

Dumfries & Galloway's Youth Council (DGYC)

December Meeting

Meeting Note

Physical Meeting: Castle Douglas Town Hall, Sunday 1st December 2019, 3pm – 7pm

Online Meeting: Monday 2nd December 2019, 6pm – 8pm

1. Welcome, Apologies, Member Update

25 Members attended the physical meeting

5 Members participated in the online meeting

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

It was noted that the meeting schedule being changed has had a positive impact on the numbers of Members able to attend the meeting in person.

Members were updated that the vacancy for Dee & Glenkens was open for young people to express an interest and that Terri Smith had been appointed to the position of Young Parent Youth Councillor. There remains an outstanding vacancy for the Gypsy / Traveller Youth Councillor which is proving challenging to fill. At present there are 32 out of 35 positions filled.

Youth Work staff supporting the meeting: Rhona Jones, Cara Hyles, Regan Jackson

- 2.** During the previous meeting, Members were asked to develop ideas surrounding the content and purpose of the Joint Meeting between DGC and DGYC. Service Manager for Young People, Mark Molloy attended the physical meeting to outline the legalities surrounding a joint meeting. Members worked to agree the format of the joint meeting which would include developing a shared action plan between the two organisations (DGYC and DGC) through committee themed groups. Members identified a programme for the January meeting that would enable them to develop their understanding of the remits and responsibilities of each committee.
- 3.** A short input that fed back the evaluation from the #ROOTS2.0 Youth Activism and Volunteer gathering that had taken place on Wednesday, 9th October 2019 at the Easterbrook Hall was provided to Members. 90+ young people from across all ward areas in Dumfries and Galloway attended the gathering. Moving forward, DGYC will have responsibility for determining the programme, promotion and delivery of the event.
- 4.** Members were scheduled to meet with the Councils Environment Champion, Cllr Dougie Campbell on October 21st, however this meeting was unable to go ahead

due to Members availability. Cllr Campbell instead was invited to attend the meeting to have discussions with Members about their views in relation to DGC's and DGYC's respective roles and responsibilities when it comes to tackling environmental concerns and the climate crisis. A detailed note of DGYC's feedback can be found in Appendix 1.

5. A short update was provided surrounding the ward level meetings between Youth Councillors and Elected Members. To date, 11/12 meetings have taken place and Members agreed they were useful. The discussions were insightful and, in many instances, Elected Members were keen to ensure regular contact with Youth Council Members and find more effective ways to involve young people in local decision making.
6. Members received an update surrounding the funding application submitted by the D&G Year of Young People Project Team to the Scottish Governments 'Empowering Communities Programme: Investing in Communities Fund' back in June 2019. The bid was developed in partnership with multiple DGYC Members and the project includes the creation and development of 12 ward-level participatory budgeting programmes that aim to address the needs and issues identified within 10'000 Voices. The funding bid has been conditionally awarded by the Scottish Government pending a few final checks. There will be a final update surrounding this in January / March 2020. Members noted their commitment to continuing their involvement in the project and recognised it to be a unique opportunity for young people to have direct influence and control over the provisions available in their communities.
7. It was also highlighted that Youth Councillors Lindsay Thomson, Bailey Wright, Hannah Birse, Cloe Allison and Natasha O'Neill are due to facilitate a workshop at the upcoming 'Children, Young People and Power' Conference being hosted by Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway. DGYC were approached by Third Sector due to a number of their partner organisations raising issues related to involving young people. The session that will be delivered will focus on challenging professionals to consider how meaningful opportunities are and the alternative ways to get young people involved.
8. Members agreed the 'Members Guidance' document that outlines how individual Youth Councillors can raise 'motions' or topics for debate and agreement. This document also includes guidance surrounding Members conduct and provides clarity to DGYC Members about their roles.
9. Final agreement was also sought for the Terms and Conditions document that outlines the role and purpose of DGYC, a checklist (formerly referred to as a charter) for engagement and a participation request form for external organisations. It was noted that there has been a considerable number of

requests and invitations for Members to represent the views of young people, however there was also consensus that many of these opportunities although well-intentioned were quite tokenistic. The final amendment and agreement of this document is hoped to bring a change in the way DGYC is included.

- 10.** A motion was put forward by a Member that asked for DGYCs backing to challenge decision makers who are spreading misinformation surrounding the current Gender Recognition Act reform that is ongoing. It was believed that decision makers have a responsibility to ensure that young LGBT people within Dumfries and Galloway are not put in a position where they feel isolated, or attacked by elected representatives. Information was provided surrounding the Gender Recognition Act Reform, and Stonewall Scotland's report that was published in light of the proposed legislative changes. DGYC were asked to vote on the following:

Do you think the Youth Council should take action against decision makers speaking out against the proposed reforms to the gender recognition act? Transphobic views have no place in Dumfries and Galloway and we want to send the message that it is not okay to spread hate or fear and cause further isolation to young trans people.

It was also made clear that if this motion was passed, it would be progressed by a sub-group of Members. Members had 3 options for voting including; voting in favour of the motion, voting against the motion or abstaining from voting. The required quota for a motion to be passed or adopted by DGYC is 50% of the Membership which equates to 17 votes. As the quota had been reached, the votes of Members unable to attend were not sought.

Voting count:

- ... 21 voted in favour
- ... 2 abstained from voting
- ... 1 voted against

- 11.** Emily Dickson, Finlay Johnston and Hannah Birse provided updates to the Youth Council surrounding the October Scottish Youth Parliament Sitting.
- 12.** The next meeting date will be Sunday, 12th January 2020.

Appendix 1

Environmental / Climate Session

Youth Councillors and MSYPs were split into two groups and asked to answer the following questions:

1. What can D&G Council do / expand on / stop doing?
2. What could the Youth Council / you as an individual do?

Both questions were posed by Cllr Dougie Campbell, Environment Champion for D&G Council.

Below is the feedback from the Youth Council for each question:

1. What can D&G Council do / expand on / stop doing?

- YOU:
COUNCIL Create/share an overview of what the Council is currently doing (or has done) so that we can see what's happening and what's been achieved so far
- YOU:
COUNCIL Introduce more electric / hybrid cars
- YOU:
COUNCIL Car share schemes (for the public too)
- YOU:
COUNCIL Pay Council employees fuel rather than buying more pool cars / vehicles
- YOU:
COUNCIL Create zero waste spaces (Dumfries)
- YOU:
COUNCIL Increase the number of bins in parks and on cycling / walking routes
- YOU:
COUNCIL Have improved kerbside and community recycling facilities (in cities they now have recycling bins on the street that allow you to separate plastic / cans / paper)
- YOU:
COUNCIL Invest / plant more trees – ties in with the Galloway National Park and is a long-term plan
- YOU:
COUNCIL Need more options to buy locally so that people have the option to reduce their carbon footprint
- YOU:
COUNCIL Community based projects such as allotments should be encouraged by the Council i.e. Council dedicating space for the community to expand on. This would promote and support local businesses using local suppliers
- YOU:
COUNCIL Research and provide support for people to use alternative, more environmentally conscious machinery / practices i.e. helping local farmers to reduce their carbon emissions / footprint
- YOU:
COUNCIL ULE2 – introduce this in areas like Buccleuch Street
- YOU:
COUNCIL Buy locally sourced food for school meals and external catering (DGFirst)
- YOU:
COUNCIL Increase penalties for dropping litter (school grounds, car windows, rural areas)
- YOU:
COUNCIL Invest in cleaner energy productions
- YOU:
COUNCIL Inform people about the environment, make sure that all children and young people in Dumfries and Galloway have a basic understanding of the environment, what affects it and why it's important to protect it
- YOU:
COUNCIL Inform the general public about the environment and global warming
- YOU:
COUNCIL Give funding to the organisations that are more environmentally conscious / have funding specifically for organisations to become more aware and reduce their footprint
- YOU:
COUNCIL Re-use carbon dioxide
- YOU:
COUNCIL Make it a requirement for every school to have a climate or environmental group or environment champions

- YOU:
COUNCIL Off-set the carbon emissions produced by Council services, if services needed to donate a portion of their budget to off-set environmentally damaging activities then this would fund an environmental fund for the community to access funding
- YOU:
COUNCIL Take a common sense approach, blanket banning when there isn't affordable alternatives locally just means that people in poverty are disadvantaged more
- YOU:
COUNCIL Reduce single use plastics in schools / promote a multiple use approach, including for items that are considered 'single use' like plastic bottles, bin bags
- YOU:
COUNCIL Running buses at times that link in better with other public transport times (for example in Lockerbie, if you get the last train home from Edinburgh and arrive in the region at 11:15pm, then there's no way to get to Dumfries as the last bus to get you back leaves Lockerbie at 10:37pm. Likewise in Cairnryan, the last 2 ferries gets in at around 10pm and 2am but the available buses are 11:20pm or 8:30am in the morning
- YOU:
COUNCIL Stop flyers being put in with local papers
- YOU:
COUNCIL Encourage meat-free days and raise awareness of the consequences of 'fast fashion' without being judgemental
- YOU:
COUNCIL A rewards scheme or incentive for reducing your environmental footprint (similar to the walking challenge a few years ago with swipe cards) wherein children and young people can earn points that they can exchange for paid services
- YOU:
COUNCIL Lower the cost of public transport so that it's a more affordable option than taking a car – the cost of fuel to get to and from towns across the region is often more expensive than the cost of a ticket. If it was less expensive then more people would likely use it
- YOU:
COUNCIL Allowing schools and all Council buildings to control their own heating as different buildings require different settings depending on when they were built, their position and the condition of the building
- YOU:
COUNCIL Run a campaign that educates people on what they can do

2. What could the Youth Council / you as an individual do?

- YOU:
COUNCIL Depends on what the Council is doing / as done but we could come up with environment ambitions for the Youth Council to be working towards – have an environment action in our ward action plans
- YOU:
COUNCIL Convert to re-usable materials (harder to do with paper and not everyone owns an electronic device)
- YOU:
COUNCIL Buy furniture, clothing and equipment that is pre-loved such as in charity shops and on Ebay
- YOU:
COUNCIL Take on more of a role in promoting and organising Climate Strikes and having a proactive approach to striking- e.g. litter pick at the same time
- YOU:
COUNCIL Challenge the Council on the exclusion of pupils who have taken part in climate strikes and do work to be vocal and protect young peoples rights to protest as a lot of secondary schools are unsupportive and actively threatening students to discourage them from taking part
- YOU:
COUNCIL Applying for money to purchase environmentally friendly, re-usable products such as water bottles that promote the Youth Council and the environment
- YOU:
COUNCIL Use public transport where possible for meetings (although our main barrier to this is that the best day for meetings is a Sunday and the worst day for buses and trains is a Sunday)

-  Take part in walking, cycling and car sharing initiatives
-  Reducing how much we eat meat, even if it's a meat free weekday or weekend
-  Raise awareness and share Campaigns through social media
-  Many Youth Councillors suggested things that an individual could do if they had money available such as:
 -  carbon off-setting their flights or commute
 -  having a wood burning fire instead of electric
 -  buying a bike, electric car or hybrid to reduce fuel emissions
 -  buying organic or more sustainable food, clothing, homeware and furniture
 -  using alternatives such as wind or solar energy
 -  Opt for paperless bills and communication from companies
-  Cut-down on food waste or have a compost bin for wood waste
-  Volunteer at nature reserves
-  Contribute to the Scottish Youth Parliaments Pack It Up, Pack It In Campaign
-  Reducing, where possible, personal use of gas and electric
-  Turning lights off when not in room
-  Donating clothing, furniture and homeware to charity shops
-  Stop shopping online
-  Sustainable period products (moon cups, period underwear etc. instead of pads and tampons)

After the session with Cllr Campbell it was highlighted by a few and agreed by many that it can be quite expensive to 'do your bit', especially living in an area that is so rural. For example, online shopping was mentioned as a negative on the environment but it was also highlighted that it would be more damaging to drive to the nearest shop a few hours away as public transport might not be available. They felt that D&G Council could run a campaign or share content that's relatable to people and highlight the different ways people can make a difference from small scale and free changes to large scale and expensive changes. The message shouldn't be 'never do anything that causes any kind of damage' but instead should be 'here are ways that you can reduce the impact'.