

Cabinet

15 January 2020

**County Durham Enhanced Engagement
with Children and Young People**



Report of Corporate Management Team

John Pearce, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services

Councillor Olwyn Gunn, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to gain Cabinet's agreement to implement a number of recommendations that will enhance how the council engages with children and young people.

Executive summary

- 2 The council successfully use a wide range of participation and engagement mechanisms to understand the voice of the child and how this influences service provision and project development. The report, 'Durham County Council Engagement with Children and Young People – As Citizens and Service Users', presented to Cabinet on 10 July 2019, described these current mechanisms, outlined the key messages given by children and young people (CYP) during engagement and how the council has acted on them.
- 3 The Children and Young People's Strategy 2019-2022 highlighted the importance of embedding a culture in service design, delivery and review, which recognises and values the importance of the voice of the child. To do this it was agreed that the council would look to explore how existing methods of including CYP in decision making processes could be enhanced.
- 4 This report details the results of further work carried out, over the past few months, to identify ways of enhancing CYP engagement and participation structures in several ways and celebrating their successes. The options explored included:

- (a) the development of a County Durham Youth Council (CDYC);
- (b) representation, drawn from CDYC, at the UK Youth Parliament;
- (c) County Durham Children and Young People's Awards by which the successes of CYP across County Durham will be celebrated at an annual awards ceremony co-produced with representatives from the Durham County Council (DCC) and the County Durham Youth Council.

Recommendation(s)

5 Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) agree that DCC officers run annual elections to appoint CYP representatives to a new County Durham Youth Council with CDYC electing two members to the UK Youth parliament;
- (b) agree to set up a County Durham Youth Council Implementation Fund to support CYP focused project delivery;
- (c) agree to support the recruitment of an Engagement Officer, to be employed on a permanent basis from April 2020, to support the County Durham Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament representatives;
- (d) agree in principle to the development of a countywide awards programme to begin in Summer 2020 and for marketing and communications relating to the enhanced suite of engagement mechanisms proposed in the report.

Background

- 6 Cabinet were presented with a report entitled 'Durham County Council Engagement with Children and Young People – As Citizens and Service Users' on 10th July 2019. Cabinet agreed that officers should explore options to enhance engagement mechanisms for children and young people and agreed that a proposal be presented at this meeting.
- 7 The following sections detail the results, conclusions and recommendations drawn for the proposed enhancements.

County Durham Youth Council

- 8 In July 2019 the Head of Education and Skills, alongside Education Advisers, hosted two pupil voice workshops that provided an opportunity for primary and secondary aged pupils to share their thoughts on a range of topics. Workshops were arranged through the Durham Associations of Primary and Secondary Head Teachers and saw young people aged 9-17 from nine different schools share their thoughts about living in County Durham and having a voice which is heard.
- 9 Officers also facilitated a workshop at the June Children and Families Partnership (CFP) meeting held at Durham Johnston School. 20 young people from Year 8 to Sixth Form discussed their ideas about setting up a countywide youth council and how the council could ensure inclusivity, as well as their thoughts on a countywide awards programme and electing a young mayor. Further consultation has also taken place at September's CFP meeting at Parkside Academy in Willington.
- 10 In addition, two more consultative events were held at Elemore Hall School and Hope Wood Academy in September, to further explore the perceptions of young people who attend special schools across County Durham.

County Durham Youth Council rationale

- 11 Following the extensive consultations with CYP in primary, secondary and special schools, all parties have indicated that they would welcome a countywide youth council whose remit it would be to address overarching themes that affect young people countywide and nationwide. Common emerging themes include the climate emergency, mental health, poverty and improving the say of CYP. Sitting at a county level, young people would have the scope to work with cross-service teams to affect meaningful change.

County Durham Youth Council set up

- 12 In response to the emerging themes, Education Durham advisers have looked at what it would take to set up a youth council with a view to this

being operational from 2020 onwards. Other youth council structures have been explored to establish what will work most effectively in our County. Most local authorities have their own youth council, including our geographic neighbours. Officers have contacted key personnel responsible for the set up and running of youth councils in Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Cumbria, Manchester and Liverpool and have taken elements from each structure to formulate a County Durham model.

- 13 It is proposed that from February 2020, 11-17-year olds will be elected by their school/college to have a seat on the youth council. This model works well in other counties as it ensures a cross-section of areas are represented. Promotional information and guidance for staff will be issued to ensure that nominations consider issues of equality (see Equalities Impact Assessment - appendix 2).
- 14 There will also be two seats available for young people who are electively home-educated or Not in Education, Employment or Training. Based on the most recent data, 575 CYP are in one of these categories, which is equivalent to one of our small secondary schools. There will also be one allocated seat on the youth council for young people in care/care leavers. In order to reach these CYP, we will set up a network (database) of contacts with voluntary sector organisations and propose building a website to share useful information with CYP and their parents/carers. CYP would contact the Council with expressions of interest in being involved in the CDYC. Two advisers would meet with interested parties to informally discuss the role and, depending on levels of interest, two candidates would be selected based on their commitment to the role, a supporting statement from an appropriate adult and their willingness to attend meetings and events.
- 15 Following an initial welcome meeting in April, the Youth Council's agenda and operational structure will be decided by the young people themselves. If all schools/colleges nominate two representatives, the Youth Council will have around 80 members. Young people may want to elect youth portfolio holders, an executive committee, or set up working groups based on priorities. It is anticipated that a proposed implementation fund will enable young people to affect meaningful changes.
- 16 Inclusivity is of paramount importance and has been highlighted as a potential issue by CYP. Officers are, therefore, exploring options to organise additional countywide youth voice activities with primary, secondary and special school pupils at 'Big Meets'. These would be open forums, facilitated by the Youth Council, on a specific subject e.g. mental health. These events would give a wider range of children the opportunity to discuss issues and solutions in line with youth council operations. This event would be facilitated by Youth Council members,

thus strengthening primary and secondary links, and giving Youth Council members the opportunity to develop their engagement and leadership skills.

Estimated resource requirements

- 17 Financial costs to set up and run the CDYC (elections, meetings, transport, administration and marketing) are estimated at circa £10,000 per year. Once the CDYC has met and agreed priorities, it is suggested that they are allocated a project implementation fund of £20,000 per year to support project delivery.

UK Youth Parliament

- 18 Education Durham Advisers met with County Durham's three current UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) representatives in June. The young men, who all attend Durham Sixth Form Centre, put themselves forward to be UKYP representatives in 2018 after getting in touch with the British Youth Council. As there were no seat holders representing the County at the time, an election was held within their Sixth Form and they were accepted as UKYP representatives thereafter. They attended the UKYP's sitting in the House of Commons in November 2018.
- 19 Census data indicates that the number of 11-18-year olds has fallen slightly over the past five years. Consequently, in 2019-20 County Durham only qualifies for two UKYP seats. Current UKYP representatives are turning 19 this year and have moved onto university, resulting in them rescinding their seats.
- 20 If it is agreed to establish the CDYC, all CDYC members will be given the opportunity to stand as members of the UK Youth Parliament. Young people will need to apply for this role which will involve sharing a manifesto highlighting their vision. Applications will be accepted in different formats to meet the needs of all young people. Once applications have been submitted, CDYC members will vote for the two UKYP representatives. The two applicants with the highest number of votes will assume the role and those in third and fourth place will be deputy UKYP representatives, shadowing the work of the UKYP representatives.
- 21 The UK Youth Parliament is run by the British Youth Council, which Durham County Council, as a local authority, became members of in the Summer of 2019. This helped to facilitate the running of the 'Make Your Mark' ballot (MYM) in County Durham in the Autumn of 2019.
- 22 Make Your Mark is the UK's largest youth ballot which gives young people the chance to vote on issues that are most important to them. Only 155 11-18-year olds in County Durham completed the ballot in 2018, but, this year, 15,699 votes were cast from 19 schools and colleges. County Durham's results were sent to the UK Youth

Parliament and the top five issues nationally were debated in the UK Youth Parliament's sitting in the House of Commons in November 2019. These debates included County Durham's top priorities: 'protect the environment', 'put an end to knife crime' and 'improve mental health services'. It is anticipated that, once set up, County Durham Youth Council may wish to focus some of their work around the identified priorities, which would enable the County Durham Youth Council to receive additional support from the British Youth Council.

- 23 UKYP representatives will have the opportunity to attend regional and national youth conferences organised by the British Youth Council. UKYP reps will also represent the County at the UK Youth Parliament's sitting in the House of Commons which takes place annually in November.

Estimated resource requirements

- 24 Financial costs to set up and support UK Youth Parliament representatives (elections, meetings, transport, administration and marketing) are estimated at circa £5,000 per year. It is suggested that UK Youth Parliament projects, which deliver against the priorities identified in the Make Your Mark ballot, are also funded from the £20,000 project implementation fund mentioned in paragraph 17 above.

Additional resource requirement to support both the County Durham Youth Council and the UK Youth parliament

- 25 Establishing and running County Durham Youth Council (CDYC) and supporting County Durham representation on the UK Youth Parliament will require ongoing dedicated staff time and financial backing. It is estimated that staff time to support the work will be three days per week, with an additional one day per week administration support; at an estimated cost of £35,000 per year.

County Durham Children and Young People's Awards

- 26 Celebrating the contributions and success of Children and Young People across County Durham is a priority for the council and its partners. Research has been undertaken to scope out the awards on offer across teams, services and organisations to explore the effectiveness of the current approach to awards. Across County Durham, a wide range of awards are on offer for CYP. Some are service specific and CYP would only be aware of the award following involvement with that service, however some awards are Countywide. Consultation has taken place across the following services and organisations to gather the information about the awards on offer:
- (a) Children's Social Care;
 - (b) Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children;

- (c) Education;
- (d) 3 Towns AAP;
- (e) Health;
- (f) Criminal Justice;
- (g) Fire Brigade.

Children's Social Care

- 27 The service hosts an annual Care Leavers Award in October – named the 'Exceptional People in Care Awards' - as decided by young people. The awards are held during National Care Leavers week to celebrate those who are making a success of their lives. The annual Celebrate Me awards, which run each July, also recognises the successes and contributions of young people year 10 and below who are looked after. Some individual teams across the service offer specific awards for their CYP on an ad hoc basis such as the Seaham 'Child of the Month' award which recognises achievements of their young people. The fostering service hold annual events each March to recognise the dedication and commitment of those who provide safe and nurturing homes to CYP.

Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children

- 28 The Early help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children service host the annual Young Parent's Celebration event in July and the DurhamWorks Achievements award in May. The young parent's celebration event recognises teenage parents who have completed a course to help develop their life skills and the Young Achievements Award celebrates the employment, training and education success of young people involved with the DurhamWorks service.

Education

- 29 Consultation across the education service highlighted that most awards are hosted by individual schools. The 100% attendance award is hosted by the council each September to recognise those young people who have exceptional commitment to school attendance throughout the academic year. Further consultation needs to be held with schools and young people to identify the best approach to awarding education achievements at a County level.

3 Towns AAP

- 30 3 Towns AAP have longstanding awards for CYP aged 9-18 who live in the local area. The awards, which run regularly, though not annually, recognise the real differences young people make to the communities of Crook, Willington and Tow Law. The awards cover a wide range of

topics such as Help in the Community, Green Champion, Team Work, Young Hero, Young Person's Choice Award, Youth Project of the Year, Young Carers Award, Young Role Model and a Wild Card Award.

Criminal Justice

- 31 The High Sheriff of Durham and County Durham Community Foundation present the 'High Sheriff Awards' in March for organisations supporting young people in the North East.

Fire Brigade

- 32 County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service participate in the national 'Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards' which have been running annually in December for the last six years. The awards include one category for children and young people – 'Youth Champion of the Year', which is given to an individual or team that has excelled on a young people's course, demonstrating clear improvement in behaviour, performance and positive contribution to their community.

Other awards

- 33 Durham Constabulary, Durham County Council along with partners and local businesses fund and host the Young Heroes Awards (a joint initiative between all three organisations) every May. The awards recognise inspirational young people who have made a positive contribution to the community with acts of bravery, personal achievement and random acts of kindness.
- 34 Shildon Town Council host the annual Children and Young People Awards each November for talented and exceptional young people in Shildon and the surrounding area. A wide range of awards are on offer such as the Performing Arts Award, Henry Nicholson 'Can Do' Award, Sports and/or Physical Activity Award, Young Person's Choice, Community Champion Award, School Award and Special Achievement and Recognition Award.
- 35 The Bridge Young Carers Service, Durham County Council and Health partners host a Young Carers Awards evening during November to celebrate the achievements of young carers in County Durham and recognise the help they receive from practitioners. Called the High Five awards, they are centred on the Durham High Five Themes: Be Strong, Be Safe, Be Healthy, Be You and Be a Voice. There are also special awards for young carers in the categories of Outstanding Achievement, Community Champion and Family Success.

Next steps

- 36 Consultation highlights a wide range of awards on offer across the county for our CYP. Developing a countywide award for CYP would

enable us to celebrate successes from across teams, services and youth organisations. We have consulted with young people at Children and Families Partnership meetings and through primary, secondary and special school workshops and feedback has highlighted that whilst school-based awards celebrate local achievements, particularly academic achievements, young people would like more recognition for additional achievements including voluntary/charity work. Once the Youth Council is set up, members will decide upon award categories which will then be shared with schools, colleges and youth organisations.

- 37 From April 2020, schools, colleges and youth organisations will be able to nominate young people for awards, which will be presented at a County-wide event in July. This will be a co-produced event with CYP at the heart of decision making.
- 38 Other areas host annual 'Child Friendly Awards' across the local authority which enables them to effectively celebrate all the work that is happening across a wide geographical area. This may be an approach for us to consider, as it would enable us to host an annual county council initiative to celebrate the achievements of young people for a wide range of successes. Adopting a countywide approach would highlight the council's commitment to celebrating the achievements of our young people, further encouraging young people to be actively involved in participation across County Durham.

Estimated resource requirements

- 39 There will be some financial costs and staff resource time associated with organising and running countywide awards. It is estimated that 10 to 15 staff days will be required to support the County Durham Youth Council to co-produce and run the awards. There will also be costs for marketing, producing the awards, administration materials and running the awards ceremony. It is estimated that total costs would be circa £8,000, depending on the number of awards, venue, speakers and entertainment.

Age relevant engagement mechanisms

- 40 Age relevant engagement mechanisms are methods of engaging with CYP that they are most likely to access in large numbers across the county e.g. using the current social media apps. Discussions took place with officers from the council Communications and Marketing team to discuss age related mechanisms to increase engagement activity for CYP. The consensus was that available council channels are quite limited with regards to age appropriate mechanisms, there is also the question around viability of channels and which media CYP use.

- 41 Young people have told us that they would like e-communications to be considered as a tool for sharing messages. Rather than developing a costly website at this stage, the council's website could host a central page that could be linked to from forums which young people are already engaged with. You tube could be used to promote stories and, if appropriate, posters and flyers could be produced for specific activities, events or to promote messages. Once the CDYC has been established we will discuss other options to appropriate communication channels to ensure they are current, relevant and ultimately fit for purpose.
- 42 Officers agreed that existing communication points through schools, colleges and community groups should be used to share messages with young people. Placing relevant information on the schools extranet to reach pupils and teachers would be a useful avenue to use, and further engagement work could be carried out face to face at existing or new community events or groups.

Estimated resource requirements

- 43 There will be costs associated with marketing and communications work for the enhanced suite of engagement mechanisms including digital campaign, artwork, new website/microsite, banner stands at £8,000 in year one and £4,000 in subsequent years.

Future plans

Children and Young People Participation and Engagement Strategy

- 44 The Children and Young People's Strategy 2019 – 2022 identifies that involving CYP in decision making will be key to ensuring the best possible services are provided to improve outcomes for CYP. To facilitate this, it will be essential that partners follow an agreed framework and methodology, linked to appropriate performance management frameworks, which will provide clarity, structure and accountability for all multi-agency participation and engagement activities with CYP.
- 45 To establish this framework and methodology it is proposed that a CYP Participation and Engagement Strategy (CYP PES) is developed and agreed by partners and CYP. For this to be adopted by all stakeholders, partner organisations and CYP, it will need to be co-produced with partner and CYP representatives.
- 46 To facilitate the CYP PES development process Durham County Council, partners and children and young people would work together to develop a bespoke CYP PES, based on best practice and the needs of children and young people across the county. The key stakeholders in developing and adopting the CYP PES are representatives of Durham County Council and partner services with links to improving the lives of

children and young people, and the children and young people themselves.

- 47 Identifying representatives from the council and partner services will be a simple process, utilising existing networks such as the Children and Families Partnership, the Safe Durham Partnership, the Integrated Steering Group for Children and the Health and Wellbeing Board. However, identifying CYP that would be representative of other CYP across the county would, currently, be difficult as the networks are not fully established.
- 48 Therefore, in order to ensure buy in from as many CYP as possible, it would be prudent to develop the CYP PES with the children and young people elected to the County Durham Youth Council, as one of their first projects following the elections in early 2020.

Conclusions

- 49 Ensuring young people have a voice which is embedded in designing, delivering, monitoring and evaluating local services for children and young people is central to the work of the council and partner organisations. This report details several enhancements that will weave children's rights into systems, structures, policies and practice which will bring about positive outcomes for children and young people, making real differences to their quality of life. Adopting these enhancements will build on progress which has been made over recent years.
- 50 It is proposed that in order to enhance engagement mechanisms for CYP across County Durham a two-tier approach should be introduced in 2020/21 (a summary model can be seen in appendix 3). The new mechanisms to raise the voice of CYP should complement each other and be enhanced countywide and nationally. This has resulted in the following conclusions:
 - (a) at a countywide level – set up and establish a County Durham Youth Council;
 - (b) at a national level – elect two new representatives to the UK Youth Council.
- 51 To maximise the benefits, it will be essential for all partner organisation to be involved with the new enhanced engagement mechanisms. Future development should, once the two-tier approach has been established, include DCC working with partners and CYP to further investigate the options of establishing AAP Youth Forums and County Durham becoming a Unicef Child Friendly County.
- 52 To support this work DCC would work with the CDYC to develop a Children and Young People Engagement and Participation Strategy,

which would include the identification of age relevant engagement mechanisms.

- 53 Finally, it will be important to celebrate the work of the newly established enhanced engagement mechanisms, and Durham County Council and the CDYC should work together to plan and run an annual countywide County Durham CYP Awards event. A timetable and key milestones for the enhanced engagement mechanisms can be seen in appendix 4.

Background papers

- Children and Young People's Strategy 2019 – 2022;
- 'Durham County Council Engagement with Children and Young People – As Citizens and Service Users' Cabinet Report 10 July 2019.

Other useful documents

- None

Contact: Richard Crane Tel: 03000 265731

Gordon Elliott Tel: 03000 263604

Appendix 1 - Implications

Legal Implications

None

Finance

The financial implications of further enhancing children and young people's engagement will be included as base budget pressures in MTFP (10).

Consultation

Future consultation to establish the proposed enhanced engagement mechanisms will be carried out when and as required.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the process for developing the Youth Council proposal and is attached at Appendix 2.

Climate Change

N/A

Human Rights

N/A

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Staffing

Proposed estimates for staffing resources are detailed in the report. Further staffing implications will be considered as proposals develop.

Accommodation

N/A

Risk

To not introduce the enhanced engagements fully would risk developing services without the voice of children and young people being truly embedded.

Procurement

To be considered as proposals develop.

Appendix 2 –Equalities Impact Assessment

Durham County Council Equality Impact Assessment

NB: The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires Durham County Council to have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. Assessing impact on equality and recording this is one of the key ways in which we can show due regard.

Section One: Description and Screening

Service/Team or Section	Children and Young People Services
Lead Officer	Richard Crane
Title	County Durham Youth Council/UKYP representation
MTFP Reference (if relevant)	
Cabinet Date (if relevant)	January 2020
Start Date	January 2020
Review Date	January 2021

Subject of the Impact Assessment

Please give a brief description of the policy, proposal or practice as appropriate (a copy of the subject can be attached or insert a web-link):

Following extensive consultations with children and young people across all phases and types of school and setting, we propose setting up a County-wide youth council to ensure that young people have a platform to have their voices heard, to share opinions and to address priorities for CYP moving forward.

The rationale behind this is that young people have told us that they don't feel they have their voices heard beyond their immediate (i.e. school/ college) environment or that they can make a real difference. They would welcome meeting up with young people across the County to address issues that have potential to affect all young people, including environmental concerns, access to mental health services and poverty.

Education advisers have researched youth council models across many other local authorities including Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Cumbria, Manchester and Liverpool and have taken elements from each model to create an approach that factors in the broad geographical reach of our County. We have also explored where we have strongest links to communicate with young people: presently through Education Durham who have a network of 271 schools and colleges but also through the ‘pupil placement and attendance’ team that monitors young people who are electively home educated or Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).

We propose that schools and colleges hold elections to nominate two representatives to sit on the Youth Council. We will issue guidance to schools to ensure that elections are carried out fairly and that all young people have the potential to stand. We will advise against, for example, asking CYP to submit written manifestos as this could discriminate against pupils with literacy difficulties.

At present, there are around 450 secondary-aged NEET young people in County Durham. This figure typically fluctuates to 500 during the Spring term. Based on the most recent data available (2018) 125 CYP were electively home-educated. On this basis, we propose that two additional seats are made available for young people who don't access school/ college education. This figure has been arrived at based on the fact that some of our smaller schools have 500 or fewer pupils.

As these young people wouldn't be subject to a school/ college-based election we propose that young people initially get in touch via email or phone and they will be invited in to meet with a small and informal panel of 2 people to discuss why they would like to sit on the Council. If necessary, two CYP will be selected based on outcomes of the panel discussion.

County Durham is also eligible for two seats on the UK's Youth Parliament. It is proposed that, once the Youth Council is established, members will be able to apply to represent the County. As part of the application process, CYP will be asked to share their vision for the role, which can be done in numerous forms including through a written statement, pre-recorded video or presentation in order to meet any SEND needs of individuals. Applicants will need to commit to attending up to 3 British Youth Council conferences and the UK Youth Parliament's sitting in the House of Commons which takes place annually in November. It should be noted that there will be no cost for young people to attend these events. Members of the Youth Council will then all be granted 2 votes to decide upon their UK Youth Parliament representatives.

Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. general public, staff, members, specific clients/service users):

11-17 year olds living in and/ or attending school/ college in County Durham

Screening

Is there any actual or potential negative or positive impact on the following protected characteristics?

Protected Characteristic	Negative Impact Indicate: Y = Yes N = No ? = unsure	Positive Impact Indicate: Y = Yes N = No ? = unsure
Age	N	Y
Disability	N	Y

Marriage and civil partnership (workplace only)	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	N	N
Race (ethnicity)	N	N
Religion or Belief	N	N
Sex (gender)	N	N
Sexual orientation	N	N
Transgender	N	N

Please provide brief details of any potential to cause adverse impact. Record full details and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

At a governor's briefing event in the Autumn 2019, one primary-school governor expressed disappointment that the Youth Council will initially be open to 11-17 year olds as opposed to primary pupils. It was explained that the sensitive nature of some of the topics being discussed at secondary- and special school consultations, including knife crime, sexual discrimination and drug/ alcohol abuse led to the considered decision being taken that initially, a secondary-aged council would be established, with a view to exploring options for a junior council subsequently. In order to fully involve primary aged pupils in decision-making, we have agreed to host a 'youth summit' event, which will bring together primary pupils from across the County to discuss issues that they tell us are important to them. Moreover, we are exploring options to more regularly capture the views of CYP including looking at child-friendly app-based tools. In Y2 we will look at the potential for setting up a children's youth council for primary-aged pupils to run alongside our main youth council.

Because of our current and proposed mitigating actions we do not anticipate a negative impact upon primary school aged children.

How will this policy/proposal/practice promote our commitment to our legal responsibilities under the public sector equality duty to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations between people from different groups?

The project gives younger people a voice and aims to improve relations and communication between them and those in older age groups. It has the potential to break down the negative stigma that young people can also feel due to the way they can be portrayed in the media, for example.

We have explored numerous models for setting up a Youth Council: particularly in relation to an election process. The model we are proposing will allow all young people aged 11-17 a fair chance to sit on the council and will positively benefit this age group through facilitating regular meetings for young people. In addition, the suggested £20,000 implementation fund will enable young people to affect meaningful change across the County. This is the first time that young people will have the means to make changes on this scale.

By asking for representation from every school/ college, it encourages participation from groups that could otherwise be marginalised, including those with SEND/ SEMH difficulties. It also takes into consideration young people living in rural areas such as Weardale and Teesdale. The inclusion of seats for electively home educated and NEET young people means that these groups also have the opportunity to be represented, which wouldn't be the case if our only engagement vehicles were schools and colleges.

Evidence

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

Please outline your data sets and/or proposed evidence sources, highlight any gaps and say whether or not you propose to carry out consultation. Record greater detail and analysis in the following section of this assessment.

Education Durham advisers have consulted with a broad range of CYP in preparation for the set-up of the County Durham Youth Council, ensuring that protected characteristics including gender, age and SEND have been considered.

Consultations have been carried out over an extensive period with the following groups:

- Primary schools
- Secondary schools
- Special schools (SEND)
- Special schools (SEMH)

In so doing, we have collated opinions from CYP of different ages (9-25), genders, SEND profiles and pupils whom are currently looked after. (Further data can be provided if required.) Whilst all consultations have been based around similar themes, approaches and resources have been adapted to meet the needs of all participants. As an example, we chunked activities for the SEMH session and ensured the session time was kept to 1 hour maximum to respond to the needs of the group. Similarly, we adapted resources for a visually impaired secondary pupil.

When we approach schools to elect two youth council representatives, we will issue guidance to ensure that staff consider equality of opportunity for all young people. Guidance will highlight to staff the importance of ensuring:

- all pupils are made aware of the opportunity (using varied mechanisms to communicate this with CYP)
- the application process is inclusive (i.e. if a manifesto is required, that this can be submitted in various forms)

- that all pupils are given the opportunity to vote for their 2 Youth Council members

When schools and colleges put forward their two elected representatives, we will ask for equalities information to be sent to enable us to review and monitor the diversity of the youth council. If necessary, we will contact schools for additional information to ensure that individual needs can be met during meetings. Any gaps in representation will be identified and we will seek to carry out additional consultations with young people in these groups where appropriate to ensure that our youth council is truly reflective of the breadth of young people that make up County Durham. This could be done through our Youth Summits, for example. From our conversations with other youth council staff, a variety of young people tend to be represented, however it is important that we monitor this for ourselves.

County Durham Youth Council members will also be influential in shaping the organisational and logistical structure of the Council, including where and when to meet. This is to ensure that all young people are included in important decisions around making meetings accessible.

Screening Summary

On the basis of this screening is there:	Confirm which refers (Y/N)
Evidence of actual or potential impact on some/all of the protected characteristics which will proceed to full assessment?	N
No evidence of actual or potential impact on some/all of the protected characteristics?	N

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off: Richard Crane – Head of Education	Date: 21 st Nov 2019
Service equality representative sign off: 	Date: 20 th November 2019

If carrying out a full assessment, please proceed to section two.

If not proceeding to full assessment, please return completed screenings to your service equality representative and forward a copy to equalities@durham.gov.uk

If you are unsure of potential impact, please contact the corporate research and equalities team for further advice at equalities@durham.gov.uk

Appendix 3 – Youth Voice: Enhanced Engagement Summary Model



Two CYP will be voted by the CDYC to be members of the UK Youth Parliament. Their role will be to represent the views of County Durham's CYP on a national platform.



The Youth Council will be made up of 2 reps from all secondary/ special schools and colleges, plus 2 reps whom are electively home educated or Not in Education, Employment or Training. The Council will address issues that are important to CYP.



Youth Summits will bring together primary pupils and non-CDYC members from secondary/ special schools, colleges and CVS organisations to share their thoughts and ideas across the County.



An annual awards event will celebrate the many successes of CYP across the County. CDYC members will decide upon award categories and consultation feedback will inform the planning of the event.

Appendix 4 – Timeline and Milestones

January – July 2020 summary

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
Youth Council	Youth council set up			Youth council operational			
	Promote YC opportunities to schools, colleges and network	In-school elections for 2 reps plus applications from EHE/ NEET CYP	EHE/ NEET meetings and school rep information forwarded to DCC	20 th April – first CDYC meeting		24 th June – second CDYC meeting	
UKYP Reps	UKYP rep set up					UKYP reps in post	
	Promote YC opportunities to schools, colleges and network			Information on roles and responsibilities of UKYP reps shared with CDYC	Candidates work on applications	Application deadline (after exams) and CDYC vote for two reps	UKYP reps take up post
Awards event	Event preparation			Nominations and invitations			Event
	Book venue	Seek sponsorship and promote event through comms channels		CDYC to decide on awards categories; share immediately with schools, colleges and network	Nominations window closes 20.05.2020; all CYP receive letter of commendation and shortlisted CYP and families are invited to awards evening	Deadline for nominees and families to confirm attendance	1 st July 2020: Awards event