

ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL
Abingdon Integrated Youth Support Project meeting
11am, 28 March 2022

Present:

Cllr Samantha Bowring	Abingdon Town Council
Cllr Gabby Barody	Abingdon Town Council
Rita Atkinson	Damascus Youth Project
Roxy Elford	Damascus Youth Project
Holly Freeland	The Abingdon Bridge
Garry Hibbins	The Abingdon Bridge

Rita Atkinson chaired the meeting.

NOTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Andrew Coveney has sent his apologies. Apologies for lateness from Cllr Samantha Bowring.

2. Update on progress with the youth support project

Current situation:

- Teams out on streets covering four days a week
- Both doing counselling work
- Working with the police on some serious matters which have arisen as a result of street work
- Working with people not in education, employment and training (NEETS)
- Gazebo used to give young people a safe place to speak to the two groups
- 'Youth Voices' group meets on Monday evenings.

There has been much progress on phase one of the project, which provides a good foundation for phase two.

Phase one: engaging with those who are most dispossessed and challenging, and to ensure that the voices of young people are heard. Much has been learned about how young people can engage with decision makers and the team has established that setting up a forum for all young people will not work. They are therefore rethinking how to carry on in year two. There will not necessarily be an organised youth council.

Youth voice has created a survey with 115 responses, to be shared with the town council. The passion of this group is LGBTQ issues but there are many different experiences.

Cllr Bowring joined the meeting at 11.24am

The town council welcomed the work of the project members and would like to support the work as much as possible.

Town councillors were asked to consider how they could be contacted by young people. They could attend the gazebo but this would need to be with a youth worker. The project team are keen to get young people involved in more formal structures of engagement.

Less involved young people are being engaged with but support needs to be available to all young people. Different topics will be of interest to different young people. 'Middle' young people are not being engaged. Different interests will attract different young people.

Next year

Issues to consider include:

- Youth Voice working with the town council and 'how we listen'.
- Projects Youth Voice could have some input on
- Wider Youth Services Forum
- Updates from other organisations
- Platinum Jubilee
- Taking part in the parish meeting

3. Planning for future meetings

Outcomes from 2021/22 with case studies
Headline proposal for 2022/23

4. Issues to address

Widening participation
Increasing need

- There is concern that there will be increasing need as a result of the pandemic and rises in the cost of living. This is being seen by the two groups and they are well placed to address this growing need.
- The town council could provide information on services available, such as food banks and fuel advice. Information could be provided on the website and on paper. The town council could consider working with the youth project on this.

Integrated working with all agencies

- The youth project is working with other agencies and this may usefully be reviewed at a future meeting. **To go on a future agenda. AC**
- Cllr Barody would work with the family solutions centre to engage it with the youth project.

Cass Report

- The youth project is hoping to run an LGBTQ group for young people.
- An LGBTQ Picnic is planned for Monday 11 April 2022, location to be confirmed.

Communications

- The youth project was invited to coordinate with the town council on communications and to use the town council online media channels.
- The youth project was invited to attend and contribute to the parish meeting. Young people could make a video on the survey. **AC would send the link for the parish meeting to the youth project representatives.**

5. Items for future meetings

Responding to growing need and future resourcing

Long term partnership agreement:

- Need to identify areas of need and priority and what the town council can offer
- Reporting back to the town council on work done
- Youth project to advise on whether funding from the town council is satisfactory
- A service level agreement may be needed

Review of the original proposal for a youth council.

6. **Date of next meeting**

Friday 20 May 12.30pm. To consider:

- the programme for the year
- Communication
- Working with other groups and agencies