

Notes from the Youth Council meeting held on Tuesday 1st August at 11am in the Mayor's Parlour

Present: Councillors Ms S Barlow, Dr J Buckley, R Fox
Anne Wilson, Town Clerk
Mstr C Peters

The Town Clerk opened the meeting by speaking about her experiences of a Youth Council and how it is essential that the Youth Council had some links with the Town Council and were not left entirely on their own or the young people involved could feel that they were a standalone group and there is no purpose to them. Mstr Peters agreed that there needed to be strong links and not completely ignored. It was suggested that one representative of the Youth Council came to each Town Council meeting so that the Town Council could listen and help each other. Councillor R Fox, the Town Clerk and others had volunteered to work with the Youth Council at their meetings.

It was agreed that the Youth Council member would have no voting rights on the Town Council.

With regard to admin support, the Town Clerk offered to give volunteer admin support to the Youth Council.

Councillor R Fox spoke about setting up a Youth Council at Newport School and it was set up successfully because of the leadership.

Mstr Peters suggested that Councillor Dr J Buckley could help with grants to set it up and there were possibilities of grants the British Youth Council.

Mstr Peters said that it was essential it involved young people and they spoke about the way forward and wider issues as well as local issues, such as being able to vote at 16 or 18. He said that it was essential they were involved in events such as live music and other entertainment that was popular with young people and they would also be willing to have more ownership over town projects as young people. The Town Council could also use them for consultation.

There needed to be some focus on freedom to bring what they wanted to the table and think about the offer of joining the Events Committee, what is the main thing the Youth Council may like to change in Bridgnorth, what is good, bad, etc. They need to canvass for ideas and find out how to put the views of others too.

Make up – 5 from years 7,8 and 9 i.e Key stage 3 (11-14 years), 5 from Years 10,11,12 (age 15-18) Key stage 4 plus 18 year olds plus others who attend college or schools outside Bridgnorth.

Everything would be done with a view to start from 31st January 2018. Councillor R Fox and the Town Clerk would attend assemblies in the schools as required and would link in with local democracy week as a good starting point to promote it.

In looking at the timetables, the Council could advertise the Youth Council on social media, the youth centre to publicise it further to those who go to school out of town, private schools or at colleges. It was agreed that the posters needed to be jazzy and appetising, not just about voting but actually put do you want to get involved in e.g. play areas, music and events and when you click on it, you find out about joining the Youth Council. It has to be young people friendly as their involvement could be a long term investment in the town.

Outcome – it was agreed that we would attend assemblies in school, local democracy week, put a timetable together, the Town Clerk would contact Shropshire Council to see if we could use ballot boxes.

Assemblies - late September

Local Democracy week – 9th – 15th October

Elections – November

Confirmation of Membership to the Youth Council - late November/early December

Councillor R Fox volunteered his wife Mrs Fox to put together nomination forms and branding. It was agreed that a new Facebook page be set up promoting the Youth Council with the strategically designed branded logo linked to the Town Council and other pages. A new strapline was needed. Examples such as “speak up, stand up ...” Mstr Peters agreed to assist with publicity and promote it.

Date of Next Meeting: 27th September at 6pm