

Title of Report:	Education Authority (EA) Youth Services Youth Voice Initiative
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	17th November 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture Community Development Manager / Community Planning

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£0
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	n/a

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide members with information about the **Youth Voice** initiative which forms part of a NI wide overall participation structure within Education Authority (EA) Youth Services.

Youth Voice is a sub-regional structure funded and supported by EA Youth Services with proposed links to every District Council across Northern Ireland. The initiative will work in collaboration with a range of Community Planning Statutory Partners, local EA Youth Services and the local community & voluntary sector. A vital role of the initiative is to represent the views of young people to decision makers.

2.0 Background

Legislation is now in place for young people to have a say in the development of services and policies that affect their lives, namely:-

- The Children's Services Co-operation Act NI (2015).
- The Education Authority (EA) – Priority for Youth (2013).

Youth Voice has been incorporated in a draft action for the newly revised Causeway Coast and Glens Community Planning Delivery Plan 2020 (currently draft pending wider consultation).

The action is led by Council's Community Development Team and focuses on the provision of a borough wide inclusive participative engagement platform to connect more voices to local decision-making bodies for the benefit of all Community Planning partners.

Youth Voice within this context will provide opportunities for young people to actively participate in consultations and engagement with consideration of the views of other young people. Intensive levels of training and leadership development will be provided by EA Youth Services personnel with links into a wider regional structure of activities.

EA Youth Services has stressed that the 4 existing local Youth Councils in Causeway Coast and Glens representing a younger age group 12 to 18+ years and representing the four legacy Council areas, will continue as part of their active citizenship theme and welcome continuing engagement by Council's Youth Champions (usually the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) with these group's activities.

The local Senior Youth Officer is Deirdre Bradley who is first point of contact. Four local Youth Councils are being formed as part of a progression in the EA participative framework ranging through Local Voices, Thematic Voices towards the proposed Youth Voice initiative and onward to regional Networked Voices.

3.0 Recruitment to Youth Voice

Each Youth Voice group will be recruited every two years with the young people committing to a 2 year term. It is proposed that 24 young people will be recruited from the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area as Youth Voice members aged between 16 –21 years. Recruitment will take the form of an independent and open process promoted in schools, further education colleges, outreach and detached events, Youth Service and Council networks and other opportunities. Each Youth Voice will aim to be representative from across the council area (each DEA) and of Section 75 groupings.

4.0 Next Steps

- A local Project Steering Group to support Youth Voice was established in February 2020 just prior to lockdown – it continues to meet virtually to establish the project.
- The group represents the statutory organisations and voluntary groups with clear links to young people and includes Council representation from Community Development,

Good Relations and PCSP. It is currently chaired through Community Planning supported by EA Youth Services.

- An indicative timeline and actions for the initiative is attached which will be adapted to comply with Covid-19 restrictions.

YOUTH VOICE TIMELINE

RECRUITMENT

OPEN ACROSS AREA,
REPRESENTATIVE OF
COMMUNITY
INCLUDING SECTION 75

TRAINING

WORKSHOPS AND
RESIDENTIAL

SENIOR YOUTH OFFICER (Local) & COUNCIL

BIANNUAL MEETINGS

CONSULTATION

ASSESSMENT OF
NEED WITH YOUNG
PEOPLE IN AREA

CELEBRATION

EVENT TO
RECOGNISE
ACHIEVEMENTS

CAPACITY BUILDING DAY

INDUCTION OF
YOUTH VOICE, AND
LAUNCH

MEETINGS

4 MEETINGS A
MONTH: FORMAL;
INTEREST GROUPS;
LOCALISED AREA
MEETINGS; VLE
MEETINGS

STUDY VISIT

UK OR IRELAND

CAMPAIGN

SOCIAL ACTION
PROGRAMME

REVIEW

EVALUATION AND
REVIEW OF
PROCESS

2 YEAR PLAN