

YOUTH COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 27 APRIL 2009,
IN FORESTVIEW, BELFAST.

1.00 PRESENT

Chairperson Ms M Young

Members Mr D Capper Mr J Currie
Mr G Doran Ms P Haren
Mr B McKee

Staff Mr D Guilfoyle Ms S Rader
Ms K Witherspoon

2.00 APOLOGIES

2.01 Apologies were received from B Faulkner, A-M McClure, P Murphy and D Spence.

3.00 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (12.03.09)

4.01 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 March 2009 were approved and signed.

4.00 MATTERS ARISING

4.01 Min 4.02: "Right Here" Project Update. The Chief Executive reminded Council of the scope of this project and provided an update report on the progress of the bid submitted by the consortium of NI agencies comprising YCNI, YouthAction, HPA and Action Mental Health. A second stage bid had now been submitted, and the consortium would be notified of the outcome around mid-May 2009. A further update would be provided at the June meeting of Council.

4.02 Min 7.04: Appeals Process Update. The Chief Executive reported on the outcome of the Appeals process in relation to Infrastructure Support Funding. Appeals lodged by Play Resource Warehouse, Share, Headliners, Belfast Community Circus School, and Young at Art were considered by the Appeals Panel. In all cases, the original decision of the Grants Panel was upheld.

It was noted that the Infrastructure Support and Thematic Infrastructure Support grants awarded under the new funding policy had been uploaded onto the Council's website.

4.03 Min 10.01: ESA Update.

(a) Following discussion at the March meeting, a revised version of the Council's response to the Proposals for the Director Level Structure had been submitted to the ESA Implementation Team. A copy of the submission was available on the Council's website.

(b) The Chief Executive reported that the ESAIT would commence a Consultation on the ESA 3rd Tier Structures in late May/early June 2009. Council would have the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

(c) It was noted that the post of ESA Chairperson had recently been advertised.

ACTION

D Guilfoyle

ALL

D Guilfoyle

G Doran declared an interest in the following item and did not participate in the discussion.

4.04 Min 10.05: Recruitment, Redeployment and Voluntary Severance (RRVS) Strategy. A copy of the Council's revised submission was tabled for information. The Chief Executive reported that it was the intention of ESAIT to circulate 'Expression of Interest in Voluntary Severance' letters/forms early in May. These would be issued, in the first instance, to the postholders identified at 1st, 2nd and 3rd Tier in the education sector RPA-affected organisations.

5.00 CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.01 YCNI Early Retirement of Employment Scheme. Background information was provided on the introduction of this scheme. Adoption of the Scheme was proposed by D Capper, seconded by P Haren, and agreed by Council.

5.02 The Chairperson reported on a recent meeting with the Chairperson and Director of Belfast Community Circus School.

5.03 The Chairperson reported that a meeting was scheduled for 28 April, with representatives of YouthNet to discuss issues related to the Council's funding policy.

5.04 Youth Work Awards 2009. It was reported that around 400 people were expected to attend the Awards Ceremony, on 6 May 2009, in the Ramada Hotel. The excellent response in terms of entries for the 2009 Award Categories was noted. In judging the Outstanding Achievement Category, the Chairperson commented on the range of very positive projects taking place across Northern Ireland, involving young people, youth workers and volunteers.

5.05 EU/International Issues. It was reported that, following a written submission, YCNI representatives had been invited to give an input to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. The delegation, comprising D Guilfoyle/B Sweeney (YCNI), S Hughes (Youth Worker) and C Thompson (Young Person), gave an input to the Committee on Wednesday 22 April 2009. The presentation provided an opportunity to raise the profile of international work, the work of the youth service in this area, and to identify the benefits, barriers and necessities associated with incorporating a cross-cutting international dimension into the non-formal education sector. A copy of the submission is available on the website. The Hansard Report on the Committee session would be available shortly on the NI Assembly website.

6.00 FINANCE

6.01 YCNI Income/Expenditure profile for 2009/10. The Income/Expenditure profile for the new financial year was presented for consideration. Overall, the budget figure had increased by £71,000, and it was proposed to earmark this for Programme Support Funding [see Item 7.00 below]. Details were provided on the budget headings which had been uplifted or reduced. It was reported that confirmation of the figures in relation to the Priorities for Youth funding for YouthNet and the Youth Forum was awaited from the Department. As part of the Department's review of Community Relations, it was noted that CRYSSS funding would run to the end of August 2009 only, hence the significantly reduced budget heading against this. Approval of the YCNI Budget for 2009/10 was proposed by B McKee, seconded by P Haren, and agreed by Council.

M Young
D Guilfoyle

7.00 RVYO FUNDING
Programme Support Funding 2009/10 Proposals

7.01 At its March 2009 meeting Council had agreed in principle to the introduction of three sub-strands (Strategic, Short-Term and Developmental) under Programme Support Funding. A paper was presented for consideration and approval, providing further detailed proposals under five main themes. A proposal to allocate the Council's budget uplift (£71,000) to the CR/EDI theme was highlighted. This would compensate for the loss of CRYSSS funding after August 2009.

7.02 A detailed discussion ensued on the proposals presented, and the following points were noted:

- Clarification was sought on the process/evidence base for selection of the themes identified, and the associated monetary allocations, and the
- What outputs/outcomes were envisaged against each of the themes?
- What engagement with the field and/or research was carried out to identify the needs of RVYOs?
- What links were made with the Priorities for Youth, as these might highlight alternative issues/themes, e.g. employability
- View was expressed that the themes needed to be founded on the basis of hard evidence.

7.03 Given the concerns raised, it was agreed to defer further discussion until the June meeting of Council.

In the interim, staff would undertake further research and give consideration to the appropriateness of the themes presented and/or identify other emerging issues. Staff would also discuss with the Department issues identified in the Priorities for Youth consultation. The work of the outreach workers (funded through YouthNet) would also be revisited to identify trends/issues. A revised paper would be prepared for consideration.

D Guilfoyle
K W/spoon

8.00 OPERATIONAL PLANS

Review of 2008-09 Operational Plan

8.01 Members reviewed the Operational Plan report presented for the year 2008/09. In terms of performance monitoring, it was noted that there had been full achievement or significant progress against 35 of the 39 priorities set.

Operational Plan 2009-10

8.02 The Chief Executive presented the draft Operational Plan for the year 2009–2010 for approval. Members reviewed the strategic priorities against each of the Core Aims, and the proposed operational objectives for the year. It was noted that the establishment of ESA on 1st January 2010 might impact on the objectives set.

8.03 The following were highlighted as being of significant importance:

3.1.1 YCNIs membership (D Guilfoyle) of the OFMDFM Play and Leisure Policy Implementation Group, which would ensure that the role of youth work was fully recognised in the implementation plan.

- 3.3.1 Submission to ESAIT of a more refined model for youth work structures within the Education and Skills Authority.
- 3.6.2 The staging of a major conference to maximise the legacy of YCNIs work with key stakeholders.
- 4.1.2 Continuing to promote and develop the contribution of youth work to active citizenship and peace-building through strategic input and operational activities in relation to Community Relations, EDI/Equality; and YCNIs contribution to the YESIP Peace III initiative.
- C.A.5 Continuing to promote and develop quality youth work through strategic input and operational activities in the areas of Training/Endorsement; European/International; North/South. It was noted that the restructuring within the Department would have a positive impact on north/south work.
- C.A.6 The increased emphasis on audit/verification/monitoring.
- 8.04 Two amendments to the draft document were recorded:
 - (i) Objective 6.6.1 Establishment of SLAs with all Infrastructure Funded RVYOs was amended to June 2009;
 - (ii) Objective 6.6.2 amended to read: "Have carried out programme monitoring visits and ensured appropriate monitoring forms/reports are returned by all funded RVYOs by stated deadlines".

8.05 A discussion ensued in relation to the need to build in "space" for Council and its staff to react to a very fluid situation in terms of, for example, the ESA structures, the Priorities for Youth, the Network for Youth. Given its "position" and location, both within the education sector and with the Assembly, other departments and agencies etc, Council could assist the youth work field by keeping it informed, soliciting input and feedback from the sector, and representing its views and interests with relevant groups/individuals and at the appropriate meetings.

Also key was the role of the Youth Service Sectoral Partners Group in influencing the position of the sector under ESA.

On a related point, there was a general view that Council needed to re-engage with the RVYOs on issues other than funding.

There was discussion that the conference referred to at Objective 3.6.2 should be used as an opportunity for a "provocative", pro-active, forward looking event, rather than solely a celebration of past achievement. The possibility of this being a collaborative event would be investigated.

It was noted that there might also be scope to organise a celebratory event to highlight achievements and good practice.

Members requested that notification of possible dates for both events be circulated as soon as possible. Proposals for the programmes, format, issues and themes would be presented for consideration at the June meeting of Council.

8.06 Council approved the Operational Plan for 2009-2010.

D Guilfoyle

9.00 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.01 The next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 25 June 2009, 5.30 pm in Forestview.

9.02 Dates of future meeting were agreed:

- Thursday 10 September 2009
- Monday 26 October 2009
- Thursday 14 December 2009.

ACTION
ALL
ALL

Signed

Date