



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the informal meeting of the Witney Youth Council held at 4.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney on Tuesday 23rd June 2026.

Youth Councillors Present:

Three Youth Councillors

Witney Town Council Mentors Present:

Cllr J Aitman

Cllr G Meadows

Cllr Sandra Simpson

Witney Town Council Officers Present:

A Hathaway – Admin Assistant for Communications and Engagement

The Councillors in attendance were Youth Council mentors and were there to guide and answer questions. Officers advised Members this was their opportunity to provide a voice for young people in Witney and the Town Council would try and bring about their ideas and suggestions.

1. Apologies

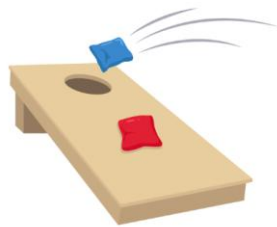
Apologies from two youth councillors were received.

2. Witney Youth Council's own Pizza and Politics at Witney Carnival

Youth Councillors discussed possible activities for their Pizza and Politics stall at the Witney Carnival and agreed that cornhole and soft darts would provide a good range of activities for different age groups.

It was proposed that young residents could take part in one of the activities to win a cold drink, in return for answering a question on a whiteboard using stickers. The following questions were suggested for consideration at the next meeting, where Youth Councillors can vote on which to use:

1. Is the social media ban for under-16s a good thing?
2. What is the biggest issue for young people in witney?



Cornhole ✓



Soft Darts ✓



Paint a wood slice X

Cold drinks will be purchased from the Youth Council budget, with the type and quantity to be discussed and agreed at the next meeting.

Participants could also be given a card or leaflet with details of how to apply to join the Youth Council, as well as information about the next meeting (or a September meeting as school starts), which will be open to public participation, as discussed under item 4.

Resolved: That, the Youth Council Admin create a business card with Youth Council details and the upcoming meetings to hand out at the carnival.

3. National Youth Council Update

The most recent news from the NYC UK was received and discussed. Details of what they discussed about can be read below:



In April 2026, 17 young people were democratically elected by YCUK's founding member organisations, joining two existing UK Young Ambassadors to form an Executive Board of 19 young leaders.

The Executive Board, focus on strategic leadership, policy development and representation. Through this work, the Board help ensure young people's priorities continue to shape UK-wide decision-making and Youth Council UK's long-term direction.

Most recent news:

NYA response to Government announcement of social media ban for under-16s

"The Government's announcement of a social media ban for under-16s is an important recognition of the scale and urgency of online harm."

"We welcome action to strengthen controls on addictive design, including features like livestreaming and harmful AI models - issues that young people themselves have consistently highlighted as needing urgent attention."

"Without stronger accountability for technology companies, effective regulation and proper support for young people, there is a risk that harm is displaced rather than reduced."

"The announcement of the £132.5 million 'Every Child Can' programme is therefore especially welcome. It has the potential to expand access to enrichment activities and provide the safe places and trusted adults to prepare young people to challenge misinformation and support safe connection across both physical and digital spaces."

"Youth work has a vital role to play in this."

"Older teenagers are equally vulnerable to risk at a critical time of forming their identity, becoming independent and making decisions about their futures."

"Lasting protection for our young people and the wider population will ultimately come from making online spaces safer, holding technology companies to account, and investing in youth work and digital education that gives every young person the confidence to navigate the digital world safely."

6. Further Recruitment Opportunities – Open meetings

Youth Councillors voted all in favour of opening Youth Council meetings to other young people who may wish to attend. However, as the meeting was not quorate, with fewer than four Youth Councillors present, the decision could not be formally confirmed and will therefore need to be brought back for a further vote at the next formal Youth Council meeting.

Open meetings would be a good way to introduce the Youth Council to possible members, including friends of existing Youth Councillors, who may be interested in joining but would like to learn more about how the Council operates before making a commitment. Any visitors who would like to speak or ask questions could do so under the Public Participation section of the agenda.

4. Items for Future Agenda

Further discussion on the final details and confirmation of youth councillor attendance for the Witney Carnival should be included.

The Youth Council Administrative Assistant proposed holding a small litter-picking event as part of Love Parks Week at the end of July. It was suggested that this could take place on 1 or 2 August, with further details, including the location and any potential collaboration with local youth groups that already organise regular litter picks, to be discussed at the next meeting

Dates of Future Meetings

The dates of the upcoming Youth Council meetings were received.

- Thursday 9 July 2026 – 4PM to 5PM
- Wednesday 12 August 2026 – 4PM to 5PM (Informal)
- Thursday 10 September 2026 – 4PM to 5PM
- Tuesday 13 October 2026 – 4PM to 5PM (Informal)

The Meeting closed at 4.30pm.