



# **SOUTHEND YOUTH COUNCIL**

## **Constitutional Arrangements**

Agreed by Southend Youth Council May 2020

## **AIMS**

The aim of the Southend Youth Council is to provide a voice for young people at a level to forge links and facilitate dialogue between young people and decision makers.

## **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL**

Youth Council meetings are Chaired by the Youth Mayor or by the Deputy Youth Mayor in his or her absence. The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor are the only elected representatives of all young people in Southend.

A Southend Youth Council badge is given to a member after attending no less than 3 meetings.

Youth Council Members are not elected and membership is open to all young people aged 11-18 who either live or are educated in Southend. However, on becoming Youth Council Members, they are considered to be representative of the young people of Southend and are expected to attend Youth Council meetings and on a regular basis and regularly participate.

## **ELECTED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Category A**

Youth Council members can only hold one elected role at a time, i.e. Youth Mayor, Deputy Youth Mayor and UKYP.

*To run for Youth Mayor/Deputy, the youth council member must be a member for a minimum 3 months, and be aged 14 years or above.*

### **Youth Mayor**

A democratic election will be held at meetings of the Youth Council on a six monthly basis and the person with the most votes by a simple majority is appointed Youth Mayor.

Qualities Adaptability, supportive, organised, self-disciplined, have time available, not bossy, very reliable and committed.

Role Youth Mayor: Chair Youth Council meetings, supervise Youth Council appointments.

### **Deputy Youth Mayor**

The person with the second highest number of votes by a simple majority is appointed Deputy Youth Mayor.

The Deputy Youth Mayor is required to undertake work delegated by the Youth Mayor. This would include Chairing Youth Council meetings.

Qualities Adaptability, supportive, organised, self-disciplined, have time available, not bossy, very reliable and committed.

Role Deputy Youth Mayor: Chair Youth Council meetings, supervise Youth Council appointments.

## **Member of Youth Parliament**

The MYP is elected on an annual basis and is required to attend BYC conventions and UKYP events and debates and to deliver the aims and objectives set out by the UK Youth Parliament on a local and national level.

Qualities Adaptability, supportive, organised, self-disciplined, have time available, not bossy, very reliable and committed.

Role: Attend UKYP events and represent Southend locally and nationally.

If the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor cannot attend the meeting, the MYP takes charge of the meeting.

## **Exceptional circumstances**

If there are any exceptional circumstances in term time for Youth Mayor, Deputy Youth Mayor (usual 6-monthly elections) or Member of Youth Parliament (usual annual elections), may be changed to later months. This also applies to all Officer Roles. This will be kept under review by the full Youth Council.

## **Accountability**

The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor have a duty to be accountable to the people who elected him / her. If the Southend Youth Council Members feel the Youth Mayor and / or Deputy Youth Mayor is not fulfilling his / her duties, as outlined under the Areas of Responsibility, they have the right to call a vote of no confidence. This can only be called following the outlined terms:

1. At least 20% of the Youth Council must write, including a petition with signatures, to the Youth Council Worker detailing their grounds for concern.
2. The Youth Council Worker will call a vote of no confidence in either the Youth Mayor or Deputy Youth Mayor at the next Youth Council meeting. At this meeting both sides will be given five minutes to put their case.
3. All Youth Council members present will be able to vote in a secret ballot.
4. A simple majority is required for the motion of no confidence to be passed.
5. If the motion is passed a new Youth Mayor and / or Deputy Youth Mayor must be elected at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Category B**

Youth Council Members who are not in a category A role may hold up to two category B roles; these are Chancellor, Press officer, LGBTQ+ Officer, Environmental Officer, School Representatives Manager, Speaker, and Minute Taker. All roles are elected on a 6 monthly basis, unless otherwise mentioned. If there is competition for a category B role, the winning candidate is in school year 10 or above, and one or more of the candidates is in school year 9 or below, the highest placing year 9 and below candidate shall assume the role of junior officer,

where they assist the primary officer in their duties. Should the primary officer need to leave their position, the junior may assume the role of primary officer until the end of the term.

If nobody wishes to stand for election, the role may remain unfilled until a youth council member wishes to stand. There must be reminders of unfilled roles for new members.

*To run for a category B role, the youth council member must be a member for a minimum 3 months.*

## **Chancellor**

- Presenting annual and quarterly budget reports to the Youth Mayor and Youth Council
- Fulfil a campaign/take over pre-existing duties, fulfilling requirements of the role, complete the job description, attend regular officer's meetings
- Conduct official business representing the financial interests of the Youth Council through official channels and advice on budgetary and funding matters at the campaign and project meetings

## **Press officer**

- Update social media on a regular basis, advertising the next meeting is happening etc. but more so when an SYC event is coming up
- Keep close links with local press, as well as write press releases on behalf of the SYC in partnership with the SBC Comms Team, write content for the SYC website and ensure everyone is held accountable for any campaigns they are running
- Monitor the image and reputation of the SYC and offer advice on how to use social media positively

## **Speaker**

- Create monthly debate topics and lead the debates ensuring polite and professional conduct is maintained throughout

## **Minute taker**

- Take minutes of all conversations, debates and discussions at YC Monthly meetings and officers meetings
- Manage the structure, timings, guest speakers and questions raised during monthly meetings
- Follow up on actions and ensure they are being assigned to Youth Councillors and delivered in the time frames
- Support the planning of future meetings, booking venues and arranging materials e.g. refreshments, stationery etc.
- Make sure minutes are typed up and sent to the executives and Youth Council workers

## **School Representatives Manager**

- Make sure current executive officer campaigns are shared with schools - regardless of whether we have a representative

- Make sure the meetings are communicated to the required Youth Councillors. Additionally, notes are taken and formally typed up and sent to the Youth Council's current Youth Worker

### **LGBTQ+ Officer**

- Representing the voice and interests of members of the LGBTQ+ community within the Youth Council and at external meetings and activities
- Working with colleagues from Stonewall, Figuring It Out and Council and external groups to support relevant campaigns and ensuring there is young people's representation throughout
- A postholder who is 18+ can take the position of Trustee within Figuring It Out which is an official charity post
- Supporting inclusivity and representation throughout all SYC campaigns and committees and to offer support and guidance to internal and external colleagues
- sharing information, events and opportunities in SYC

### **Environmental Officer**

- To lead on and champion environmental issues
- To do various things in relation to the environment e.g. setting up a committee or organise a beach walk to pick up litter
- Working with colleagues, Council and external groups to support relevant campaigns and ensuring there is young people's representation throughout
- To work closely with the Member of Youth Parliament to campaign for greater action in terms of climate change prevention and link to the Youth Parliament Wide campaign 'Protect the Environment'
- Sharing information, events and opportunities with the SYC

All officers are expected to support the planning and delivery of the Make Your Mark campaign - supporting the communication with schools, managing targets, increasing participation and maintaining momentum to ensure last year's target is met.

### **Accountability**

Elected Officers have a duty to be accountable to the people who elected him / her. If the Southend Youth Council Members feel an Officer is not fulfilling his / her duties, as outlined in the role descriptions above, they have the right to call a vote of no confidence. This can only be called following the outlined terms:

1. At least 20% of the Youth Council must write, including a petition with signatures, to the Youth Council Worker detailing their grounds for concern.
2. The Youth Council Worker will call a vote of no confidence in either the Youth Mayor or Deputy Youth Mayor at the next Youth Council meeting. At this meeting both sides will be given five minutes to put their case.
3. All Youth Council members present will be able to vote in a secret ballot.
4. A simple majority is required for the motion of no confidence to be passed.
5. If the motion is passed a new Officer must be elected at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **Any Other Business**

Members of the Southend Youth can move a motion preferably at the end of a monthly meeting. Topics like a vote of no confidence, formation of new roles or formation of new committees can be raised, for example.

This can be carried through with the Youth Council's consent, granted there are no objections. Any other business is integrated into the end of every agenda if someone has something to raise that hasn't been discussed in the meeting and would be of interest for the Youth Council. A vote, if appropriate, can be held if this matter needs to be passed as soon as possible or it isn't a dramatic addition. In most cases, votes will take place in the next monthly meeting. Votes are not to be done by a ballot but by a show of hands. A simple majority is required to pass 'any other business' subjects.

If a project hasn't been voted on by the whole present Southend Youth Council, it is at the Chair's discretion whether another vote is necessary to renew the need for a certain project or committee.

## **ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Youth Council Meetings**

Full Youth Council Meetings will take place on the first Wednesday of every month and will last no more than two hours. Meetings will usually take place in the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre. Attendance at Youth Council Meetings is expected by all members and apologies should be sent in advance to [youthmayor@southend.gov.uk](mailto:youthmayor@southend.gov.uk).

Youth Council Meetings will be attended by Youth Council members only and supported by the Youth Council Worker. If anyone else wishes to attend, a request must be made in advance to the Youth Mayor.

The Youth Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be responsible for approving applications, invitation to attend or formally declining the application.

### **Youth Council Worker**

The Youth Council worker and their team attend meetings in their capacity as Support Workers to the Youth Council. They will only contribute to debates if invited to do so by the Speaker.

### **The Agenda**

If people want to attend a meeting, their request should be directed to the Youth Council Worker who will respond on behalf of the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor.

If anyone wants to raise a point, they can have it included in the agenda.

### **Permanently Invited Guests**

The following adults or their representatives have permanently invited guest status:

- Youth Council Worker
- Head of Childrens' Transformation and Principle Social Worker Exec
- Director Children and Public Health
- Various Councillors

### **Other Formal Meetings**

The Youth Council is expected to take an interest in the work of other partnerships and formal meetings and, when possible, send representation. You may be invited by the Mayor for the Mayor's events amongst other organised events.

### **Agreed Elected & Approved Representatives**

Information about elected people and roles will be presented on the Youth Council website and agenda.

### **Voting at Youth Council Meetings**

If a vote is required to agree to a proposal, then a 'one member, one vote' simple majority system shall operate. Only those present may vote. The Speaker is impartial unless a casting vote is required.

If there is a vote of 5 people or less, the vote can be sent to other members to agree or disagree at either an Officers' Meeting or future Youth Council Meeting.

Either the Youth Mayor or the Deputy Youth Mayor or the UKYP needs to be in attendance at each Youth Council meeting.

Youth Council Members can vote from their second meeting onwards.

### **Changes to the Constitution**

Changes to the Constitution must be endorsed by a simple majority at a full Youth Council meeting.

**The Youth Council's Constitution was Amended and Adopted by the Youth Council on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020, witnessed by:** Eugene Vlas, Youth Mayor & Madi Faulkner-Hatt