Guidelines to the 2015 Youth Cabinet Elections
I joined the Youth Cabinet because I wanted to be part of an organisation that was able to make a difference in Reading and improve the voice of young people.

Joining is a great way of doing just that, becoming a member provides you with countless opportunities to meet with councillors - so that you can tackle issues such as Mental Health in Reading. Being the Member of Youth Parliament for Reading is a truly unique experience. Aside from the additional bonus of standing out for university applications or any other form of further study, the skills that you learn such as public speaking are invaluable for later life.

Being the MYP is truly a unique experience, allowing me to be the voice of young people in Reading. There is always something going on, so the only thing left to do is for you to register as a candidate and take part in the elections!

Good luck!

Adrian

Member of Youth Parliament for Reading and Youth Cabinet member

readingmyp@gmail.com
FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

Who can be a member of the Cabinet?
Anyone who lives, works or goes to school or college in Reading can stand for election.

How old do I have to be?
As long as you are aged between 11 and 18 on 1st January 2016, you can stand for election.

How many places are there on the cabinet?
The 2015 election has 14 new places. These will be divided between the four different areas of Reading:

- Reading North (Postcode starting RG4)
- Reading East (Postcode starting RG1 and RG6)
- Reading South (Postcode starting RG2)
- Reading West (Postcode starting RG30 and RG31)

In addition to this there is the opportunity to nominate yourself as a school representative and each school will have 2 places on the Youth Cabinet non-executive committee.

On the Nomination Form, you’ll see that you are asked to state what area you would like to be nominated for. This could be where you live or the area that your school, college, work or youth club is located in, it is up to you.

How are the candidates elected on to the cabinet?
Voting will take place in youth clubs, youth centres, schools and colleges. For each area the candidates with the most votes will be given a place on the cabinet.

For example if you live in Reading North, and there are seven candidates competing for a place on the cabinet, the four candidates with the most votes will be given a place on the cabinet.

Likewise the two school representatives will be decided by the two candidates from each school with the highest number of votes.

If I decide to stand how do I campaign?
Don’t worry. We will provide you with posters and flyers which you can use to publicise your campaign and will support you as much as you need. If you are standing, you must also attend a training day we will hold on Saturday 14th November 2015.
What’s a manifesto?

Your manifesto is a short written statement saying why young people should vote for you. It should tell young people why you would make a fantastic youth cabinet member and what you plan to do to make Reading a better place for young people. You could make a campaign pledge on the issues that affect you and the young people in your area or school.

Your manifesto might look something like these ones below:

**Hi, I’m Zak, I’m 15 and I go to …. school. I look much older than 15 though and when I get the bus to school, even if I am in my uniform, the driver makes me pay adult fares. If I’m elected on to the Cabinet, I want to make fares for public transport cheaper for young people and make sure that drivers know we are still young people. Vote for me!**

**Hi, I’m Liz and, I’m a member of my local youth club. Our youth club would like more places for young people to hang out in our area and for the place to look a bit nicer, with less rubbish and graffiti. If you vote for me I will do everything I can to make Reading a better place for young people. Please vote for me!**

How often does the Youth Cabinet meet?

This year the Youth Cabinet has been split into two groups:

**The Executive Committee – Youth Cabinet:** Made up of the elected Area representatives, this group meets up every other Tuesday at the Civic Offices, starting at 4.30pm and finishing at 6.30pm. This is the group that develops and works on local campaigns and also supports the work of the UK Youth Parliament’s national campaigns.

**The Non-executive Committee:** Made up of the school representatives, this group meets up once every 6 weeks (once per half-term) at the Civic Offices on a Tuesday, starting at 4.30pm and finishing at 6.30pm. The work of this group is vital in supporting the campaigns of the Youth Cabinet. The work of the Youth Cabinet is heavily reliant on engagement from schools so you will be a key link between the work of the Youth Cabinet and your school. Due to the fact that meetings for school representatives are only every 6 weeks this role is good for people who want to get involved but perhaps can’t commit to fortnightly meetings.

How much time does the Youth Cabinet take up?

Like all things the more you put in the more you will get out of being on the Youth Cabinet. We anticipate Youth Cabinet will take approx 3hrs per week on average, though if there is something you are really passionate about you may find yourself spending a bit more. No matter how much you do, you should make sure that it does not interfere with school or college commitments.
What happens in a Youth Cabinet meeting?

The meetings are run by the young people on the Youth Cabinet. We decide what we are going to talk about; this could be about our campaign work or issues affecting young people. The cabinet decide who to invite to our meetings and who we would like to meet. This could be people like Councillors and MPs, and people who work with young people. Our meetings are not all work – we try to do some fun things as well and occasionally our youth workers buy us pizza!

What do I get out of being on the Youth Cabinet?

You will have the opportunity to campaign on issues that affect you and the young people you represent. You will meet new people, get involved in exciting projects and develop new skills (and maybe improve existing ones). Your time spent on the Youth Cabinet will help you complete the Youth Achievement Award scheme, so you will get a nationally recognised certificate. Obviously you will get the respect and admiration of your peers and it looks good on your CV!

What is UKYP?

UKYP stands for United Kingdom Youth Parliament. If you are a member of the youth cabinet you are eligible to stand for election to be Reading’s Member of the Youth Parliament (MYP) and Deputy Member of the Youth Parliament (DMYP). The MYP and Deputy MYP attend regional meetings approximately every 6 weeks. The MYP attends the UKYP Annual Sitting and takes part in a debate which is held in the Houses of Parliament. This year’s House of Commons Debate will be on the 13th November 2015 and will be broadcast live on the BBC Parliament channel. UKYP is an opportunity to represent young people on a national basis and may involve things such as attending meetings with government ministers!

What happens if I’m not successful?

Don’t worry – there are loads of other things that you can get involved in if you want to represent the views of young people in Reading. You could become a member of your Area Youth Forum or become a Young Inspector or a Young Commissioner. Contact Tom or David for more information about these opportunities.
Youth Cabinet structure 2015-2016

- **National representatives**
  - UK Youth Parliament (UKYP)

- **Area representatives**
  - 4 West
  - 2 East
  - 4 South
  - 4 North

- **School representatives**
  - 2 representatives per school

- **Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) & Deputy Member of Youth Parliament (DMYP)**

- **Youth Cabinet executive committee**
  - Representing and getting involved with local areas
  - Fortnightly meetings focused on Youth Cabinet campaigns and supporting the work of UKYP

- **Non-executive committee**
  - Representing schools and acting as a key link between schools and the youth cabinet
  - 6 weekly meetings feeding into and supporting the work of the Youth Cabinet

- **Area meetings**
  - Quarterly meeting's combining school’s and area Youth Cabinet representatives
What do I do next?

If you have read this pack and thought that you would like to be a member of Reading Youth Cabinet, great!! Here’s what to do next:

- Be sure you have read and understood everything that is said in this booklet about being a Reading Youth Cabinet member.

- Talk to your youth worker, teacher, social worker or project worker and tell them you want to stand for election. If you don’t have any of these workers, drop us an e-mail at tom.woolmer@reading.gov.uk or david.dobraszczyk@reading.gov.uk.

- If you know somebody who is already on the Youth Cabinet talk to them to find out more.

- Think about the commitment: Can you give your time to this project? How will you try to represent the views of young people in Reading? Will you be able to balance school, social life and being a cabinet member?

- Complete the nomination form on the back of this pack and send it back to us. You can do this by completing the below form, or doing it online and e-mailing, by going to www.readingyouth.com.

- Return the form to us and you’ll be in the elections! The details for how to do this are on the form.

After we have received your nomination form we will be in touch!
Candidate’s Nomination Form
Reading Youth Cabinet
Elections 2015-16

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<td>Date of Birth:</td>
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<td>School/College/Youth Club:</td>
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<td>Email: (please write clearly)</td>
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<td>Why I want to be a member of Reading Youth Cabinet: (max 50 words)</td>
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<td>What skills and qualities I will bring to the cabinet: (max 50 words)</td>
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<td>Please tick which role(s) you are nominating yourself for. You can choose to nominate yourself as an area and/or school representative. You can only represent one area though.</td>
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<td>Executive Committee (Youth Cabinet)</td>
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<td>Non-executive committee</td>
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<td>School representative</td>
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<td>What I am going to do for young people in Reading (max 50 words):</td>
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**CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATIONS: Friday 6th November 2015**
(with the exception of nomination at the Youth Cabinet event on 26th November)

For more information please contact
- Tom Woolmer on 0118 9374084 or email Tom.Woolmer@reading.gov.uk
- David Dobraszczyk on 07779429371 or email David.Dobraszczyk@reading.gov.uk

Online version of this form can be found on [www.readingyouth.com](http://www.readingyouth.com). Return the form to us and you’ll be in the elections! You can either give the form to your youth worker or teacher, post it to Tom Woolmer, Upper Floor Door 1, The Hamilton Centre, 135 Bulmershe Road, Reading, RG1 5SG or email it to Tom.Woolmer@reading.gov.uk