

Dumfries & Galloway's Youth Council (DGYC)

August Meetings Note

Physical Meeting: Castle Douglas Town Hall, Saturday 31st August 2019, 11am – 2pm

Online Meeting: Thursday 29th August 2019, 7pm – 8:30pm

1. Welcome & Apologies:

17 Members attended the physical Youth Council meeting at Castle Douglas Town Hall on Saturday, 31st August.

13 Members participated in the online meeting held on Thursday, 29th August.

4 Members submitted their apologies and were unable to attend either meeting.

It was noted that 10/15 Members unable to attend the physical Youth Council meeting was as a result of being unable to secure time off work. To prevent this from occurring again, a list of monthly meeting dates has been circulated until February 2020.

Youth Work staff supporting the meeting: Rebecca McQuaker, Tracey Wood, Regan Jackson

- 2. Environmental consultation led by MSYP Hannah Birse related to the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) National Campaign, 'Pack It Up, Pack It In'. The results of which have been fed into the SYPs ongoing national steering group for the campaign.**
- 3. Planning session focussed on the second annual Youth Activism and Volunteer Conference #ROOTS. DGYC worked in small groups to determine the potential themes and workshops. Date for #ROOTS to be confirmed depending on venue. Youth Councillors Lucy Forteach, Lindsay Thomson, Blake Dean, Sophie Blair, Lucy Jin, Natasha O'Neill, Connor Johnston and Will Wallace will form the steering group who will lead on the planning and delivery of the event. It was noted that there will also be the opportunity for young people out-with DGYC to put their names forward for the steering group and that this opportunity will be promoted through social media.**
- 4. Consultation surrounding D&G's Cultural Strategy drafted priorities. Full feedback from DGYC is detailed in Appendix 1. Consultation questions were put to DGYC by Rebecca Coggins, Arts and Museums Principal Officer for Dumfries & Galloway Council.**
- 5. DGYC agreed to arrange introductory ward level meetings with Elected Members to discuss potential partnership working moving forward.**

6. DGYC considered dates for the first annual Joint Full Council meeting, Members considered that school holidays would be the most appropriate time for the meeting to take place due to varying prelim schedules across secondary schools.

Appendix 1

Cultural Strategy – Youth Council Feedback

DGYC Members were given copies of the draft themes and asked for comment.

Below is a summary of young peoples views:

- What do you think of our draft vision and themes?

All DGYC Members agreed that the themes were good and made sense to be included. 'Access and Inclusion', 'Developing Empowering Communities' & 'Best Start in Life for all our Young People' were highlighted as the most relevant themes to young people.

A few commented that there wasn't a lot to make a judgement on in the draft, this was then echoed and agreed by the whole group. To quote, "it's good but I don't understand what there is to disagree with or not like about this, it sounds fine but what difference will a strategy make to what's on for people?". It was explained that the strategy would support organisations to secure funding and target resources in the places they were most needed (for example).

- Can you think of any examples where things are working well already?

Members highlighted drama clubs, theatre groups, choirs, music tuition, town bands (brass/pipe), Arts Festival, The Toon, Big Burns Supper, Wigtown Book Festival (WTF Programme), civic events (gala day celebrations) as examples of good practice. Members felt that there were lots of individual things happening but not much joined up – when asked if things should be more joined up there were not agreement. Members will split 50/50 between the following 2 comments:

1. Not really – working with everyone can take a long time and it'd be better to put time into running groups and opportunities. Members agreed that something that promoted the times and places of opportunities would work well (so there wasn't too much happening on one day / at one time in small communities), but that trying to co-ordinate everyone to work together would be much more challenging. A system in which people could check provisions in communities and find out more information about organisations delivering locally would support partnership working and avoid duplication.
2. Yes, definitely – Members spoke about the differences in things that were offered depending on what area you live in comparing it to a postcode lottery. It was felt that by bringing everyone together they could talk about what they were going to do and then divide everything up across the region – this would hopefully reduce the numbers of young people disadvantaged by their geography.

It should be noted that the Members focused primarily on art / drama / music-based opportunities.

- What do you think might be stopping the people you know from getting more involved with arts and heritage?

It was noted that groups out-with school time for music, art and drama often had a cost to participate or a cost to travel to participate for free. Members also noted that there had been taster sessions for things in their area but then no way for them to become involved beyond this more regularly.

Around 50% of the young people involved felt that they weren't really included, or that people didn't want them to go along to the 'serious' opportunities promoted in their community that were open to all ages. A handful of Members spoke about not being taken seriously at groups or clubs that mostly had adults in, some examples given were about photography clubs with the others related to an art class and civic pride committees.

- What changes would help make things better?

Youth discounts to make things more affordable, 3 Members commented that the national minimum wage can be as low as £4 when you leave school (and lower for apprentices) and start working but the cost of transport is the same price as someone older who is getting a better minimum wage. One young person said that "I'm working full time doing a job on minimum wage and someone whose 10 years older doing the exact same job is getting like 2, 3, 4 pound more an hour than me...I have to work 4 hours to afford something but they've only got to work 2 so it'd be fairer if the prices for things were different, whether that's the bus to get there or the actual thing you want to do".

Hosting events, activities, clubs or groups at times that worked with the local buses was highlighted as something that could easily be changed so that people dependant on public transport would be more likely to take part.

Taster sessions that turned into longer programmes based in local communities was also discussed by over $\frac{3}{4}$ of Members.

Better promotion was a major discussion point for this question with all Members agreeing that it was quite hard to find out what was on as everyone had different ways of promoting. Having one place where people could check what's on in their area and when was suggested.

The times of opportunities was also mentioned by a small number of Members with 3 stating that they felt the higher-level opportunities in their area as in the groups for if you are serious about having a career or developing high level skills in a particular medium (specifically related to art) were during the day when they were at school.

- Anything Else?

"Sounds alright what they have so far"

"Should say that it's okay to say somethings for adults or young people rather than saying it's for everyone and not wanting everyone to come"

"People who are interested in drama may not be interested in other aspects of culture and vice versa so I think it's important to not mix them all together into one thing and make sure that the different aspects of culture and heritage are related but separate"

"I'm glad we're being asked our opinion but I don't see how anyone would disagree with this and what could change because of people being asked"

"They've got good themes but what matters is what actually happens after the strategy".