

YOUTH COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 13 MAY 2010, IN FORESTVIEW, BELFAST.

1.00 PRESENT

Chairperson	Ms M Young	
Members	Mr D Capper Ms A-M McClure	Mr J Currie
Staff	Mr D Guilfoyle Ms S Rader	Mr J McCormick Ms K Witherspoon

2.00 APOLOGIES

2.01 Apologies were received from B Faulkner, G Doran, and P Murphy.

3.00 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (15.04.10)

3.01 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 15 April 2010 were approved and signed.

4.00 MATTERS ARISING

4.01 Min 6.00: YouthNet TSN/Child Protection Funding Update. Confirmation had been received from the Department that funding would be made available in the Council's budget 2010/11 to cover the TSN and Child Protection work undertaken by YouthNet.

4.02 Min 7.00: Voluntary Severance/Interim Arrangements Update. The Chief Executive confirmed that the business case had been prepared for submission to ESAIT. Subject to ESAIT approving the business case, it would then be submitted to the Department for its approval. In terms of the timeline, it was hoped that a release date of 23 July 2010 might be achieved.

4.03 Min 8.00: ESA Convergence Delivery Plan. Members noted the correspondence received from the Permanent Secretary [letter dated 27.04.10], reiterating the input at, and actions arising from, his meetings with Council, and with other education sector bodies. Members would be kept informed of developments in relation to the CDP and the implications for YCNI.

5.00 CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.01 The Chairperson briefed Council on the Governance and Accountability Training seminar (4th or 10th June), organised by DE, for Members and Chief Executive's of its NDPBs. As a follow up, the Chief Executive was asked to lead a discussion, at the Council meeting in June, on the implications for YCNI of topics covered and/or specific issues identified at the seminar.

5.02 It was reported that the Council's Accountability Review Meeting, with DE officials, was scheduled for 24 June 2010.

5.03 The Chairperson reported that she would be attending the Girls' Brigade Queen's Award Ceremony on 14 May 2010.

ACTION

D Guilfoyle

D Guilfoyle

D Guilfoyle

M Young
D Guilfoyle

6.00 YCNI BUDGET 2010/11

6.01 The revised Income/Expenditure Profile for 2010/11 was presented for approval.

6.02 The Chief Executive reported that the budget showed an uplift, in the region of £90,000 over the previous year. This uplift had been provisionally allocated to the Programme Funding budget line. However, the newly elected government’s funding arrangements for Northern Ireland, when confirmed, could necessitate Council having to make decisions on budget cuts in-year.

6.03 The Chief Executive proposed that the total budget allocated for Infrastructure Support Funding and Thematic Infrastructure Support Funding be maintained at 2009/10 levels. He also proposed that the £90,000 uplift be assigned to Programme Funding. Members concurred with both these proposals.

6.04 Proposed by A-M McClure, and seconded by D Capper, Council approved the revised 2010/11 Budget presented.

7.00 YCNI OPERATIONAL PLAN 2010/11

7.01 The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive presented a draft Operational Plan, as prepared by staff. In response to a query on the continuing relevance of the Strategic Priorities (first agreed in 2004), it was reported that the Corporate Team had reviewed these, and some had been revised or adjusted to reflect the current environment.

7.02 During the presentation and discussion, specific priorities, objectives and targets were explained, and the following amendments were made:

D Guilfoyle

Objective 3.2.1	Promote <i>the development of</i> an appropriate model
Objective 3.3.1	Promote <i>the development of</i> an appropriate model
Objective 5.1.1	Include M McAlinden/N Rea in Lead Staff Column

7.03 In response to a query on how realistic it would be to produce the models referred to above, the Chief Executive indicated that some preliminary work had been undertaken by the YSSPG, and that preliminary discussions with Dr C Mangan, the ESA Director (Designate) Children and Young People’s Services were scheduled for late May. An update would be provided at the June meeting.

D Guilfoyle

7.04 On a related matter, D Capper/J McCormick reported that a YWTB Symposium was planned for 20 May, to consider the future of the Youth Work Training Board in light of the changing environment. Proposals would be brought forward to Council, at its September meeting, for consideration. It was also reported that the Department would be conducting an Accountability Review Meeting with NSETS.

D Capper
JMcCormick

7.05 It was recognised that the objectives included in the Plan reflected a combination of Council’s commitment to (i) identify and engage in some longer-term strategic initiatives aimed at protecting the position of the sector; (ii) continue to deliver on YCNI’s statutory functions; and (iii) engage in ESA convergence delivery plan arrangements.

ACTION

7.06 In terms of viability, the Chief Executive indicated that the Plan was achievable with a blend of YCNIs own staff, working in partnership with others, and buying-in support for specific tasks, as required. The Chief Executive would continue to keep this under review, particularly in terms of the voluntary severance referred to at 4.02 above, and pending maternity leave arrangements for N Rea.

D Guilfoyle

7.07 Council approved the Operational Plan 2010/11. Quarterly updates would be presented to Council.

D Guilfoyle

8.00 RVYO GRANTS

8.01 The Chief Executive briefed members on the financial position of a YCNI-funded RVYO. He outlined the background to this, and reported that the organisation had ceased trading on 5 May 2010. A detailed report would be presented to Council at its meeting on 24 June 2010.

D Guilfoyle
K W'spoon

In the interim, Council staff were currently in discussion with the other Consortium members involved in the Disability Hub, in order to determine the future viability of this YCNI-funded strategic initiative. [See also Minute 8.03 below].

D Guilfoyle
N Rea

Members expressed their concerns about the situation with this organisation, particularly in relation to governance, accountability and financial control arrangements. Consideration should be given to the "lessons" for Council arising from this, i.e. of safeguarding Council resources (public funding) in the future, for example in terms of the verification and monitoring controls in place and whether these would need to be strengthened.

It was agreed that it would be helpful if, in addition to detailing the situation (including a timeline of events/triggers) in the particular organisation referred to, the report presented to Council in June was expanded to:

D Guilfoyle

- Identify what Council could do to protect its own resources in the future, linking this to Priority 6.5 (Promote the development and adoption of best practice in financial controls within RVYOs) in the Council's Operational Plan;
- Highlight governance and accountability issues;
- Identify practical steps/support/help for other organisations facing a similar situation.

8.02 NI Youth Forum Funding 2010/11. A interim proposal that the YCNI funding (40%) of the NI Youth Forum Participation Co-ordinator post be extended to August 2010 was approved. A further paper in relation to NIYF funding for the entire 2010/11 financial year would be presented at the June meeting of Council.

K W'spoon

8.03 Total Grant Allocations 2010/11. Members were reminded that, at its meeting on 15 March 2010, Council had approved the 2010/11 grant offers (first quarter only), pending DE confirmation of the YCNI budget for the year.

The Grants Manager presented a revised Grant Allocations paper [attached], adjusted to take account of the situation discussed at 8.01 (above), for approval.

ACTION

Members discussed the paper presented, focusing particularly on the proposed grant figure, and associated conditions, for the Disability Hub. Subject to a satisfactory outcome of the discussions, and staff being reassured about the future viability of the project, Council approved the Grant Offer to this project up to the end of June 2010 (i.e. one-quarters grant) in the first instance.

K W'spoon
N Rea

Approval of the 2010/11 Grant Offers for Infrastructure Support Funding, Thematic Infrastructure Support Funding, Reduced Infrastructure Funding, Strategic Programme Funding and Capacity Building Funding was proposed by D Capper, seconded by J Currie, and agreed by Council.

8.04 DE Request. The Chief Executive briefed members on a request from the Department of Education, that YCNI would consider taking on the management of the following programmes, with a view to their eventual incorporation into a YCNI/ELB/ESA funding scheme:

- Millennium Volunteers
- Bytes
- Prince's Trust XL Programme.

Currently these programmes were funded directly by the Department but, as DE was becoming a more policy-focused department, this relationship was deemed to be unsustainable. The Department was also of the view that this process of rationalising funding would be consistent with the main purpose of the ESA Convergence Delivery Plan.

In considering the proposal presented, members sought further clarification on the implications for Council in taking on this function (for example in terms of the administration costs/financial and programme monitoring/staff capacity).

Following discussion, Council indicated that, whilst not opposed to the proposal, it would not be in a position to make a decision until members had the opportunity to give more in-depth consideration to the implications for YCNI, based on more detailed information. A follow-up paper would be prepared for discussion at the June meeting.

D Guilfoyle

8.05 Proposal for a CR Funding Stream. It was reported that whilst a final figure for the Department's CR Budget for 2010/11 had yet to be announced, it was envisaged that there would be a substantial reduction. YCNI staff had recently met with the CRC Chief Executive, to discuss mutual concerns regarding this situation, and it was agreed to continue a close dialogue to determine where co-ordinated action would be beneficial.

Given that CR is one of Council's stated functions, and with the availability of some resources under the Council's Programme Funding budget, approval was given for staff to develop detailed proposals for a CR funding stream.

D Guilfoyle
N Rea

8.06 Outline Ideas for Programme Funding. An analysis of the annual accounts returned by RVYOs confirmed the increasing pressures facing voluntary organisations in the current economic climate. Informal discussions with YouthNet would indicate that it had similar concerns and would welcome further dialogue with YCNI to develop an appropriate strategy to assist RVYOs in this area.

ACTION

Members were reminded that YCNI had previously provided some limited funding to RVYOs to give consideration to exploring the scope for collaboration/sharing of services. At that time RVYOs showed limited interest in this type of funding.

The Chief Executive briefed members on a new initiative, The Building Change Trust, through which it might be possible to access funding to support RVYOs in further examining the scope for collaboration/sharing of services/mergers. Members recognised a distinction between organisations collaborating to share services such as HR, payroll, publicity and marketing etc, and organisations collaborating to provide youth work services to children and young people.

Following discussion, members agreed that there would be merit in exploring the options/opportunities further. As a first step, it was agreed that the Chief Executive and the Grants Manager would meet with
(i) B Osborne, Chair of the Building Change Trust;
(ii) M Walls, DSD re the Modernisation Fund; and
(iii) YouthNet.

D Guilfoyle
K W'spoon

Approval was given for staff to develop a more detailed paper/proposal for consideration at the Council meeting in June.

D Guilfoyle

9.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.01 There were no items of AOB.

10.00 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

10.01 The next meeting of Council is scheduled for Thursday 24 June 2010, 5.30 pm in Forestview, Belfast.

ALL

10.02 Dates of future meetings (September – December 2010) to be agreed.

Signed Date