

STROUD DISTRICT YOUTH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2000 at 4.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Stroud.

MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL PRESENT:-

Stewart McKane	Katharine Lady Berkeley's
Cheryl Holley	Maidenhill
Lee Stopford	Maidenhill
Lawrence Anderson	Marling
Dan Snell	Marling
Lucy Mather	Rednock
Francesca Lane	Stroud High
Katy Costigan	Thomas Keble
Nina Costigan	Thomas Keble

Also Present:-

Alan Caig	Head of Leisure, Stroud District Council
Fred Chance	Stroud Team Leader, Youth and Community Service
Colin Hassall	Gloucestershire Drugs and Alcohol Action Team Co-ordinator
David Marshall	Information Officer, Stroud District Council
Lesley Williams	Chair of Stroud District Council

Apology:- Chloe Carpenter (Stroud High)

<u>Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2000</u>	Accepted as a correct record.
<u>To receive reports on:-</u> - <u>Transport</u>	<p><u>Nina Costigan</u> reported that she had contacted Tiina Emsley, a special projects officer with the District Council, who had advised her that work on mapping transport facilities/needs was due to be undertaken this year.</p> <p>The partnership on transport (District, County and Town Councils) had discussed the concessionary fare scheme and had felt that efforts should be made to allow both the young and the disabled to benefit from this as well as the elderly.</p>

Nina proposed that the Youth Council might consider inviting representatives of 'bus companies to a meeting to discuss transport facilities.

Stewart McKane explained that, from his research, it appeared that one quarter of households in the county did not have a car but that the County Council had only committed £600,000 this year towards 'bus transport. This equated to £1.50 per person.

There also appeared to be a county and national trend of preference being given to train rather than 'bus transport. The response received by his school to a letter sent to the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions had given little information on the regional provision of 'bus transport but a great deal on train facilities. Whilst he agreed that the aim to increase the use of trains was laudable, this county needed a better 'bus system, particularly to support the rural areas.

Referring to the provision of train services for the county, he emphasised that the only stations were at Gloucester, Cheltenham, Stroud and Cam. In order to use these stations it was still essential to have accessible connecting 'bus services. He understood that discussions were still continuing into the provision of a further station at Charfield but that these did not seem likely to be finalised in the short term.

He gave an example of how difficult it was to plan a journey to Gloucester, particularly for commuters, and how this affected the accessibility for work. He had used the travel helpline and although this had been successful he was unable to obtain details of fares from this source. Contact with the 'bus company itself had proved very unsuccessful.

He also felt that a meeting with representatives of the 'bus companies would be useful, and particularly in the light of the recent report on the safety of school 'buses.

The members discussed various issues including identifying the need for local services, the availability of mini 'bus vehicles other than daytime, the availability of drivers and insurance cover and whether the Rural Transport Policy addressed any of these issues. Stewart commented that the County Action Plan incorporated integrated services but that these would be left to competition and market forces, which he felt did not address adequately local needs.

It was agreed that Nina would contact the 'bus companies to invite them to a meeting of the Youth Council.

ordination with the school rules.

Stroud High

The student council meeting had generally approved the policy and had strongly expressed the point that excluding students was not acceptable. Although initial exclusion in order to deal with the situation was important and would protect the person involved, fair treatment was paramount.

Katharine Lady Berkeley's

Although the school council had yet to consider the policy, the representative and other students he had spoken to informally had felt that it appeared to be a sensible way forward.

Marling

An emergency student council meeting had considered the policy and given their support both to the policy itself and to the fact that all secondary schools in Gloucestershire would have the same framework within which to work. One comment had been that it was important for individuals to be treated as such and not just as a statistic.

A suggestion had also been made that ex-drug users might be asked to talk to students about the consequences of drugs.

Maidenhill

The policy was considered acceptable but an important aspect was felt to be the contact with the parents. This needed to be confidential and carefully addressed as some parents might feel that they had to take the full burden of responsibility. Confidentiality was important for the students as well, as without that, they might not seek help when they needed it.

Colin Hassall noted the points raised and stressed that the policy was based on the treatment of students as individuals and on the avoidance of permanent exclusion.

He referred to the involvement of an ex-drug addict in the education on drug misuse but felt that, although one individual had undertaken this in the past, it needed a particular type of person to be able to do this successfully and within the school framework.

He advised that drugs education was being targeted by the Government and would involve society's use of all drugs. It would include the development of a programme for 5 year olds and above which would provide a lifestyle package and a more holistic approach.

<p><u>Election of Officers to the Youth Council</u></p>	<p>The following appointments were agreed:-</p> <p><u>Chair</u> Nina Costigan</p> <p><u>Vice Chair</u> Stewart McKane</p> <p><u>Press Officers</u> Katy Costigan Dan Snell</p>
<p><u>Presentation to the Stroud District Council Meeting on 20 April 2000</u></p>	<p>Steward McKane and Katy Costigan agreed to lead the presentation.</p> <p>The members discussed the issues which might be included in the presentation and agreed on the work of the Youth Council, the issues already raised (particularly transport) and what the Youth Council would like to take further. The presentation would be for about 15 minutes.</p>
<p><u>Future meetings</u></p>	<p>It was agreed that the next meeting should be specifically to deal with transport issues, to which representatives of transport providers and the County Council would be invited.</p>
<p><u>Other matters of interest</u></p>	<p>Fred Chance invited the members to an event at Roxburgh House on 11 May 2000 which was titled 'Power' and would include theatre/music etc on that theme.</p> <p>He also suggested that the British Youth Council might be a useful source of information/research on Youth Council work nationally.</p>
<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p>	<p>The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 18 May 2000 at 4.30 p.m. at Ebley Mill.</p>

The meeting ended at 6.08 p.m.