

YOUTH COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14 MARCH 2011,
IN FORESTVIEW, BELFAST.**

1.00 PRESENT

Chairperson	Ms M Young	
Members	Mr B Faulkner Mr G Doran	Mr D Capper
Staff	Mr D Guilfoyle Ms K Witherspoon Ms S Rader	Mr J McCormick Mr K Traynor Mr J Hawkins (Item 4 only)

2.00 APOLOGIES

2.01 An apology was received from Ms A-M McClure.

3.00 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING [27.01.2011]

3.01 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27 January 2011 were approved and signed.

4.00 MATTERS ARISING

4.01 Min 4.01: Social Return on Investment - Update. It was reported that, with YCNI funding, YouthNet had engaged the New Economics Foundation to provide a two-day training course. This course would allow participants to become familiar with SROI methodology and, for those interested to progress, to become accredited SROI practitioners.

4.02 Min 4.02: NI Youth Forum Transitional Director Post - Update. The Chief Executive reported that DE had now agreed to a six-month extension to this post. YCNI staff were currently reviewing the present job description and ensuring that The NIYF proposed actions, to be funded under an SLA in 2011/12, were appropriate.

4.03 Min 4.03: Youth Works Programme – Update. The Chairperson welcomed J Hawkins, the Programme Manager, who had taken up post on 01 March 2011. Mr Hawkins briefed members on the timeline and process for the appointment of a Delivery Agent for the Pilot Programme. A call for tenders would be published during April, and a selection panel, comprising YCNI members, would be established to handle the shortlisting and interview process. It was envisaged that the Delivery Agent would be appointed by late May, and IFI would publicly launch the Youth Works Programme in June 2011.

DE was in the process of finalising the membership of the Steering Group which would oversee the project. A first meeting of this group would take place in April, prior to the call for tenders.

4.04 Min 4.05: Voluntary Severance Business Case. It was reported that the Business Case had been submitted to ESAIT. A response was awaited. [Also see Minute 5.1 below].

4.05 Min 5.02: Meeting with Permanent Secretary [04.02.11]. The Chairperson and Chief Executive, supported by B Sweeney and M McAlinden, briefed the DE Permanent Secretary and Ms L Wilson on key aspects of the Council's role and functions.

ACTION

K W'spoon

ALL
J Hawkins

D Guilfoyle

ACTION

Particular emphasis was given to the European/International and Training functions, and their contribution to the delivery of DE priorities in these areas. The Chief Executive spoke on the role of YCNI in facilitating collaboration within the sector, and attracting resources, and also YCNI's continuing commitment to community relations.

4.06 Min 6.04: YCNI Response to DE Draft Budget 2011-15. Members endorsed the YCNI response. It was reported that DE had clarified that the Minister's statement that "*youth service budget is protected*", did not extend to a protection of YCNI's management and administration costs. Council would be given a target for savings under these headings for the 2011-15 period in due course.

D Guilfoyle

4.07 Min 7.02: Ocean Youth Trust. It was reported that a Financial Verification Visit had recently been undertaken by Council staff. No financial concerns were identified. Staff had also reviewed, and were content with, the OYT revised programme. The OYT Chair was actively engaged in developing a new strategy for OYT, involving north/south co-operation and with the potential for new additional funding streams.

5.00 CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

5.01 The Chairperson reported on a meeting with G Boyd, on 09 March. The focus of this meeting was to convince G Boyd that the suppression of the two posts, as part of Council's voluntary severance/restructuring proposals, would not affect YCNI's functional delivery and governance/accountability.

In advance of the meeting with G Boyd, the Chairperson and Chief Executive had a detailed discussion on the outworking of the restructuring arrangements. As a result, the Chairperson, on behalf of Council, was content to provide reassurance to G Boyd that service delivery would not be hindered, and that appropriate risk management strategies had been identified.

5.02 Council acknowledged and thanked the Chief Executive and Grants Manager for their role in securing the reinstatement of DARD funding for the Young Farmers' Clubs.

6.00 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

6.01 Report on Governance and Accountability Review Meeting [04.03.11]. Items reported on at the meeting included 2010/11 financial performance, budget 2011-15, performance management targets 2010/11, procurement, accountability and audit issues. The Chair and Chief Executive also reported on Council's Strategic Planning Workshop. It was confirmed that Council would be given a target for savings in management and administration.

D Guilfoyle

M Young
D Guilfoyle

The pattern of future governance and accountability review meetings would move to four-monthly.

6.02 The Income/Expenditure Profile to 28 February 2011 was presented for information and performance monitoring. A 9-month set of accounts had been prepared by the new accountants [Baker Tilly Mooney Moore], and the Chief Executive reported that the budget was subject to daily monitoring, to ensure as close to total spend as possible.

D Guilfoyle

It was noted that the remaining balance had been requested from DE, and would be transferred to the Council's account later this week.

ACTION**7.00 YCNI STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP**

7.01 A summary of the Workshop Outputs was circulated for information. These were used as the basis to develop the Draft Strategic Priorities 2011-15, and the Outline Operational Plan 2011-12, as presented.

Members expressed the view that the format of the planning workshop had worked well, and provided a valuable opportunity for members and staff to discuss Council's priorities and plans for the future.

7.02 However, in a wide-ranging discussion, members identified a number of issues / unknowns which impacted on Council being in a position to fully complete, and/or sign off, its strategic and operational plans at this time. These included:

- outcome of the Assembly election in May;
- the appointment of a Minister for Education following the election;
- the overall Youth Service budget; and the YCNI budget;
- the overarching DE Priorities and the Priorities for Youth;
- convergence issues in relation to statutory Youth Service partners;
- collaboration with Youth Service Partners.

7.03 Further development of the Draft Strategic Priorities and Objectives would be required, in terms of the Council's role in advising on the future of the sector, the Pfy, sectoral collaboration etc.

It was noted that the Department might require Council to produce an interim Plan, in order to secure the release of funding for 2011/12.

D Guilfoyle

7.04 The importance of effective engagement with stakeholders prior to finalising the Council's Strategic Plan was emphasised, and it was agreed that the Chair and Chief Executive would consider ways in which stakeholder views could be obtained, whilst Council continued its strategic planning process.

M Young
D Guilfoyle

The Chair and Chief Executive would also review the format of the May Council meeting, involving members and staff, to facilitate further discussions/thinking in order to finalise agreed Strategic / Operational Plans. It was suggested that it would be useful to have some stakeholder feedback prior to the May Council meeting.

M Young
D Guilfoyle**8.00 RVYO FUNDING 2010/11**

8.01 Equipment Grants. Council formally approved the Grants Panel Equipment Grant Recommendations as ratified by members on 28 February 2011.

8.02 Interim Review of the Young People Focused Funding Policy. The Grants Manager presented a paper reflecting on how the policy had operated since its implementation in 2009. It set out an analysis of the implementation of the policy, how changes had affected the level of funding to RVYOs, and its impact on young people from Section 75 categories in particular. The findings in the paper were informed by an analysis of the monitoring forms returned by RVYOs, and meetings with RVYO staff.

A number of conclusions were identified in the interim report, and the following recommendations were made to Council:

ACTION

- (i) No changes needed to be made to Infrastructure Support Funding or Thematic Infrastructure Support Funding at this stage.
- (ii) YCNI should host a Seminar in the Autumn 2011 to disseminate the work of RYVO's under Programme funding strands (2009/2010).
- (iii) Staff should continue to provide close support and monitoring to "The Disability Hub" to enhance the consortium.
- (iv) YCNI staff should seek a meeting with GLYNI and prepare a report for Council with appropriate recommendations.
- (v) Given that DE envisaged a fundamental review of all funding of voluntary organisations, by both YCNI and ELBs, in light of the "Priorities for Youth" strategy, it was not appropriate for YCNI to consider significant changes its current funding policy.
- (vi) YCNI and ELB Youth Service personnel should commence dialogue regarding their separate funding streams for the voluntary sector in order prepare the ground for the fundamental review necessary in light of DE's "Priorities for Youth".

Members accepted the above recommendations, but, in relation to point (vi), expressed the view that Council should begin to gather more detailed evidence/ feedback on the impact of the YCNI funding policy, from funded organisations and relevant stakeholders, in order to feed effectively into a wider review of YCNI and ELB funding streams.

D Guilfoyle
K W'spoon

It was felt to be important that, in undertaking this exercise, Council did not raise expectations or concerns about a full-scale funding review. Informal methods should be used to gather the information, and it was suggested that perhaps this exercise could be combined with the dissemination seminar referred to at point (ii).

K W'spoon

Council staff were not in attendance for the following item.

9.00 EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

9.01 YCNI Review against the Good Governance Standard. Members reviewed Governance with reference to Role of the Board – A Guide for Council Members 2002 and the good Governance Standard for Public Services.

9.02 Board and Committees. In 2003, there were 14 members of Council; currently we have 6, 5 of whom sit on the Audit Committee. It is the intention of that committee to co-opt an additional member with the relevant financial expertise. One Council member chairs the Youth Work Training Board and another is a member. No member of the Council sits on the International Committee, whose chair was co-opted to that position.

Members recognise the limitations in having such a small membership but are confident that appropriate accountability arrangements are in place.

9.03 Discussions using the 6 elements of the Good Governance for Public Services can be summarised under the following headings where members felt YCNI needed to take action to meet the standard more comprehensively:

ACTION

(a) Acting as Adviser & Advocate

If YCNI is to fulfill its statutory remit to advise the Department of Education, Education & Library Boards etc on the development of the youth service, it must re-invigorate how it engages with its stakeholders. A strategy should be drawn up to facilitate this process. Council cannot act as an *advocate* for the service or advise on policy with any authority without this engagement.

M Young
D Guilfoyle

(b) Facilitating Collaboration

Effective collaborative working also requires a degree of pre-engagement as proposals are being developed.

M Young
D Guilfoyle

(c) Accountability

If YCNI is committed to making accountability real Council needs to be clear about the outcomes it wants for citizens and service users. It must be able to demonstrate to its stakeholders and its funder how the money allocated through this organisation benefits young people. What are we funding organisations to do; how do we know they are doing it; and what impact is that having on young people? It is crucial to have the evidence and information to respond to these questions.

D Guilfoyle

10.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.01 There were no items of AOB.

11.00 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

11.01 Meeting dates for 2011 were agreed as follows:

ALL

• Thursday 12 May 2011	• Monday 27 June 2011
• Thursday 22 September 2011	• Monday 07 November 2011
• Thursday 15 December 2011	

Signed Date