

CABINET MEETING – 14 JULY 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Youth engagement across the city: response to Council resolution

Author(s):

Director of Children's Services

Purpose of Report:

To report to Cabinet the current arrangements for formal consultation and engagement with children and young people across the city in response to the Council resolution

Description of Decision:

Members are recommended to agree the suggested approach for receiving consultation feedback from children and young people.

Cabinet is recommended to:

Agree the outlined approach for the Council to engage and consult with children and young people.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? *Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

A Motion to Council in January proposed that a shadow young person's board should be established to enable consultation activity. In order to respond a review of the current arrangements has been undertaken and evidences a significant amount of existing consultation activity. What is less apparent is how the feedback from children impacts on decision making in some areas. A process is recommended in this report to improve that.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

To leave the arrangements as they are risks limiting the benefit of feedback from children and young people and risks dis-engagement from them, as they may well feel that the engagement is a token and not a meaningful opportunity to influence.

Impacts analysed;

Equality ☒ Privacy ☐ Sustainability ☐ Crime and Disorder ☐

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values?	Yes
Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?	No
Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?	No

**YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACROSS THE CITY: RESPONSE TO COUNCIL
RESOLUTION**

Report of the Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of the Report

To consider the resolution to establish a shadow young person's consultation board as proposed in the January 2022 Council meeting. The report attempts to outline the current range and type of consultation and engagement activity across the city and provides an indication of the number of young people involved, where that intelligence is available. It also suggests implementing an approach to receiving consultation feedback that ensures children and young people see that their views have been heard.

2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)

Members are recommended to consider the suggested approach for receiving consultation feedback from children and young people.

3. Introduction/Background

The following Motion was presented to Council in January 2022:

'Council resolves to establish a Shadow Young People's Consultation Board, through which the Council and its leadership will consult with young people on important issues to them and on key areas of the Council's operations, such as budget setting.

This Board will also invite partners such as TfC, CCG, Nexus and others to consult with young people on what they are doing in their area of service provision to enable young people to share what they think they can be improved upon and what changes or developments they wish to see. This Board will consist of young people, councillors and leadership of all political parties on the Council, working together to improve young people's representation in the city.

Councillor Joshua McKeith (Proposer)

Councillor Sam Johnston (Seconder)

Signed by:-

Councillor C. Burnicle

Councillor M. Hartnack

Councillor R. Dunn

Councillor P. Wood'

The following resolution was duly passed to consider and respond to the Motion following an amendment:-

“Council resolves to explore the establishment of a Young People’s Consultation Board, through which the Council and its leadership will consult with young people on issues over which the Council has influence or control and on key areas of the Council’s operations, such as budget setting. This Board may also invite other bodies such as TfC, Police, the Commissioners and providers of health and public transport etc., to consult with young people on what they are doing in their area of service provision to enable young people to share what they think can be improved upon and what changes or developments they wish to see. This Board will consist of young people, councillors and leadership of all political parties on the Council, working together to improve young people’s representation in the city. That a report be brought back to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity and no later than six months from the adoption of this motion on the establishment of the Board.”

In order to respond to the Motion a review of the current strategic engagement groups supported by TfC and partners has been undertaken. It is important to note however that there are many other youth groups and provisions operating across the city that engage and consult with young people routinely that are not represented in this report.

In terms of the national legal framework, there is no single statutory duty placed upon the Council to engage or consult with young people to refer to. Contained within the statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children’s Services and the Lead Member for Children’s Services (Sections 18(7) (Director of Children’s Services) and 19(2) (Lead Member for Children’s Services) of the Children Act 2004) is a direction to have regard to the General Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and ensure that children and young people are involved in the development and delivery of local services and this general duty underpins the governance for consultation around both of those roles/functions.

4. Current Position

1. The Council has an established tradition of supporting young people’s engagement and participation (as noted in the Ofsted ILACS Report, 2021) and the following graphic shows the existing governance established to ensure children’s voice informs the key priorities in the City Plan and fulfils the Council’s obligations as a corporate parent.

Chart 1. Existing governance arrangements



The chart shows both the groups themselves, and the agendas they consider, so for example; the EGS Youth Group feeds into the Low Carbon Board and Framework; the two Change Council groups of cared for and care experienced young people report their work, issues and concerns to the Corporate Parenting Board; and the school and college councils feed into the Youth Council itself.

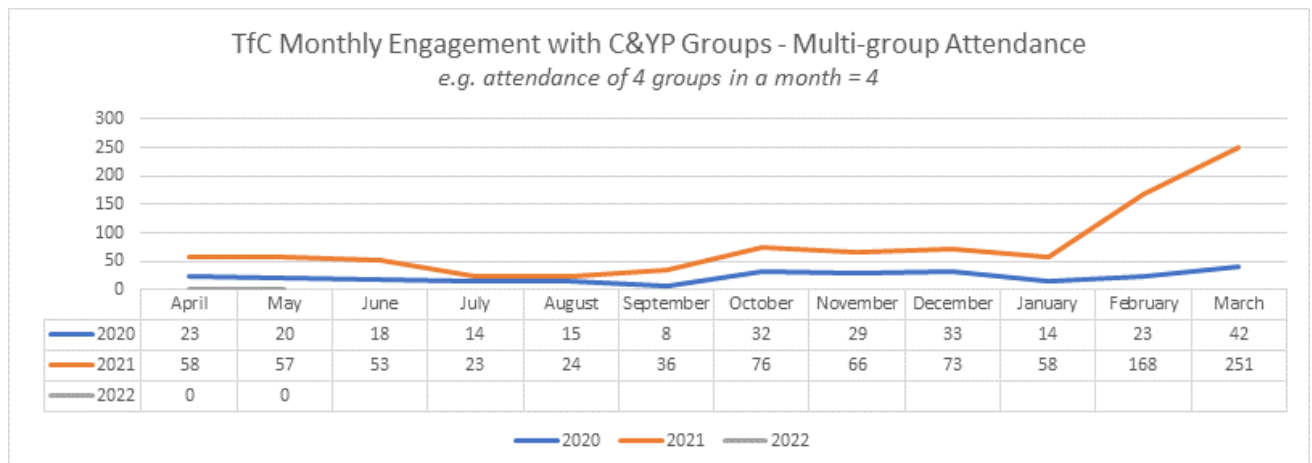
A working example of the process in action is the annual national UK Youth Parliament Mark your Mark campaign, which is led by the Youth Council locally. This year the Youth Council engaged 4,444 children and young people in voting for their top issues. The following three were taken forward:

1. Health and Well-being
2. Jobs, Money, Homes and Opportunities
3. Environment

The campaign culminates in the State of the City debate, which took place this year in the City Hall. Members of the Youth Council led the debate and the topic of Health and Well-being received the greatest number of votes. The work of the Youth Council will therefore focus on this subject area for the coming year.

2. The reporting framework established in TfC captures, where available, the data relating to the number of children and young people taking part in participative or consultative activity (described as multiple groups). The graph below shows the total data for the year April 2021 to March 2022. Even allowing for continued Covid restrictions, and the fact that this is a partial view of activity across the city, it shows a total number of 691 young people engaged with 943 times over that period and an upward trajectory in overall terms.

Monthly Engagement Participation and Engagement – Multi Group Attendance (April 21 – March 22)



Summary: April – March 22 – 943 children and young people engagement in a participation group (691 were unique young people).

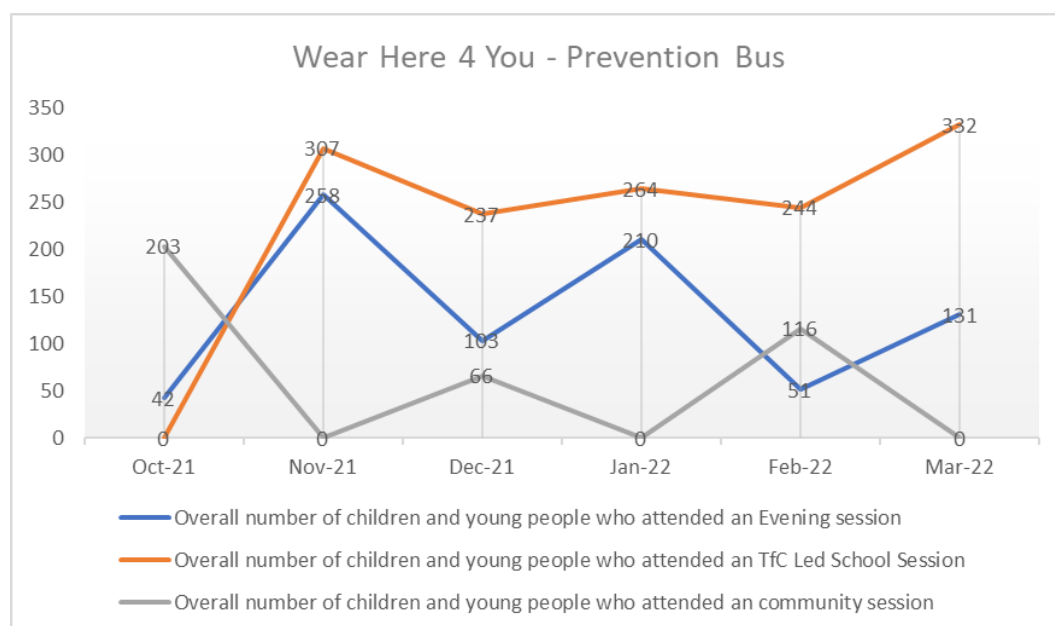
Again to illustrate the number of opportunities to engage children and young people in a discussion about their priorities and issues, the graph below shows the number of children engaged with the Prevention Bus. As follows:

Between October 21 – March 22 **1384** individual children and young people received a brief intervention from the Wear Here 4 You team

Between Oct – March (6 months) **795** children and young people engaged with the Wear Here 4 You team on an evening session.

Between October 21 and March 22 **385** children and young people have received information at a community day event along with 58 parent/carers.

Prevention Bus – Wear Here 4 You Engagement Figures (Oct 21 – March 22)



During their engagement with the Prevention Bus many children provide feedback and ideas about service delivery and service design which have helped to refine the delivery of that services and that of the partners who jointly support the Bus.

Through 2021-22 the Children's Education and Scrutiny Committee work programme included visits to a number of youth engagement groups as well as presentations to scrutiny itself. The Scrutiny annual report contains a summary of the issues noted and reference to young people's request to see more evidence of the impact their feedback makes on Council and partner decision making.

Overall the Council has a significant range of existing mechanisms to seek views from children and young people, and in each individual group there is a reporting arrangement in place, which has included reporting to Scrutiny as noted earlier. What is absent however, is a single summary of the collective issues or priorities raised by those groups and evidence of the difference they have made to decision making at a Council level. The value of children's feedback would be strengthened by evidencing that impact.

That could be achieved if relevant sub-committees of Council, and city-wide partnership meetings, receive a summary of feedback from young people and duly report back on work undertaken to address those issues. This could be annualised or follow an academic year if that better suited the children.

For illustrative purposes, given the Youth Council have a priority focus on health and well-being, which sits within the broad remit of the Health and Well-being Board, the Youth Council could present (in any format suitable to ensure their engagement) their issues for discussion and action, which in turn would inform action planning and priorities.

5. Reasons for the Decision

A Motion to Council in January proposed that a shadow young person's board should be established to enable consultation activity. In order to respond a review of the current arrangements has been undertaken and evidences a significant amount of existing consultation activity. What is less apparent is how the feedback from children impacts on decision making in some areas. A process is recommended in this report to improve that.

6. Alternative Options

To leave the arrangements as they are risks limiting the benefit of feedback from children and young people and risks dis-engagement from them, as they may well feel that the engagement is a token and not a meaningful opportunity to influence.

7. Impact Analysis

Given there are no changes to policies, or process required and no new material actions arising from this report, an EIA has not been completed

8. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

(a) **Co-operative Values** – the proposal further progresses the co-operative values of 'self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity' by strengthening the impact of consultation with children and young people.

9. Glossary

N/A

10. List of Appendices

N/A

11. Background Papers

N/A