

Lichfield District Youth Council (LDYC)

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement

Date: 3 April 2024

Agenda Item: _____

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Key Decision? NO

Local Ward N/A

Members



Lichfield
District Council

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The creation of Lichfield District Youth Council (LDYC) was agreed at Cabinet in September 2022 with the primary objective being to provide a dedicated platform for young individuals to vocalise and address important issues. Members from secondary schools in the district form part of LDYC, which has identified their key focus areas as mental health, climate change, community safety, affordable housing, and youth employment.
- 1.2 Since its establishment, LDYC has actively participated in various LDC initiatives, providing feedback on the 2050 Strategy, suggesting improvements for the council's website, being consulted on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and on the current Recycling and Climate Change Campaign. LDYC has also engaged in projects and community events such as the launch of the Social Progress Index and the Fuse Festival.
- 1.3 Initially granted a £60,000 budget over three years, LDYC has spent £6,967.08 to date, with the additional allocation of £6,000 for charity pot funding grants with aim to be launched in June 2024.
- 1.4 In January 2024, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a briefing note on LDYC. Most of the information provided in that brief has been included in this report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the activities of Youth Council over this year of operation and recommend changes or improvements that could be implemented.

3. Background

Overview

- 3.1 The establishment of LDYC was sanctioned at the Cabinet meeting in September 2022. The primary objective behind the formation of LDYC was to provide a dedicated platform for young individuals to vocalise and address issues that are important to them. It seeks to empower young individuals to have a say in the development of their communities, as well as the services they access and engage with. Furthermore, LDYC functions as a consultative body, providing a platform for engaging young people on decisions that impact their lives within the district.
- 3.2 All secondary schools in the district were extended invitations to join LDYC, and efforts were made to engage with young individuals educated at home through Staffordshire County Council. The inaugural LDYC meeting in January 2023 included the election of its Chair and served as an introduction of LDYC

to various local youth organisations, such as Liberty Jamboree, Fun Club Hub, and The Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services. Subsequent meetings of LDYC have identified key focus areas, including mental health, climate change/environmental sustainability, and community safety, with discussions on affordable housing and youth employment also being raised. To date, LDYC has conducted eleven meetings.

LDYC as a Consultative Body

3.3 Since its creation LDYC has been consulted on various LDC initiatives. A summary of these consultations are below:

- LDYC provided feedback on the 2050 Strategy, expressing excitement about projects for younger people, the need for more community events, better public transport, and a focus on green communities.
- LDYC suggested improvements for the council's website, including a new colour scheme, clearer visuals, community engagement features, and easier navigation.
- LDYC supported the initiatives in the MTFs such as funding for new leisure facilities and youth services, while advocating for eco-friendly options in housing.
- LDYC were consulted on the Recycling & Climate Change Campaign they proposed activities such as designing recycling stickers for schools and increasing recycling bins availability in schools.

Projects, Funding and Events

- 3.4 In March 2023, an LDYC councillor took part in the launch of the Social Progress Index at Lichfield District Council, which displayed ward-level data on factors like basic human needs and wellbeing foundations. The councillor appreciated that the index addressed key concerns of young people.
- 3.5 In July 2023, LDYC members participated in the Fuse Festival to connect with the community, gathering feedback from young individuals on district issues and initiatives.
- 3.6 At the February and March 2024 meeting (**meeting outcomes are attached at Appendix A**) it was decided to create a funding pot to provide grants to local charities and non-profit community groups that benefit young people in the district. LDYC have allocated £6,000 of their budget to this and would like to see this launched by June 2024.
- 3.7 At the February 2024 meeting, stipulations of grant funding for Fun Club Hub were agreed. A copy of these signed stipulations by the grantee can be found at **Appendix B**. An outline of how this grant will be spent is at **Appendix C**. The amount of funding is detailed in the table in the **Budget** section of this report. The grant was paid to Fun Club Hub on the 4 March 2024.
- 3.8 Discussions are underway on other projects LDYC would like to work on however no consensus has been reached yet but there is a focus on tackling anti-social behaviour in the district.

Attendance, Resignations and Appointments

- 3.9 On average, fifteen councillors attend meetings, although the actual number may be slightly higher due to some councillors forgetting to sign in. The average attendance is also affected by factors such as councillors being preoccupied with exams, parents' evening, and teacher training days. Additionally, certain schools consider it their responsibility to accompany the students to meetings, leading to youth councillors being unable to attend if the school is unable to facilitate their presence.
- 3.10 As of the current date, we have received notifications of five resignations. Two resignations were from King Edward VI School, where former council members resigned after completing Year 11. These vacancies have been filled by new appointees. Furthermore, three resignations were submitted by members of Erasmus Darwin Academy: one due to a departure from the school and the other two after completing a year-long commitment. The former Chair is also among the resignations mentioned

above, as he completed the required one-year commitment in accordance with LDYC's constitution. The school will begin the process of replacing these positions in April.

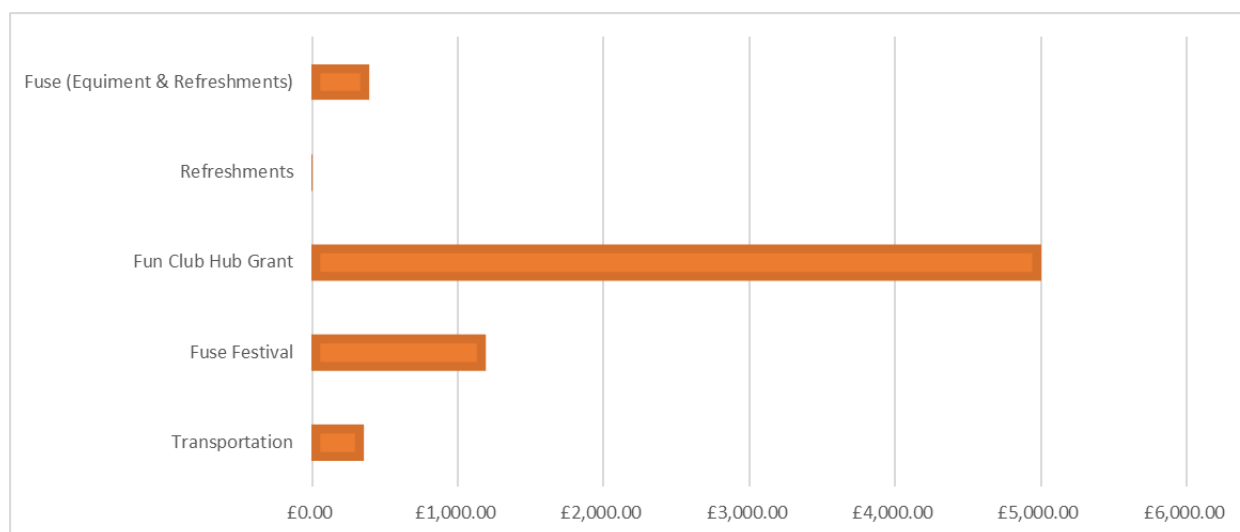
- 3.11 A new Chair was elected for LDYC at the most recent meeting in March. In addition to this, a Vice-Chair and a Social Media Coordinator were also appointed.

Budget

- 3.12 In September 2022 LDYC was granted a £60,000 budget by Cabinet to be spent over three years. The breakdown of this budget is below:

Financial Year	Budget
2022-2023	£10,000
2023-2024	£20,000
2024-2025	£30,000

- 3.13 The below chart details how LDYC has spent their budget to date. In total £6,967.08 has been spent.



- 3.14 Additionally, LDYC have allocated £6000 to towards charity pot funding grants. This would see the total spend at £12,967.08 once the grants have been approved and processed.

Feedback and Implementation Following LDYC's One Year Review

- 3.15 LDYC would like to see less frequent full council meetings with task groups being set up to focus on projects. These tasks groups will then feedback at LDYC Full Council meetings. This will be implemented over the coming months once LDYC have reached consensus on a project/s they would like to work on.
- 3.16 LDYC would like us to reach out to more schools again on their behalf. This will be implemented by summer.
- 3.17 LDYC identified a communication issue concerning the irregular receipt of updates from their school. They expressed a preference to receive direct communication regarding updates and meeting schedules. This change has been initiated and is now in effect.

Updates and Progress

- 3.18 Updates from LDYC meetings are included in the monthly Members' Newsletter to ensure they are informed of discussions taking place.
- 3.19 Going forward, meeting outcomes from LDYC meetings will be brought to Leadership Team meetings. By doing so, Leadership Team can stay informed about the discussions taking place and ensure that LDYC's perspectives and insights are being appropriately considered and addressed.

- 3.20 Feeding back to LDC councillors and integrating updates from LDYC into Leadership Team meetings will enhance collaboration between LDYC and LDC and also facilitate a more inclusive decision-making process.
- 3.21 A new role of Social Media Co-ordinator has been created. This will help facilitate LDYC's online presence, enable them to engage with the community and help promote any projects and initiatives they wish to work on.
- 3.22 An informative webpage on LDYC is in progress of being created on LDC's website. This will increase the awareness of LDYC and can act as a point of information to the public on what LDYC are up to.

Alternative options	1. To not have a Youth Council which would mean we lose access to underrepresented views.
Consultation	1. Youth councillors were consulted on their first year at LDYC at their February meeting. The feedback can be seen at Appendix A and is discussed at paragraphs 3.15-17 .
Financial implications	1. None. LDYC's budget was previously allocated and agreed in its creation in September 2022. The budget was approved via a £60,000 increase in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy over three financial years.
Approved by Section 151 Officer	Yes/no*
Legal implications	1. None
Approved by Monitoring Officer	Yes/no*
Contribution to the delivery of the strategic plan	1. LDYC fulfils the aims of the strategic plan by providing a platform for young people to have a voice in decision-making processes, fostering youth engagement and participation in community issues, and promoting the overall well-being and development of young individuals within the community.
Equality, diversity and human rights implications	1. By establishing LDYC as a platform for young people to voice their opinions, address issues that are important to them, and participate in decision-making processes, this demonstrates a commitment to promoting equality and ensuring that the voices of young individuals are heard and considered in the development of policies and services. Additionally, the report highlights initiatives and activities undertaken by LDYC to promote inclusivity, address key concerns of young people, and support community engagement.
EIA logged by Equalities Officer	Yes/no* Equalities Officer confirmed not required.
Crime & safety Issues	1. LDYC can help support the objectives of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 by engaging young people in crime prevention efforts, promoting community safety, addressing the needs of at-risk youth, and advocating for the interests of young people in discussions related to crime and disorder.

Data assessment	1. LDYC can impact the Social Progress Index by ensuring youth representation in decision-making processes, proposing and leading youth-specific initiatives to address social issues, increasing community engagement among young people, advocating for policies that promote social progress, and ultimately contributing to improvements in SPI indicators related to opportunities, well-being, and basic human needs.
Environmental impact (including climate change and biodiversity)	1. LDYC can impact environmental issues, by advocating for policies, leading projects, collaborating with local organisations, and empowering youth to act for a more sustainable future. Their efforts can raise awareness, drive community engagement, and influence decision-making to address environmental challenges effectively.
GDPR / Privacy impact assessment	1. None

	Risk description & risk owner	Original score (RYG)	How we manage it	New score (RYG)
A	One potential risk of the report on the Lichfield District Youth Council (LDYC) could be the challenge of maintaining consistent attendance and engagement among youth councillors, especially during busy periods such as exams, parents' evenings, and teacher training days. This could impact the effectiveness and continuity of LDYC's activities and decision-making processes.		To overcome this risk, strategies such as providing flexible meeting schedules, leveraging digital platforms for virtual participation, and ensuring clear communication about the importance of consistent attendance could help mitigate	
B	One challenge that LDYC may face is ensuring effective budget management to optimise the allocation and utilisation of funds in alignment with its objectives and priorities.		To mitigate this risk, establishing clear budget guidelines and oversight mechanisms, and promoting accountability and transparency in financial decision-making processes could help prevent potential issues related to budget management.	
C	Another potential risk for LDYC could be the limited awareness and visibility of the council within the community. If young individuals and relevant stakeholders are not adequately informed about the existence and purpose of LDYC, there may be challenges in attracting participation, engaging with the community, and effectively advocating for youth-related issues.		To overcome this risk, LDYC could enhance its outreach efforts through targeted communications, social media campaigns, community events, and partnerships with local organisations to raise awareness about LDYC, its initiatives, and opportunities for involvement. Improved visibility and outreach can help increase community engagement, broaden participation, and strengthen the impact of LDYC in addressing youth issues within the district.	

Background documents	Cabinet Report September 2022 - Lichfield District Youth Council - Policy Proposal https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=1876&Ver=4
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Relevant web links	-
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