

Epping Forest Youth Council

Constitution

Agreed Mission statement and Purpose of the Epping Forest Youth Council

“To represent the views of young people and see they are put into action.”

Setting Aims and Objectives

The Youth Council must agree its aims and objectives for their Term of Office within six months of election.

Term of Office

The Youth Councillor's Term of Office shall run for two years following their Annual meeting.

Chairman and Vice Chairman:

The Chairman of the Youth Council meetings shall be elected on a meeting by meeting rolling basis with the Chairman for the following meeting being appointed at each Youth Council meeting. The Vice-Chairman will then assume the position of Chairman for the full Council meeting following the one that they have been Vice Chairman.

At the annual meeting the Youth Council shall appoint a Chairman as the first item of business.

The position of Chairman shall be open to all voting youth councillors up to a recommended maximum of twice in any one Youth Council Term of Office.

General Principles

The following general principles of operation are agreed:

- (a) The Youth Council is non-party political and does not affiliate itself to any Political group or party;
- (b) Youth Council members will not miss school to undertake any duties in connection with the Youth Council unless in exceptional circumstances and this is agreed in advance with their Parent or Carer and Head Teacher of the School concerned.
- (c) Support will be supplied to the Youth Council by officers of Epping Forest District Council, who will ensure resources are available to the Youth Council to operate;
- (d) The frequency, venue, dates and times of Full Youth Council meetings, training and working groups will be agreed by the Youth Council at their annual meeting.
- (e) Agenda for full Youth Council meetings will be sent to members' home addresses five clear days before each meeting, alternatively Youth Councillors can request that the Agenda be emailed to them five clear days before each meeting. Minutes of all Youth Council meetings will be taken to record the decision made at each meeting and confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

(f) Voting on issues at Youth Council shall be by majority by show of hands. The Chairman has the right to vote but no second or casting vote. The Youth Council members will be bound by such decisions.

(g) Youth Council meetings shall be open to attendance by the public by prior arrangement and stakeholder/officers/District Councillors can be asked to attend if requested;

(h) Youth Council meetings shall be webcast with agreement of Youth Council members;

(i) Youth Council members shall keep senior district council members and officers informed of their work including regular liaison as necessary;

(j) The Youth Council shall be able to appoint working groups as necessary to meet their agreed objectives with reports and action from those groups being agreed via the Full Youth Council meetings. It is expected that each Youth Councillor will be a member of at least one working group if appointed by the Youth Council.

(k) The Youth Council may, at any Youth Council meeting, determine individual member responsibilities to be reviewed at the annual meeting. Such responsibilities shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Youth Council Membership

There shall be three types of voting member:

- (a) two nominated representatives from each secondary school in the district;
- (b) two from Epping Forest College elected in a manner determined by their own college; and
- (c) up to five co-opted independent members from young people attending School/Sixth Form/College/Home Educated and working within or outside the district, with their membership being determined using appointment criteria agreed by the Youth Council and appointed by the Youth Council or by a Panel of members appointed by the Youth Council at the annual meeting and priority will be given to new candidates and previous Youth Councillors who had not completed a full term of office.

The following shall be co-opted non-voting members:

Those Epping Forest members of the Young Essex Assembly not already members of the Epping Forest Youth Council.

Other eligibility criteria

In addition to the requirements for voting members, Youth Councillors must:

- (a) Be aged between 12 and 17 in the year of their appointment; and
- (b) Be living in the district.

Ceasing to be a youth councillor:

Members will automatically cease to be a Youth Councillor:

- (a) On the date of the annual meeting if not re-elected;
- (b) From the date of a written letter of resignation – resignations will not cause a re-election to be held unless the Youth Council determine otherwise; or
- (c) By failing to attend at least 50% of scheduled meetings, training, or working group meetings in any rolling six month period unless their absence for a longer term has been agreed in advance by the Youth Council. Reasons for absence must be advised to the Council Officers in advance
- (d) There shall be a warning limit of 60% . If a Youth Councillors attendance drops below 60% within three month period then the appropriate officer will advise the Councillor accordingly.

Conduct:

All Youth Councillors must abide by the following conduct rules:

- Every member of the Youth Council should attend meetings and training and must send apologies to the designated officer if unable to attend.
- Be on time to meeting they are expected to attend.
- Mobile phones should be set to silent or vibrate during meetings or training and members should leave the meeting to answer a call.
- Only one person should talk at a time and always through the Chairman at Youth Council meetings. There should not be any background chat.
- Respect each other and each others views, and must not be discriminatory, judgemental, racist, sexist or offensive regardless of gender, religion, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, medical conditions, social behaviour or sexual orientation.
- Work together with each other and not exclude any other Youth Councillor from any task.
- Freely offer views, thoughts and suggestions and give and receive feedback in a constructive way.
- To treat information given to them with sensitivity and appropriate confidentiality.
- Not to do anything that would bring the Youth Council or Epping Forest District Council into disrepute.
- When attending any Council meetings or other events, always conduct themselves in a way that meets the conduct criteria above, wearing ID and uniform and appropriate dress.

Constitutional Review

Reviews of this Constitution will be undertaken as necessary and at the end of the Youth Council Term of Office. All changes proposed shall be made at the Youth Council meetings with the agreement by majority vote of those present.

Financial matters

Epping Forest District Council to meet transport costs of attending meetings, training and other events, on request and with prior agreement.

Dissolution clause

In the event of the Youth Council being dissolved, any received Grant Funded money that remains unspent after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities of the Youth Council shall be transferred to any organisation with similar purposes which is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual members.