

# Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 3 March 2015

## Edinburgh Young People's Participation Strategy – Implementation Update: February 2015

Item number	8.5
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

### Executive summary

---

**Edinburgh Young People's Participation Strategy:** the aim of the young people's participation in Edinburgh is to facilitate young people's meaningful participation in partnership working and decision making, leading to:

- a) Improvements in services for young people;
- b) Learning and development for young people involved.

Young people's participation takes place in many council services and also partner agencies across the city. There is a range of options for young people, from dedicated youth forums to joining open campaign groups or political organisation alongside adults.

This report outlines the implementation of the strategy over the past year.

### Links

---

Coalition pledges	<a href="#">P1, P7 and P33</a>
Council outcomes	<a href="#">CO1-CO6</a>
Single Outcome Agreement	<a href="#">SO3</a>

## Edinburgh Young People's Participation Strategy

### Recommendations

---

It is recommended the Committee:

- 1.1 Continues to support the Edinburgh Young People's Participation Strategy.
- 1.2 Invites young people to report on their work to the Education, Children and Families Committee on a yearly basis.
- 1.3 Advocates, when required, on behalf of young people and supports them to be heard within the full range of Council committees and structures.
- 1.4 Notes that young people's participation is healthy, diverse and not limited to involvement in forums and other formal groups.
- 1.5 Notes that although Council formal structures might be useful for some issues raised by young people, in general formal structures do not always meet the needs of young people and therefore alternative approaches and models to young people's involvement in decision making are required eg the 'Conversation for Action' model.

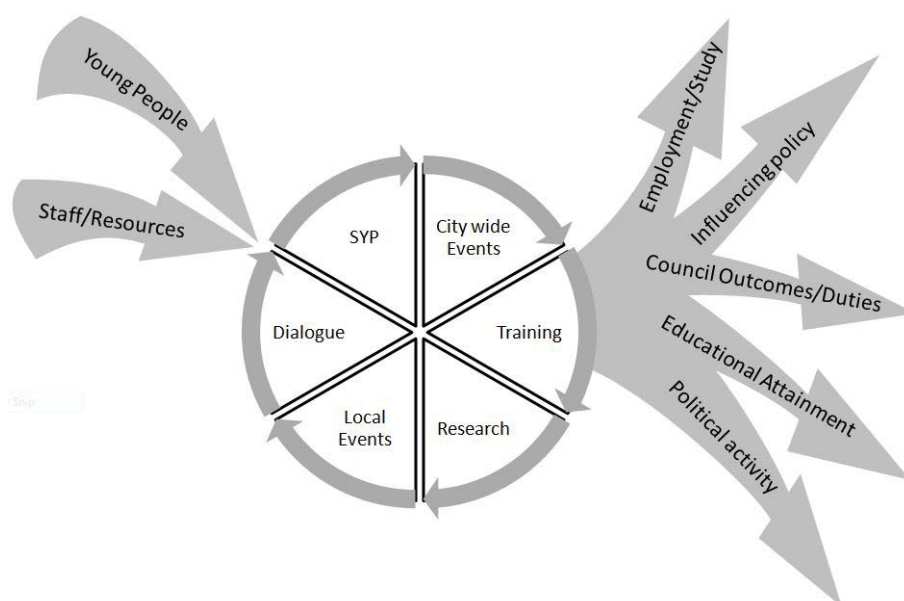
### Background

---

- 2.1 On 10 December 2013, the Edinburgh Young People's Strategy was tabled at the Education, Children and Families Committee. This report recommended the implementation of the Edinburgh Young People's Participation Strategy.
- 2.2 Edinburgh Youth Participation Strategy is delivered by the Community Learning and Development's Participation Team.
- 2.3 Edinburgh Young People's Participation supports young people to make changes on local, citywide and global issues. The aim of young people's participation in Edinburgh is to facilitate young people's meaningful involvement in partnership working and decision making across Edinburgh, leading to improvements in services for young people and development for the young people involved.
- 2.4 Measures of success from the Dec 2013 report and accompanying evidence can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 2.5 This report outlines the implementation of the strategy over the past year.

## Main report

- 3.1 **Edinburgh Young People's Participation Strategy:** the aim of the young people's participation in Edinburgh is to facilitate young people's meaningful participation in partnership working and decision making, leading to:
- Improvements for services for young people
  - Learning and development for young people involved
- 3.2 Young people's participation takes place in many council services and also partner agencies across the city. There is a range of options for young people, from dedicated youth forums to joining an open campaign groups or political organisation alongside adults.
- 3.3 This work complements and is one of the key priorities of the National Community Learning and Development strategic guidance for community planning partnerships, which highlights the importance of involving stakeholders (including young people) in community planning. In addition 'the Requirements for Community learning and Development (Scotland) regulations 2013' that came into force in September 2013 have strengthened the legislative framework for the delivery of service user involvement in planning.
- 3.4 Young people's participation supports young people to make changes on local citywide, national and global issues. This includes, but is not limited to, engaging with Councillors, officers and other decision makers at a range of levels. The work supports colleagues across Children and Families, and other council departments and partner agencies to hear young people's thoughts and concerns on a wide range of issues.
- 3.5 Youth Participation in Edinburgh:



## **Strengthening Community links**

- 3.6 An important element of the participation strategy has been to strengthen young people's links with the Edinburgh Partnership and local level decision making forums.
- 3.7 The Community Learning and Development service (CLD) has identified 6 local participation leads who are actively involving young people in participation activities at a local level.
- 3.8 Examples of local participation activities include:
- the organisation of local Youth Gatherings in East (March 2014 involving 45 young people) and the summer blast in North Edinburgh (June 2014, involving over 500 young people).
  - 'Youth Decides' processes in local communities have also supported young people to have a say in the way budgets are distribution at a local level.
- 3.9 An exemplar of good practice includes North Edinburgh CLD team's partnership working with schools which links schools with local activities and issues. North Edinburgh News have provided journalism training opportunities for students to enable them to write articles for the local newspaper, challenging negative stereotypes of young people by highlighting good news stories. In addition the North CLD participation lead is teaching an elective S2 democracy course '*Power to the People*' which identifies local issues for young people and supports them to challenge and campaign for change.
- 3.10 These activities (Appendix 2) reflect a variety of ways in which CLD neighbourhood teams are involving young people in both the organisation and planning of events locally.

### **Citywide areas of work and development include:**



## **Young People's Events – The Participation Festival and Gathering**

### **The Participation Festival**

- 3.11 This one day event held in February 2014, brought together 75 young people, youth workers and elected members to celebrate and hear about young people's participation in Edinburgh. It highlighted actions taken throughout the year by young people involved in city wide activities as well as providing an opportunity for external agencies to showcase their own participation practice. The Festival of Participation was facilitated and organised by young people drawn from the participation mentor team.

### **The Young People's Gathering**

- 3.12 Gatherings are fun and informal issue based events organised for and by young people. The purpose of the gatherings is to identify issues for young people, which will be taken forward in the action research groups. The 2014 Gathering was held in November 2014 and 45 young people attended the event. It was planned, delivered and reviewed by participation mentors. The following issues were prioritised by those young people who attended of which the top two are currently the focus of young people's action research groups:
- a) Better sex education
  - b) Votes at 16
  - c) Gender Inequality

### **Action Research Groups**

- 3.13 Young people volunteer to be involved in action research groups, the topics of which are identified by the gatherings and then defined as a result of conversations between young people and workers, setting a priority for meaningful learning and action.
- 3.14 The action research process, as identified by City of Edinburgh Council's young people's participation team has 4 stages:
- **Think** about the issue and about why this issue is important for young people in Edinburgh;
  - **Investigate** the current situation and what people think about this issue
  - **Create a resource** to share what we have learned;
  - **Make recommendations** to the people who make decisions about the issue.

However the form that these stages take is flexible, depending upon the issue and the group of young people working on the issue.

- 3.15 Over the course of 2014 there were two action research groups which met and focused on issues which had been identified at the September 2013 Gathering : Poverty and Inequality and Mental Health in Schools.

#### **Poverty and Inequality Action Research Group**

- 3.16 Canongate Youth were identified as a partner organisation for this work as they had already been planning to do some work looking at young people's perception of poverty and were interested in hosting an action research project. The group was made up of 9 young men aged between 16 and 18.

The most significant issue identified over the course of the group was immigration and how their views on immigration had changed across the course of the life of the group:

- How it isn't fair to blame foreigners for taking Scottish people's jobs and houses
- The positive impact that migrants have on Scottish economy and communities
- The high number of people in Edinburgh living in poverty

#### **Mental Health in Schools Action Research Group**

- 3.17 A group of nine young people and two Modern Apprentices worked with Council staff to research two key questions regarding Mental Health Support in schools.

- What can be done to improve awareness, information and education for young people and teachers about mental health?
- Why is mental health stigmatised and what can be done to de-stigmatise it?

- 3.18 The group distributed questionnaires to teachers and pupils, receiving 124 responses from pupils and 47 from teachers. After analysing the information the group decided that they wanted to create a radio play to share the key messages from their learning on this project. After writing the script, they recorded the play and one of the group members drew pictures to animate the play

- 3.19 The key message that the group wanted to get across was about the importance of communication. The radio play encourages people to think about how they could best support a person who may be experiencing difficulties with their mental health. It also encourages young people to think about what they could do if they were experiencing a mental health problem. It emphasises the importance of listening and of not making assumptions about people

- 3.20 A script of the play is available on request. The play can be accessed online at: <http://vimeo.com/95219980#at=1>

### **Conversation for Action**

- 3.21 Chaired by the Convenor for Young People's Participation Strategy, these conversations involve key CEC Officers, partner agencies and young people. They are structured and action focused where those young people involved in an action research group present their learning, ideas and recommendations for meaningful dialogue between themselves and relevant policy makers and senior officers. Joint plans for improvement are created as a result of these conversations. Actions from these plans are reported back to key stakeholders.
- 3.22 Actions identified in the Mental Health Support in Schools Conversation for action include:
- All new staff in the City of Edinburgh Council will be involved in a training course on Mental Health in the Workplace – this will be a platform for further in-depth training for teachers, youth workers and other staff on young people and mental health;
  - the book Stress by Nicola Morgan will be available in all high school libraries;
  - the Healthy Respect website has been revamped to include general information about relationships and mental health;
  - and finally new and improved ways of communicating to young people the best pathways to mental health services will be piloted over the coming year.

### **Participation Mentors**

- 3.23 The participation mentors programme is a key strand of the youth participation strategy. Young people are trained in political education, facilitation skills, presentation skills and decision making activities. In this way they are able to host activities for other young people and help others to; prioritise topics, clarify thoughts into action and contribute to local and national policy. In 2014 we trained 23 young people through the process and they have worked alongside those trained previously to deliver the Participation Festival and Gathering events.

#### **Graduation**

- 3.24 The young people that have been through the Participation Mentors training in 2013 and 2014 were invited to 'Graduate' at a ceremony we held in the City Art Centre. This enabled us to thank young people for being involved, ask them to share some of their highlights from the programme and also talk to both Councillor Cammy Day and the Director of Children and Families about their personal priorities and any issues they had.

## **Referendum**

### **Democracy on the Move**

- 3.25 This project was created and delivered as part of a final year student placement from the Community Education course at Moray House. The project delivered classroom based democracy education using the Independence Referendum as the 'hook' to engage young people. Young people engaged by the project were S4-S6 from a variety of schools across the city. The project worked with over 200 young people. The session looked at decision making, linking opinions to politics and aimed to make political decisions (elections and referenda) more interesting to young people. A subtext of this project was to encourage young people to register to vote in the referendum.

### **Kirklees Young people visit**

- 3.26 We were approached by a youth forum in Kirklees, West Yorkshire. Their young people had been thinking about the referendum, and what it meant to Scottish and English young people. We invited the group to visit Edinburgh and facilitated two discussion sessions, one with 10 city wide young people (MSYPs, participation mentors and action research group members) and one meeting with a local project (Jack Kane Community Centre). At these meetings we facilitated discussion on National and local politics whilst also sharing participation techniques that encourage dialogue and decision making. At the city wide event we made a short video looking at the top topics for young people.

## **Work experience placement**

- 3.27 The Young People's Participation Team has an S5 student from Castlebrae Community High School on work experience for the 2014/15 academic year.

Nicole says:

*I have learned many things, even how to do small things such as connecting the computer to the printer and learning how to use Outlook and use in detail Microsoft office photo manager. I have learned how to be more confident and speak up more in front of people. As a person I have learned to handle the responsibility of being given tasks to do and go away and do them, and my organisation and writing skills have improved massively. I am challenging my comfort zone, meeting new people and doing new things. In the 4 months I have been here I can look back and notice a positive change in me and see how much more confident I have become is unbelievable.'*



## **Erasmus+**

- 3.28 We are putting together a bid for European money through the Erasmus+ programme under key strand 3 'Structured Dialogue with Young People'. If successful this will involve 3 or 4 European partners, each with 10 young people who will look at youth participation in democracy. The aims of the project are to find out; What does youth participation look like across the partners? What specific successes have partners had, what specific methods do they use and finally host an international conference here in Edinburgh that will showcase the findings and launch an 'action plan' for youth participation.

## **Measures of success**

---

- 4.1 A diverse range of young people from across Edinburgh attend the events organised, including members of the Scottish Youth Parliament, local forums and student councils
- 4.2 30 young people trained to become Participation Members before April 2016
- 4.3 These participation mentors (and other keen young people) lead events and discussions within and outside the structures of the Young People's participation team
- 4.4 Elected members, partners and key officers attend and participate fully in the variety of activities organized to discuss the issues raised by young people
- 4.5 Services (both Council and partners) learn from the young people and develop their practice because of the participation of young people
- 4.6 Young People's participation in formal democratic processes is increased and supported.

## **Financial impact**

---

- 5.1 None

## **Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

---

- 6.1 None

## **Equalities impact**

---

- 7.1 The structure of Youth Participation in Edinburgh will support a broad range of young people to get involved in decision making in Edinburgh. The participation strategy contributes positively to the Council's duty to a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination b. Advance equality of opportunity and c. foster good relations.

## Sustainability impact

---

- 8.1 The recommendations are aimed at creating a sustainable, long term young people's participation structure for Edinburgh.

## Consultation and engagement

---

- 9.1 The participation Strategy was developed and agreed to in 2013 after consultation took place with key stakeholders i.e. young people, youth workers, partner agencies and elected members.

## Background reading/external references

---

Education Children and Families Committee report 10 Dec 2013

Edinburgh Young People's Participation Strategy

### Gillian Tee

Director of Children and Families

Contact: Mary Mitchell, Senior Youth Participation Officer

E-mail: [Mary.mitchell@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Mary.mitchell@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 2131

## Links

---

Coalition pledges	<p>P1 - Increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care</p> <p>P7 - Further develop the Edinburgh Guarantee to improve work prospects for school leavers</p> <p>P33 - Strengthen Neighbourhood Partnerships and further involve local people in decisions on how Council resources are used</p>
Council outcomes	<p>CO1 - Our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed</p> <p>CO2 - Our children and young people are successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities</p> <p>CO3 - Our children and young people at risk, or with a disability, have improved life chances</p> <p>CO4 - Our children and young people are physically and</p>

emotionally healthy

CO5 - Our children and young people are safe from harm or fear of harm, and do not harm others within their communities

CO6 - Our children's and young people's outcomes are not undermined by poverty and inequality

Single Outcome Agreement

SO3 - Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential

Appendices

- 1) Edinburgh Youth Participation Strategy Statistics/Activities 2014
- 2) Measures of Success Youth Participation Strategy

**Measures of success Young Peoples Participation Strategy  
Dec 2013- Feb 2015**

2013 Report	Comment	2015/16 measures of success
A diverse range of young people from across Edinburgh attend the events organised, including members of the Scottish Youth Parliament, local forums and student councils	<p>A post code analysis indicates young people from a broad spectrum of backgrounds are involved in YPPT activities.</p> <p>In terms of equalities there are a good range a young people from black and minority ethnic groups. There is still work to be done to support young people with disabilities and encourage the involvement of young men.</p>	Diverse range of young people is expected to continue. The additional time it takes to ensure young people are supported to get involved and attend events / activities is challenging.
30 young people trained to becomes Participation Members before April 2014	<p>Achieved.</p> <p>45 young people have been trained in 2013/2014. Those young people have been involved in organising Youth Participation events, participating in action research groups and getting involved in local forums. Residential training experience has proved a valuable expenditure.</p>	It is expected the Participation Mentors training will continue. We expect to train 30 young people in 2015/16.
These participation mentors (and other keen young people) lead events and discussions within and outside the structures of the Young People's participation team	<p>Achieved.</p> <p>All events have been organised by young people for young people. This includes developing programs as well as facilitating the events.</p>	This measure of success will continue.
Elected members , partners and key officers attend and participate fully in the variety of activities organized to discuss the issues raised by young people	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Conversation for Action whilst in the early stages have proven successful in particular the Mental Health In Schools Conversation for action where the director for Children and Families and NHS senior officers engaged in dialogue with young people.</p>	This measure of success will continue.

<p>A young Peoples participation conference occurs showcasing young people's participation across the city</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>This was a highly successful and popular event, reenergizing young people across the city to get involved in a variety of activities.</p>	<p>Capacity to do undertake this activity annually within the team budget and workload is challenging. We expect to undertake this event every two years. The next festival is expected to be organized in spring 2016</p>
<p>Services (both Council and partners) learn from the young people and develop their practice because of the participation of young people</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Conversation for action has created the following change in practice :</p>	<p>The action research group and conversation for action model is expected to be continued and developed over the coming year.</p>
<p>Young People's participation in formal democratic processes is increased. Specifically turn out for the 2014 independence referendum in the 16 – 18 yr old age range in Edinburgh is on the top quarter of local authorities in Scotland</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <p>82% of young people in Scotland participated in the referendum. No statistics available for Edinburgh specifically.</p> <p>YPPT specific input resulted in 499 'branded' voter registration forms being submitted. 144 of these would not have been registered in any other way and 39 were 16-17 year olds.</p> <p>Democracy on the Move provided information workshops regarding the election for young people in schools and community groups across the city.</p> <p>One of the current action research group for the team is focusing on votes at 16.</p>	<p>The Scottish Youth Parliament election, General election and Scottish elections over the coming two years will enable the team to continue to support young peoples participation in democratic processes.</p>
<p>An increase number of young people feedback their views are listened to and changes are made as a result of feedback.</p>	<p>The action research groups and consequent Conversation for Action has proven to be a successful model to support the views of young people effectively being heard and change being made.</p>	<p>The team is confident that young people will be involved in participation activities across the city, this can only be strengthened with elected members support.</p>

## Edinburgh Youth Participation Strategy Statistics/Activities 2014

Activity	Numbers of YP involved
Participation Mentor Training x3	45
Festival planning group	15
Youth Decides (several)	50
Participation Festival February	75
East Youth Gathering March	45
North Summer Blast June	500
Gathering planning group	10
Gathering November	45
Kirklees visit	18
MSYP x 3 sittings	12 each sitting
S1 event	75 attending 6 helping
Action Research Groups:	
Poverty and Inequality	9
State of our schools	4
Mental Health Support for Schools	12
Votes at 16	
Better Sex Education	6
Conversation for Action	8
	8
Preventing Violence against women workshops	8
Peer Mentor Graduation	18
Democracy on the move	200
Youth Work Trainee and Work experience	2 (Terri and Nicole)
SYP elections	25 candidates
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,196</b>

## **Feedback from participants in Action research Groups**

### **What is important about the action research group? 4.2.15**

- The idea that we can raise awareness on important issues that affect young people – we can beat the unfairness that is served to the youth!
- That everyone is open that we can all communicate and cooperate, work together.
- Everyone respects one another
- I like the research groups because we can be open with our questions and ideas.
- Safe
- Banter
- Education out of school
- I feel listened to and respected,
- I feel comfortable
- Meeting new people is great
- They are interesting