

Appendix 1: Youth Council Constitution

Constitution: Lichfield District Youth Council

Name:

The name of this association shall be Lichfield District Youth Council (LDYC) It shall hereafter be referred to as LDYC in this document.

Aims and Objectives:

- To encourage and initiate communication between young people in the District and local government
- To broaden the opportunities available for all of Lichfield Districts young people and increase the accessibility of said opportunities.
- To support youth councillors in reaching their full potential through training and skills development.
- To provide a voice for young people in Lichfield District and to represent their views to decision makers.
- To ensure that Lichfield District Council is aware of the needs of individuals and groups of young people who may experience disadvantage or are unable to speak for themselves.
- To raise the profile of young people in a positive way.
- To form a range of task groups as and where appropriate to enable the work of the LDYC. These groups will report progress and conclusions to the full Youth Council.
- To work with Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS) and participate in events with the Youth Union and national Youth Parliament.
- To meet and work with groups and agencies that work with and around the issues affecting young people to ensure the needs of young people are addressed.
- To inform Lichfield District Council and its partners of young people's views so that they can make decisions about young people more effectively.
- To organise, promote, and encourage activities, events and opportunities for young people from Lichfield District.
- To celebrate and promote the achievements and success of young people in Lichfield District.
- Work in partnership with local press to promote the work and views of LDYC.

Membership:

- Initially, LDYC will consist of six elected representatives per school. One third of members must be present to meet quorum.
- Young people can become members by standing for election in their schools. Elections will be held every 2 years.
- All members must be between the ages of 11 and 18 years inclusive on their acceptance to LDYC
- Each member must attend school in Lichfield District.
- A member of LDYC may resign at any time by informing the LDYC Chairperson in writing.
- The Term of Office for each Youth Councillor will be 2 years from the election event. Members are eligible to stand for re-election providing that they still meet the age requirements.

Co-Opted Members

- LDYC aims to be representative of all young people within Lichfield District. Due to the nature of elections, not all groups or certain life defining factors may be represented in the membership of LDYC. These may include:
 - Looked after young people
 - Young carers
 - Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds
 - Young people with disabilities
 - Young people who are parents
 - Young people who are homeless
 - LGBTQ+ Young people
 - Young people from the travelling community
 - Young people who are refugees or asylum seekers
 - Young offenders

- To ensure that the views and voice of these young people are represented, young people from these groups may be co-opted onto LDYC. A co-opted member need not be democratically elected at the annual elections but will be elected by the group they represent (where appropriate). Co-optees have full voting rights and will serve a term of office until the next Election event, where they are eligible to stand for re-election.

Officers:

- LDYC has four officers; Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer
- Officers hold their posts for one year.
- Officer positions are elected by LDYC members.
- In the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, a temporary Chair may be adopted for specific meetings.
- LDYC may appoint other officers, as it considers necessary to meet its needs. These posts will be taken up by elected members of LDYC.

Meetings:

- LDYC will meet once per month in the Lichfield District Council chamber at the Frog Lane premises.
- LDYC may hold additional meetings to address specific issues and tasks as and when is considered necessary.
- LDYC may invite anyone with special knowledge or experience relevant to the aims and objectives of the LDYC to sit in and participate in meetings. These people will have no voting rights.
- All decisions will be made by a majority of members present. Voting will be done on a one member one vote basis. If there is a tie the Chairperson will have the casting vote.
- Decision making by voting can only take place if one third of members are present (not including vacancies).
- Officers will hold strategic planning meetings at least every 3 months. These meetings will formulate plans that will be proposed at full council for final decision making.

Attendance:

- Members of LDYC are expected to attend all full meetings. Where this is not possible, they must send apologies.
- All non-attendance at meetings will be recorded regardless of whether or not apologies have been given.

- Non-attendance is acceptable if apologies have been given prior to the meeting, to the Chairperson or to the LDYC support staff.
- Persistent non-attendance will be addressed by the group. Correspondence will be sent to the non-attending member asking them to attend the next meeting or their membership may cease.

Political Views

- LDYC is a non-party political organisation.
- Members may still hold allegiance and/or membership of a political party but must be aware that they do not represent that party on council.
- Members can meet with any political party at any time as long as it is not used in any way to gain votes for that party.

Voting

- A majority voting system will be used by LDYC, using either a show of hands or where required a secret ballot.
- Where there is a vote split equally, the Chairperson will have the casting vote.

Equal Opportunities:

- All members of LDYC are equal in status. LDYC recognises that we live in a society where discrimination operates to the disadvantage of many groups in society and believes that all persons have the right to be free from discrimination of all types.
- LDYC are committed to pursuing Equality of Opportunity for all. LDYC will ensure fairness is built until all we do. All those involved in the work of LDYC will be expected to promote equality and justice at all opportunities and will ensure that no-one is treated unfairly or discriminated against.
- All those working with LDYC will be expected to challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Finance and Budget:

- LDYC will be provided with an annual budget as set by Lichfield District Council.
- The LDYC support staff will take responsibility for the monitoring of any finances and budgets, including funds raised by Youth Council members or any external funds received for the Youth Council.
- Any additional funds raised by young people for LDYC will be placed in the LDYC bank account.
- Decision making regarding how the annual budget is spent will be undertaken by the Treasurer, Chair and members of the Youth Council in consultation with support staff. However, youth council holds overall responsibility for budget allocation.

Alterations to the Constitution:

- The Constitution may only be amended by a majority decision at the first annual meeting of LDYC or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Dissolution:

- LDYC may be dissolved by a majority decision at a meeting of all members, called for this specific purpose.
- The reasons for the dissolution must be put in writing and sent to all members 2 weeks before the meeting.