, on emails and on the website. It would also appear on all other forms of publicity (e.g. in *Breckland Voice*, on stickers and posters etc).
- Message/Image : Ideally the logo should reflect the nature of the Breckland Youth Council – it should be vibrant and appeal to the age group involved.

- 5.3 She asked for ideas to be sent to her and she would then compile them and bring them to the next meeting for consideration. Ideally suggestions would be produced on Publisher or in *jpg* format. But if this wasn't possible an A4 drawing, or even a description in words, would be accepted. She said there was no need to base the colours on the Breckland corporate colour scheme – in fact it would be good to go with a fresh, dynamic mix.

- 5.4 It was agreed that ideas should be emailed to Shendy or Caroline a week before the next meeting, so that they could be compiled into the right format and then voted upon. **All to Note**

6.0 Page in Voice (Agenda Item 8)

- 6.1 Shendy explained that *Breckland Voice* was published six times a year and reached every household in Breckland (a total of about 53,000 households). She said that, as the

coordinator of this publication, she would be happy to devote a page in every edition to the BYC. She said that there would be room for about three articles of approximately 250 words, together with some images. The latter would need to be of high resolution (300 dpi), and in jpg form to ensure that they were printable.

- 6.2 There were strict publication deadlines and Caroline Cox would pass a copy of these to the BYC. **Caroline Cox**
- 6.3 Shendy asked Youth Council members to start thinking about the kind of articles they would like to write, with a view to first publication in the May or July issues. **All to note**
- 6.4 There was some discussion about how many young people actually read – or were aware of – *Breckland Voice*. If, as was suspected, not many saw it, then perhaps a survey could be done to find out why. If it was because there was nothing inside which was relevant for younger people, then the challenge would be to make it interesting and get young people to read and contribute to it.
- 6.5 It was also agreed that this was another good opportunity to get the message out about the existence and purpose of the Youth Council. Other ideas to spread awareness included having twenty copies delivered to each school; a mention at School assemblies; and an invitation for young people to be in touch with their Youth Council members.
- 6.6 It was felt that once there was more awareness about the Youth Council page, this would be an excellent publicity springboard.
- 6.7 There was a suggestion that perhaps the Youth Council could design a cover for one edition and several Members volunteered to work with Shendy on this project.
- 7.0 Thetford Street Party (Agenda Item 9)
- 7.1 As Cat Lang was absent, it was agreed that this item should be taken forward to the next meeting for discussion. **New Secretary to note**
- 8.0 Team-Building Day at Dereham Leisure Centre (Agenda Item 10)
- 8.1 Caroline Cox reminded everyone about the importance of returning their signed consent forms and asked for any outstanding ones to be sent to her as soon as possible. **All to note**
- 8.2 She said that taxis would collect everyone from their home addresses at 8.30 a.m. and would take them to the Dereham Leisure Centre.
- 8.3 The idea was to have an informal meeting at the start of the day, covering some of the ideas raised at their very first meeting. There would be lunch and a bowling competition. Basically, it would be a day of fun to enable everyone to get to know one another and to start to feel like a real team.

9.0 Dates for Diaries (Agenda Item 11)

9.1 Caroline handed out diaries to everyone, saying that she had already written in the date of the next Youth Council meeting (16 April). She explained that the meetings would be held once a month, with the venue covering each of the main towns in the district.

9.2 There was some discussion about the days which meetings should be held on. In the end a vote was taken and it was agreed that meeting days should also be flexible. They would therefore vary between Mondays and Thursdays.

10.0 Any Other Business (Agenda Item 12)

10.1 BYC Podcasts

10.1.1 Caroline Cox explained that *Kiss FM* were keen to promote the Breckland Youth Council and to support Youth Activity Week. They would be sending a representative in May to meet with Members. The idea was that one Member from each area would have the chance to make a Podcast and answer some questions.

10.1.2 Caroline suggested that everyone should think about which Members would best represent their local areas in this project and be happy to make a Podcast and to answer some questions. Anyone who was interested should get in touch with her and then, if there was more than one volunteer per area, this could be discussed at the next meeting.

All to note

10.1.3 She added that the Podcasts could also appear on the school websites, as well as on the main Council one, so this was another way to get some good publicity.

10.2 Youth Engagement: A Rural Approach

10.2.1 Caroline said that the Youth Council Conference on 27 May was going to be an excellent opportunity for Breckland Youth Council to tell the rest of the country what they stood for and what they were hoping to achieve. She would welcome as many volunteers as possible to join her, either on stage or to participate behind the scenes, to help ensure that the day would be a success.

10.2.2 Anyone who was interested in participating should let her know, making clear the level of participation they were interested in. Everyone would be welcome.

All to note

10.3 Are you OK? (Event at Norwich Forum)

10.3.1 Caroline handed out a note about an event which was taking place on 15 April at the Forum in Norwich. This was to be run by Victim Support and various agencies which worked with young people, (dealing with anti-social behaviour, crime and bullying etc.), would be present. The Council would have a Stand and the idea would be to learn about what others were doing in this field, as well as to share information.

10.3.2 As this was going to be an excellent opportunity to get some more experience and to make some contacts, Caroline asked if anyone would like to volunteer to help run the Stand and talk to other young people.

10.3.3 The date fell in the Easter holidays and Caroline confirmed that there would be transport to and from Norwich.

10.3.4 Once again she asked for anyone interested to get in touch with her. Ideally she was hoping for three or four volunteers.

All to note

10.4 Toftwood Street Brief : 2 April

10.4.1 Caroline explained that this was an ongoing project where the Council was trying to communicate with young people who were involved in anti-social behaviour. The idea was to listen to their side of the story and to find out if there was anything that the Council could reasonably do to deter young people from getting involved in the first place.

10.4.2 Dereham members of the Youth Council might be able to help with this by perhaps speaking to their peers and listening to their side of things. This could be an excellent opportunity for people to promote themselves as Youth Councillors.

10.4.3 Anyone who thought they might like to learn more about this area should get in touch with Caroline. The Street Brief was due to start at 4.00 p.m. and anyone interested in attending could be collected from their school and taken home afterwards.

All to note

10.5 Attleborough Skate Park

10.5.1 This was a similar ongoing project which hoped to open lines of communication with young people involved in anti-social behaviour. A date for the next meeting was yet to be confirmed. Again, Caroline asked for any volunteers to get in touch with her. Transport would be provided.

All to note

10.6 Personal Websites

10.6.1 It was confirmed that Members did not have their own websites, although most had Facebook pages.

10.7 Town and Parish Forum (Dereham)

10.7.1 Members were asked to wish Stuart Green the best of luck as he would be giving a presentation about the Breckland Youth Council to the Town and Parish Forum on 19 March. This was going to be an important publicity opportunity for BYC.

10.8 General Comments

10.8.1 Members were asked for some feedback about their first meeting. Caroline explained that this was obviously a new group and it was understandable that some might have felt a little nervous. It had probably been a little more formal than had been expected too. However the biggest step had now been taken, and from now on it was up to the group to drive the Agenda forward. A Chairman was about to be elected and he or she would need the help and support of the whole group, as well as their immediate committee team, to drive things forward and make decisions.

10.8.2 Caroline said that the very first meeting had been something of a scene-setter, with various speakers explaining some background about their areas of work and where the Youth Council could participate. From now on, the Youth Council itself would be creating its own Agendas and setting its own goals and challenges.

10.8.3 It was agreed that it would be helpful for various Council officers to be invited to attend future Youth Council meetings, as part of an exchange of ideas and to offer support and guidance where needed.

10.8.4 It was also agreed that Mike Onassis would be asked to participate on a regular basis to ensure ongoing discussion about *Pride* projects, especially future ones.

**Mike
Onassis**

10.8.5 Rob Walker added that if the Youth Council wanted to invite representatives from other local organisations, or even national ones, then they would be able to do so – and he reminded the group that the Council had many useful contacts. For example, he said that members from the local police force were keen to meet with the Youth Council and he and his colleagues could certainly make arrangements if this was required. Members agreed that this would be welcome at some point.

11.0 Breckland Youth Council Constitution and Appointment of Positions (Agenda Items 2 and 3)

11.1 With the full group now present, Caroline Cox referred members to the back page of their Constitution. She read out the detailed 'person specifications' for the Committee positions to be filled, so that everyone was aware of the strengths and abilities needed in each case.

11.2 Rob Walker took the group through the formal voting process, which was handled by Caroline. Rob explained that where there were several nominations for one post, nominees should be asked to give a brief promotional speech, putting forward their case, before voting actually took place. In the event that a vote ended in a tie, then the newly elected Chairman would have the casting vote.

11.3 As a result of the voting, it was agreed that the following appointments should be made:

Chairman : Sean Ward
Vice-Chairman : Amy Head
Secretary : Jordan Sacharczuk
Treasurer: Sally Eastwood
Public Relations Officer: Billy Brown

12.0 Next Meeting

12.1 Caroline confirmed that the next meeting would be on Thursday, 16 April from 9.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. at the Dereham Leisure Centre and Strikes. Transport arrangements would be confirmed nearer the time.

12.2 An Agenda would be circulated in advance and it would include the Constitution, which would need to be finalised and formally agreed.

**Jordan
Sacharczuk**

Meeting ended : 6.30 p.m..

Chairman

Contact details for Caroline Cox:

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