

YOUTH COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**MINUTES OF [INFORMAL] COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2010, IN FORESTVIEW, BELFAST.**

1.00 PRESENT

Chairperson	Ms M Young	
Members	Mr D Capper	Mr J Currie
Staff	Mr D Guilfoyle Ms S Rader	Mr J McCormick

2.00 APOLOGIES

2.01 Apologies were received from G Doran and A-M McClure.

[NOTE: As the meeting was not quorate, but there were two items of business [*Agenda - 6.1 and 6.5*] which required action/approval, the Chairperson decided to proceed with an informal meeting to take the views of those members present. Following the meeting, the Chairperson would contact the other members [B Faulkner, G Doran, A-M McClure, P Murphy] to request that they consider the papers relating to these items and advise her whether or not they were in agreement with the recommendations.

Minutes of 24 June 2010 Meeting would be formally presented for approval at The November meeting. The minutes of this meeting [23/09/10] would serve as a briefing for members on current issues, and any outstanding matters would be brought forward for consideration / ratification at the November meeting.]

3.00 MATTERS ARISING

3.01 Min 4.04: DE Request to Fund Additional Organisations Update. It was reported that the concerns expressed by Council, at its May and June meetings, had been raised with Departmental officials. The Chief Executive confirmed that he was reassured by the Department's response and was content that Council undertake the funding management of the Prince's Trust, Millennium Volunteers and Bytes programmes for the remainder of 2010/11, with a view to their eventual incorporation into a future YCNI/ELB/ESA youth service funding scheme. An update on progress would be presented at the November meeting of Council.

3.02 Min 8.04: NI Youth Forum – Transitional Director Post Update. Following Council approval at the June 2010 meeting, the NIYF had been advised that funding would be made available to extend the Transitional Director contract to 31 March 2011. Consistent with Council's approval, it was noted that the TD job description had been revised to reflect the current environment. The Forum had been informed that Council would review the situation in December 2010, three months in advance of the extended contract end date (31/03/11).

3.03 Min 9.02: RVYOs Facing Financial Instability Update. The Chief Executive briefed members on the current position in relation to:

- (i) Ocean Youth Trust – the insurance cover and some additional fund raising would cover the cost of a replacement vessel. The organisation remained financially viable.

ACTION

M Young

D Guilfoyle

D Guilfoyle
K W'spoon

K W'spoon

- (ii) FACE – No further update at present, as matters were currently proceeding through the legal processes.

There were no other organisations giving rise for concern at this time, but staff would continue to keep the situation under review through monitoring and verification visits.

4.00 CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

4.01 On behalf of members, the Chairperson congratulated staff member, Norma Rea on the birth of her son.

4.02 With the change in emphasis at Accountability Review meetings, as reported in June, "Governance and Accountability" would now be a standing agenda item for Council meetings.

4.03 Members were issued with an updated version of the Guide for Board Members of Public Bodies in NI – "On Board 4". Time would be set aside at the November Council meeting to update members on the principles of corporate governance, accountability and roles/responsibilities.

4.04 A meeting to brief the Permanent Secretary on the work of Council, and its contribution to DE priorities, would take place on 15 October 2010. Council would be represented by the Chairperson, B Faulkner, D Capper, the Chief Executive and relevant staff.

4.05 The Chairperson reported that she had accepted an invitation to sit on the Awards for Bridging Cultures judging panel.

5.00 GOVERNANCE and ACCOUNTABILITY

5.01 Follow-up actions arising from Accountability Review Meeting [24/06/10]:

- Chief Executive was now required to complete a Statement of Internal Control pro-forma for quarterly submission to DE.
- Procurement arrangements were under review.
- A revised format for monthly financial reporting would be established.
- DE approval had been sought for Council to obtain a 5-year pension actuarial forecast.

Council would be briefed on new arrangements as they were finalised.

5.02 Review of Youth Council Management Structures.

The Chief Executive highlighted a number of matters under this heading:

- (i) The case for voluntary severance (Deputy Director) remained with the Department for consideration.
- (ii) In light of the Convergence Delivery Plan, the need for efficiency savings, and a direction from the Department, the Honoraria payments to staff undertaking additional responsibilities would cease at the end of November 2010.
- (iii) Given the circumstances at (i) and (ii), the Chief Executive reported that he had commenced a review of management/staffing structures. A range of options would be prepared for initial consideration by the HR Committee, prior to presentation to Council.

ACTION

K W'spoon

S Rader

M Young
D Guilfoyle

M Young
B Faulkner
D Capper
D Guilfoyle

D Guilfoyle

D Guilfoyle

- (iv) At a Staff Seminar, held on 06 August 2010, the Chairperson provided an overview/external perspective of the current situation facing the Youth Council and the education sector generally. A challenge was issued to staff in terms of identifying a range of cost saving scenarios and efficiency measures to take account of projected funding cuts, whilst continuing to provide a quality service to the sector and stakeholders.
- (v) The Income and Expenditure Profile to 31 August 2010 was noted for information and performance monitoring. There were no key issues of concern to date, but staff would continue to monitor the balances.

ACTION

D Guilfoyle

6.00 PROGRAMME FUNDING 2010/11

6.01 A) Community Relations & Diversity Programme Support Funding. On behalf of the Grants Panel, J McCormick presented information on the applications received, and the amounts of funding requested. It was noted that a significant number of the applications would require clarification, prior to the Panel finalising the funding to be awarded. Staff were currently in the process of follow-up with the organisations concerned. Details of the funding awarded would be presented at the November meeting of Council.

JMcCormick
K W'spoon

6.01 B) CR/EDI – Proposal for further funding round. It was reported that the Department had written to Council confirming that additional funding would be made available in relation to the Council's CR post, and also inviting YCNI to bid, by 30 July 2010, for some additional resources from the funds remaining within the DE budget for community relations work for 2010/11.

In developing a submission to DE, staff convened a meeting of all RVYOs in receipt of Infrastructure Support Funding or Thematic Infrastructure Support Funding to seek their views on the focus of future funding from YCNI should it be made available by DE. Staff also used this opportunity to provide insight into the Department's new CRED (Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education) policy for work in this field.

As a result of this consultation, the Council's submission included a bid for additional funding to resource a detailed workplan designed to support RVYOs prepare for the implementation of the new DE strategy. It also indicated that Council would seek to identify some matching funding from within Council's own Programme Funding budget to support this initiative. In August 2010, the Department wrote confirming that an additional £120,000 would be allocated for 2010/11, consistent with the Council's submission. The DE letter also emphasised that the new wider DE remit for CR work must be reflected in the Council's funding and activities.

A recommendation was presented that Council approve an allocation of £80,000 from its Programme Funding budget in order to access the additional £120,000 earmarked by DE.

Members present agreed in principle with the recommendation and, as recorded in the Note on page 1 of these minutes, the Chairperson would contact those members not in attendance for their views/agreement.

M Young
D Guilfoyle

6.02 Collaboration/Sharing of Services Update. The Chief Executive reported on a useful meeting with M Walls, Director of the DSD Voluntary and Community Unit. It was noted that an outcome of the YouthNet bid to the Building Change Trust was still awaited.

D Guilfoyle

ACTION

6.03 Governance of RVYOs Update. As reported at the June meeting, it was proposed that funding be made available to YouthNet to provide governance training / support to its member organisations. YCNI staff were in discussions with YouthNet on the establishment of an agreed action plan. A further report would be provided at the November meeting of Council.

K W'spoon

6.04 Participation Update. A template for applications under this theme was currently being prepared and would be issued to RVYOs in receipt of Infrastructure Support or Thematic Infrastructure Support Funding. A further update would be provided at the November meeting of Council.

K W'spoon

6.05 Proposal for Additional Funding Theme. J McCormick briefed members on significant changes taking place in training for youth work.

He highlighted the active engagement of the Youth Work Training Board with LLUK, NYA, WAG, and OCN, to ensure that the units of training for youth work that are to be placed on the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) are fit for purpose in Northern Ireland.

A period of testing and trialing would take place over the next two years, with The new qualifications being piloted by voluntary and statutory organisations. Piloting and monitoring to ensure the needs of the sector are met would require some detailed work and would incur costs.

On a related matter, both voluntary and statutory sector training providers were finding the accreditation costs, including registration and certification fees for learners, becoming increasingly prohibitive. It was important that new volunteers to youth work were encouraged to undertake appropriate training programmes and qualifications that were accredited – preferably courses that had support from the Youth Work Training Board.

With the increasing emphasis on complementarity between formal and non-formal education, the need for a comprehensive programme of continuous professional development for staff had been highlighted. Investment in training that would equip staff to address the challenges that the youth worker would encounter could put them on an equal footing to staff in the formal education sector.

It was recommended that Council would earmark up to £70,000, from its 2010/11 Programme Funding budget, to support the implementation of an appropriate training strategy with guidance and support from the Youth Work Training Board.

Members present agreed in principle with the recommendation and, as recorded in the Note on page 1 of these minutes, the Chairperson would contact those members not in attendance for their views/agreement.

M Young
JMcCormick

7.00 SECTOR-WIDE INITIATIVES

7.01 The Chief Executive updated members on two current sector-wide initiatives:

- (i) Youth Arts – a bid submitted to the Arts Council for lottery funding by a consortium of Youth Service agencies, with YCNI as the lead partner. An update would be provided when the outcome was known.

D Guilfoyle

(ii) Mapping of Youth Work Outcomes against Educational Outcomes – a project established on behalf of the Youth Service Sectoral Partners Group (YSSPG). The potential for YCNI to fund a major event / training seminar seminar to disseminate the findings would be explored.

ACTION

D Guilfoyle

8.00 OPERATIONAL PLAN 2010-11: Update Report April – June 2010

8.01 An update on progress against the objectives/targets set for the year was tabled for performance monitoring/information. It was noted that all objectives had been achieved, or were on track for achievement, by the relevant dates. There were no significant issues of concern.

8.02 On a presentational issue, the term “ongoing” would be removed from the ‘Achievement’ column.

D Guilfoyle

8.03 The Chief Executive briefed members on recent communications from DE officials concerning the issue of reflecting the Department’s priorities, and aligning the Council’s Operational Plan with the DE format. The Chairperson would write to L Wilson, DE Director of Families and Communities, on this matter.

M Young

9.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of AOB.

10.00 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

10.01 The next meeting of Council was scheduled for **Monday 01 November 2010**, 5.30 pm in Forestview, Belfast.

ALL

10.02 Date of meetings to end December 2010:

- Thursday 16 December 2010.

ALL

Signed Date