

AGENDA 11, Enc viii) Report of the Youth Coordination Meeting, held on Tuesday 17th June 2025

WORKING GROUP MEETING NOTICE

This is a working group meeting comprising officers and councillors. It is not a formal meeting of the Town Council and is therefore not subject to the statutory requirements for council meetings, including clear days' notice, agenda publication rules, and formal meeting procedures.

This working group examines issues and develops recommendations. Any decisions or recommendations arising from this meeting will need to be formally considered and approved through proper council meeting procedures to have official effect.

To note the terms of reference as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

PRESENT

Cllr Caroline Ball, Cllr Louis Brown, Cllr Kerry Davison, Cllr Karl Green, Cllr Lynne Grimshaw, Cllr Paul Wright, Sarah Eden, Sharon Parmley

1. Agree Chair

Cllr Caroline Ball was AGREED Chair.

2. Agree Vice Chair

Cllr Paul Wright was AGREED Vice-Chair.

3. Budget and Capacity

The meeting received the note that the Youth Advisory Committee Budget includes over £51k to deliver youth priorities, including where spending has been directed.

Members discussed the potential availability of an inclusion award to counter financial barriers. There was also discussion of the following, but acknowledgement that spending should be youth-led:

- Youth Festival
- Junior Gym
- Commissioning Services, i.e. Community Safety Team, etc.
- Youth Shelters with Wi-Fi

4. Youth Survey

Members received the current analysis of data from the youth survey, previously sent to Cllrs in March. This survey has remained available for completion, was sent to all linked youth groups, and actively engaged by Sharon and Gary at school events.

It was discussed that the numbers completing the survey were low (124). Sarah outlined that Sharon and Gary had been into Northumberland College and Dukes Academy, at events they held, that the survey was available online, and had been shared with youth groups. More active completion would take significant staff time. Sharon advised that young people preferred completing the survey online and they only had access to one laptop and one tablet at the events in school and college.

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It was **AGREED** more engagement would be good and the youth groups would be key to this.

5. Free Swim Update

An update on the numbers and costs for swim sessions was received. It was **AGREED** that Wednesday and Saturday sessions should be supported throughout the school summer holidays. It was discussed that it would be great to increase numbers, and the video and publicity have been amazing, but the cost as a proportion of numbers visiting was excellent value for money. Cllr Ball spoke about the families visiting that otherwise would not be able to. Cllr Green asked if there as an opportunity to combine wate safety as part of the sessions, with an instructor. It was **AGREED** this would be requested; however, it was acknowledged that lessons have to be booked whereas these sessions allow families and young people to simply turn-up. We are aware that anything with a booking system can often be a barrier. We would need to explore booking water safety sessions via a mechanism of referral.

Cllr Green asked about the availability of the inflatable for some of the sessions over the summer holidays. It was **AGREED** to request this and to allow additional budget which would likely be required.

Date	Term	No of Participants	Feedback	Cost
26/10/24	October Half Term	34		£72.00
02/11/24	October Half Term	39		£72.00
	Total	73		£144.00
26/02/25	February Half Term	34	Video taken at these session, very positive feedback, great for families with more than one child, gives families a free activity to do with the kids through the holidays, good for spending some family time in the pool.	£72.00
01/03/25	February Half Term	29		£72.00
	Total	63		£144.00
16/04/25	Easter Half Term	36		£72.00
19/04/25	Easter Half Term	39		£72.00
23/04/25	Easter Half Term	33		£72.00
26/04/23	Easter Half Term	35		£72.00
	Total	143		£288.00
24/05/25	May Half Term	36		£72.00
28/05/25	May Half Term	0	Session cancelled due to leak in pool	
	Total	36		£72.00

Further to meeting, additional swim sessions have been booked but unfortunately the centre doesn't have the staffing capacity to cover additional inflatable sessions.

6. Riverside Open Day

It was **AGREED** to receive an update on preparations for the Riverside Open Day. The Riverside Open Day is scheduled for Saturday 12th July 2025, from 10:00am-2:00pm at the

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Sea Cadets Building and Rowing Club House. The event will feature three main activities: learn-to-paddle sessions by the Paddle Board Club (with advance booking required), Sea Cadets open house focusing on recruitment and volunteer opportunities, and Cambois Rowing Club tours including boat viewing and rowing machine trials. The event aims to showcase local water sports activities and encourage youth engagement in maritime activities. Following liaison on Town Council support required and the capacity to support the event, **it was AGREED** to fund the cost of food and refreshments being made available throughout the day. Sharon extended an invite to all Cllrs and advised that we would be promoting the event.

7. Ashington Pride Picnic

It was AGREED to receive an update following communication with Pride Action North on this potential event led by them in September, and funding via Events Budget (for which £3,000 was set aside). Sharon confirmed that staffing capacity at PAN has resulted in conflicting information about their ability to deliver the event.

Since the meeting PAN has confirmed that they do not have the capacity to deliver the event in September.

8. Youth Services Gathering and Ashington Children's Community Meeting

The committee received a report outlining capacity challenges in delivering on youth survey findings, which showed young people want action rather than consultation, including regular social media engagement, events, and ongoing forums. With over £50k budget available but limited office capacity, options discussed included commissioning external delivery versus building internal capacity through additional staffing.

Following this discussion, the committee considered a proposal to strengthen the Youth Advisory Committee through partnership with the Youth Groups Gathering, initiated by Carla Thompson's community engagement work. The proposal suggests inviting youth group representatives to join the committee as non-councillor members, similar to the Climate and Environment Committee model, to leverage their frontline expertise, established networks, and community credibility.

The committee supported pursuing formal collaboration with the Youth Groups Gathering, with authority sought to take necessary steps to formalise a new Youth Advisory Group structure including non-councillor members, subject to youth groups' support for the collaboration.

END OF MEETING