

## EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>Report Subject</b>	Young Flintshire Participation Model
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, and Culture
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been developed to provide Cabinet with an overview of the proposed Young Flintshire Participation Model for children and young people to have their voice heard about matters which affect them and speak to key decision makers in the local authority.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee understands and supports the Young Flintshire Participation Model to engage children and young people in Flintshire in matters that impact on them and provide a mechanism for decision makers to hear their views.
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## REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING Participation and Engagement</b>
1.01	<p><b>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)</b></p> <p>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.</p> <p>The Young Flintshire Participation Model supports all articles in the UNCRC, in particular Article 12, where young people have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.</p>
1.02	<p><b>National Participation Standards</b></p> <p>The National Participation Standards in Wales are used to support those who are working with children and young people, and to make sure that youth participation is developed effectively. The standards ensure that children and young people are part of the design, delivery and evaluation of services.</p>
1.03	<p><b>Young Flintshire Aims</b></p> <p>To strengthen participation in Flintshire, a model where both Youth Council and School Council representatives (11-18 years old) collaborate to lead on participation is being proposed under the identity of 'Young Flintshire'. The Young Flintshire Aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Widening opportunities for young people to have their voices heard and to speak directly to decision makers.</li><li>• Providing opportunities for young people to feed into working groups and projects running within the Council which directly affect them.</li><li>• Raising awareness of how Flintshire County Council works and educating young people and communities on democratic processes.</li></ul>
1.04	<p><b>Young Flintshire Participation Model</b></p> <p>School Councils are a legal requirement and are fully operational in all schools in Wales. School Council representatives who are nominated as Associate Pupil Governors (APG's) would be invited from all secondary schools (including Specialist provision and the Pupil Referral Unit) to be members of Young Flintshire from Autumn 2024. (Please see Appendix 1 for an infographic).</p> <p>The Flintshire Youth Council has been in place for many years coordinated by the Youth Service. All young people can become members of the Flintshire Youth Council. The Youth Service also work with a variety of different groups of young people. (Please see Appendix 2 for the infographic which highlights the linked groups). Representatives from</p>

	<p>Youth Council would be invited to be members of Young Flintshire alongside School Council representatives from Autumn 2024.</p> <p>This would be a combined estimated membership of 34 young people participating in Young Flintshire.</p>
1.05	<p>Prior to embarking on a pilot of the participation model, a working group was established of key officers from across Education and Youth, supported by Councillor Mared Eastwood.</p> <p>Significant work has been undertaken to ensure a Young Flintshire Participation Model meets the requirements of the local authority including an equality impact assessment, privacy notice, consent forms and a safeguarding risk assessment.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to different methods of communication with our young people, to encourage participation and give a voice to diverse groups, recognising not every young person will be comfortable or engage with a formal process.</p>
1.06	<p><b>Young Flintshire Pilot</b></p> <p>During June and July 2024, a Young Flintshire Pilot took place to explore the proposed model and to understand how it could work in practice. Three identified areas from a young people’s consultation coordinated by Youth Services in Spring 2024 informed the areas of focus during the pilot. The three priority areas identified were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community – Amenities &amp; Safety</li> <li>2. Mental Health &amp; Wellbeing</li> <li>3. Schools and Education</li> </ol> <p>Two school council representatives from nine secondary schools and representatives from the Youth Service took part. An initial face to face workshop for young people, coordinated by Youth Service and Healthy Schools officers, was delivered on June 7<sup>th</sup> in the Lord Barry Jones Chamber.</p> <p>Representatives were then tasked with undertaking a ‘deep dive’ in their school community on the three identified areas from the initial consultation and to provide feedback on these.</p>
1.07	<p>Based on the young people’s ‘deep dive’ findings, a summary report was written to provide Chief Officers with further detail. The Chief Officer Team (COT) then requested support from officers within their portfolios (which were most pertinent to the issues raised in the findings) to respond and consider the findings.</p> <p>Designated officers were asked to provide written and face-to-face feedback to the young people at a meeting chaired by Councillor Eastwood, Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language and Culture on July 12<sup>th</sup>.</p>

Key discussion points covered during the meeting included:

- School nurses are available in different ways in different schools. Young people felt that it would be good to have a consistent approach across schools and that everyone should have access to a school nurse.
- There is lots in place to help young people 0-18 and families with mental health and wellbeing. Officers from Social Services presented on the range of support in place for young people and their families.
- Young people found Contextual Safeguarding, highlighted by Social Services officers, very interesting and how reporting on community observations and anti-social behaviour through school staff, adults, and the police will help to inform this process.
- The majority of young people were not aware the role of town and community councils in managing aspects of community provision such as street lighting. A takeaway message was that young people should report to Streetscene things they think need to be looked at – and officers will then inform the relevant teams / councils to resolve the issue.
- Young people’s ‘deep dives’ suggested that more bins and litter picks would resolve litter and dog fouling. However, examples of projects where more bins and posters had been put in place had sadly shown no impact. The young people agreed it everyone’s responsibility to put litter in the bin and, if a dog owner, to put dog waste in the appropriate bin.

1.08

### **Young Flintshire Pilot Outcomes**

The work undertaken during the pilot brought young people across schools and communities together focusing on common priorities, developing a further a sense of belonging and also an understanding how the Council operates in regard to its decision-making processes. Although the pilot took place over a short period, young people across the various settings built relationships and rapport with others and also developed their confidence. Feedback from young people who attended the pilot included:

*“The launch event was informative and was broken up into activities and group work, with creative exercises.”*

*“The meeting session was more formal, long and had a lot of information presented. Adding more activities, breaks could help this.”*

*“Carrying out more research was easy, we sent out powerpoints, surveys and discussion sheets during tutor time.”*

*“The consultation reports answered key areas and were informative.”*

*“The officer presentations were Informative and helpful. It was good to have presentations from officers.”*

	<i>“We have got lots to share with our peers about how young people can get further support and how we can report things we see through to the council.”</i>
1.09	<p><b>Young Flintshire in Operation 24-25</b></p> <p>The Young Flintshire Participation Model provides an avenue for service areas and departments across the Council to engage with young people directly on potential policies and projects.</p> <p>Once the membership of Young Flintshire is established, identified officers in Healthy Schools Team and the Youth Service will have direct contact with the young people via email.</p> <p>Young Flintshire members will be invited to planned meetings over the course of the school year, which will be a combination of online and face-to-face, at a time most convenient for them. Fun workshops and age-appropriate activities will also be arranged.</p> <p>A Terms of Reference will be established and agreed; meeting notes will be taken and cascaded accordingly.</p> <p>Young Flintshire members will be invited to other opportunities to engage in local democratic process and receive relevant information from appropriate partners.</p>
1.10	<p><b>Town and Community Councils in Flintshire</b></p> <p>In February 2024, Town and Community Councils were invited to share details of how young people in their area are able to input into their council meetings and council structures. Of the 32 Town and Community Councils 24 responded.</p> <p>Mold Town Council has a Primary School and Secondary School Youth Council which has been re-established post-Covid. Penyffordd and Argoed Community Councils both have Young Community Councillors.</p> <p>Four other councils have had successful youth engagement or forums in the past but currently have vacancies. Many councils are keen to explore how other councils are engaging with young people.</p> <p>This has highlighted an area where Young Flintshire could support and work in partnership with Town and Community councils on matters affecting children and young people going forward and to share effective practice.</p>
<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	The Healthy Schools Team and the Youth Service will provide the staff to support the participation model.

2.02	Support and engagement of officers from all Council departments will be drawn in as required. This will include providing written reports to feedback to young people and attending meetings in order to present reports and respond to questions from young people. The support from a number of officers across the range of portfolios in the Council for the pilot project was welcomed and is encouraging.
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<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	Young person's consultation was undertaken Spring 2024 coordinated by the Youth Service.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	Healthy Schools Team and Youth Service staffing support this model and the direct communication avenues with Young Flintshire members. There are no strategic risks related to this policy noted on the Education Portfolio Risk Register.
4.02	It is important officers are allocated to respond to areas that have been raised through young people's consultation activities. Feedback to Young Flintshire must show examples of how the consultation has been reviewed, and how decisions have been made. This will enable young people to feel their voices have been heard and are valued.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 Young Flintshire Model Graphic
5.02	Appendix 2: Youth Council – young people's groups which feed into the Youth Council

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	Welsh Government Children and young people's National Participation Standards <a href="https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/Bilingual-Participation-Standards-poster2016.pdf">https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/Bilingual-Participation-Standards-poster2016.pdf</a>
6.02	Children's Rights in Wales <a href="https://www.gov.wales/childrens-rights-in-wales#30766">https://www.gov.wales/childrens-rights-in-wales#30766</a>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Emma McIntyre, Healthy Schools, and Preschools Officer  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704057  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:Emma.McIntyre@flintshire.gov.uk">Emma.McIntyre@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Claire Sinnott, Learning Advisor – Health, Wellbeing &amp; Safeguarding  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704054  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:Claire.h.sinnott@flintshire.gov.uk">Claire.h.sinnott@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
8.01	<p><b>APG's</b>  Associate Pupil Governors - registered pupils nominated by their school council to be a member of the governing body. They attend full governor meetings to update on work the school council is involved in and support on work the school governing body is carrying out.</p> <p><b>UNCRC</b>  United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> <p><b>Participation Standards</b>  The seven National Participation Standards in Wales are used to support those who are working with children and young people, and to make sure that youth participation is developed properly. They make sure that children and young people are part of the design, delivery, and evaluation of services.</p> <p><b>Contextual Safeguarding</b>  Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to young people outside their home, either from adults or other young people.</p>