



Carlisle City Council

Report to People Panel

Report details

Meeting Date: 12th January 2023
Portfolio: Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Key Decision: No
Policy and Budget Framework: No
Public / Private: Public

Title: YOUTH PROJECTS AND ENGAGEMENT
Report of: The Deputy Chief Executive
Report Number: CS 03/23

Purpose / Summary:

Provide an overview of potential future youth engagement from Cumbria County Council

Recommendations:

The panel to receive an update on youth engagement work and provide recommendations on the approach to future youth engagement as we transition into Cumberland Council.

Tracking

Executive:	
Scrutiny:	12/01/2023
Council:	

1. Background

1.1. The Carlisle City Council Healthy City team provided an update to members at the November panel.

2. Cumbria County Council - Update to Carlisle Scrutiny regarding youth participation activities in Carlisle

2.1. Cumbria County Council are presenting their current approach and future aspirations as we transition into Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness.

2.2. Young People's civic participation boils down to Article 12 of the United Convention of the Rights of the Child, which states that young people have a right to share their "views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them and to have their views considered and taken seriously" (Unicef, 1989). Thus, it could be argued that supporting young people's participation is not just 'nice to do' but a young person's right.

2.3. Since 2020, all youth councils in Cumbria, have been located in the 'Partnership and Improvement' (P& I) team, which now has its own 'Participation Framework' (Cumbria County Council, 2020), which argues for 'embedding a culture of participation' and creates working parameters for the inclusion of children in decision making in Cumbria. Prior to this, colleagues spent several years in 'Targeted Youth Support' contributing to the participation of young people in their 'early help' plans, alongside, supporting young people's civic participation. In September 2021 the P & I team supported an officer to be seconded temporarily to CCC's community development team, where they looked at projects including Covid 19 vaccine uptake and hospital discharge. In this time Colleagues kept in touch with Carlisle young people. The officer returned in April 2022.

2.4. In 2022, Carlisle Youth Council (CYC) is celebrating a decade of consistent activity of supporting Carlisle young people (CYC) to share their views and have a voice on matters that affect them. CYC aims to be an apolitical vehicle for youth voice in the City. This year, young people have contributed to projects on; youth sexual health education and treatment services, youth events linked to the Zero Carbon Cumbria partnership, participated in the national referendum of teenage opinion 'Make Your Mark' and members have been invited to take part in the forthcoming UK Youth Parliament election. 'Post pandemic' there has been some good opportunities to reconnect with colleagues at groups including Carlisle Carers, Carlisle College, William Howard School, Carlisle Matters, Morton Academy, People First, Carlisle Young Farmers, Barnardo's and Carlisle United Trust. With many more establishments having been requested to link in with Carlisle Youth Council. As youth Councillors grow up and gain their adult vote, colleagues need to find the next crop of local young people who hold a desire to represent their peers. Carlisle

Youth Council is currently recruiting and rebuilding a new team. The participation officer is continuing to speak with young people regarding building a strong youth voice vehicle in Carlisle. We plan to go to the local 'Skills Fair' in January to recruit and consult.

2.5. Over the pandemic, CYC members joined with Eden Youth Council, to work covertly on Microsoft Teams from home. Again, having a voice on equalities issues such as 'Black Lives Matter', the loss of education due to the pandemic, the spike in domestic violence and not least how they felt about Covid 19 and the restricted ways of life this brought. In 2022, we have now returned to being a Carlisle based group with regular meeting space rented at Carlisle Youth Zone and are regrouping ahead of local government reform.

2.6. The priorities for early 2023 include further work on establishing a new brand of the 'Cumberland Youth Council', which will bring Carlisle young people together with their peers from Copeland and Allerdale to form a new level of youth representation, which will work with members and officers in the new authority. There is still an expectation that there will still be a youth participation officer in Carlisle and there will be a mechanism for young people to speak up in Carlisle too. We are also hosting a training day for new recruits and electing a young person to represent Cumberland in the UK Youth Parliament. With elections in February 2023.

2.7. Council officers and members are welcome guests at CYC. We would like to work with members and officers more closely on issues that matter to young people and are curious about the mechanism for making sure that young people's views are heard by the right audience to help make them an influential force in the City.

Contact details:

Contact Officer: Luke Leathers Ext: 7481

Appendices attached to report:

- Appendix 1 Cumbria Participation Framework Document

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

Update to Carlisle Scrutiny regarding youth participation activities in Carlisle

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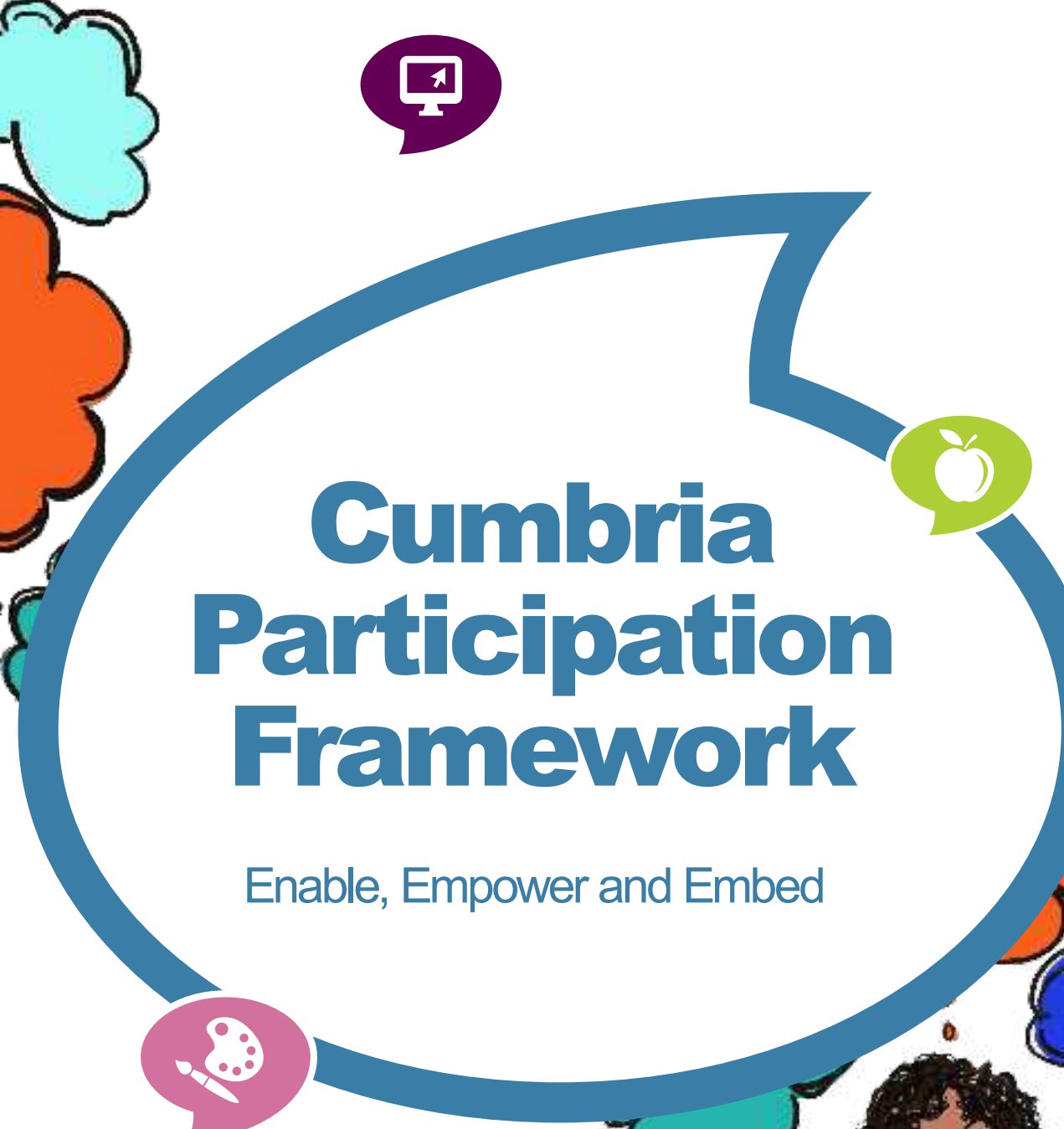
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Cumbria Participation Framework

Enable, Empower and Embed

Introduction

Involving children and young people in the decision-making process can profoundly affect their lives, their views should influence any decisions that are made about them.

Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child; listen to what they say, take their views seriously; and work with them and their families collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs. Evidence suggests that children and young people are empowered through participation and often develop an increase in confidence. It is essential therefore that children and young people are 'enabled' by professionals to participate in matters that affect them. Participation is often referred to as 'the voice of the child'.




Defining participation

All children and young people have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings taken into account, when decisions are being taken about their life.

These decisions could be about their family, school or life in the community. This right is protected under Article 12 in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This has been adopted into United Kingdom legislation, such as the Children's Act 2004, and all services and agencies have a duty to comply with this right.

The definition to the right makes the distinction between individual children and young people's involvement and public or collective involvement in decisions that affect children as a group or cohort. The examples below describe how this may work in practice.



Participation is the active involvement of children and young people in experiences, opportunities and decisions that affect their lives and their ability to fulfil their potential. A distinction has been made between children and young people's involvement in personal decisions, affecting them as individuals, and public decisions affecting children and young people as a group

(Kirby et al, 2003; UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2009).

Individual participation examples

- 1 One-to-one consultation with their social worker (or another worker)
- 2 Using an advocate to bring their views to the attention of the decision-makers
- 3 Children involved in their EHCP (education and health care plans)
- 4 Children and young people chairing reviews
- 5 Children and young people involved in writing their plans



Collective participation examples

- 1 Children and young people involved in the recruitment process including interviewing staff
- 2 Young people involved in policy making
- 3 Children and young people involved in the development and delivery of training
- 4 Children and young people's councils or specific issue forums, for example the 'all of us' forum for SEND children.



Cumbria's Principles

Cumbria has agreed a set of underpinning principles for participation. The principles have been developed to inform the way we deliver participation in the Council. The principles state what children and young people and others can expect of the Council in children and young people's participation practice. We will ensure that these principles underpin all that we do.

- 1 We will ensure that all children and young people, especially those that are most vulnerable, are able to participate in decision making, if they choose to do so.
- 2 We will listen to children and young people and ensure that their views inform our work.
- 3 We will enable children and young people through supporting them to acquire the necessary skills to develop and deliver their own participation activities.
- 4 We will ensure that children and young people receive feedback about any decision making that they have been involved with.
- 5 We will provide accessible, supportive, meaningful opportunities so that all children and young people can make informed decisions about their lives.
- 6 We will involve children and young people at the earliest opportunity engaging them in the development and design stages of participation activity.
- 7 We will ensure a sufficient range of resources and incentives are made available to support the participation of children and young people.
- 8 We will ensure the children and young people's workforce acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to involve children and young people in decision making appropriately.
- 9 We will safeguard all children and young people through creating safe and friendly environments for participation activity.
- 10 We will recognise that children and young people's participation is voluntary, and we will respect that they have other commitments.

Priorities

Achieving best practice in all our participation work will be an ongoing process, to help us to do this we have agreed a set of five key priorities, and for each priority some specific actions to deliver them.

- 1 Embed a culture of participation
- 2 Enable children and young people to participate
- 3 A Coherent structure for the voice of children and young people to be heard, with clear pathways of influence.
- 4 A visible participation 'offer'



Priority 1









Embed a culture of participation

A culture of participation is an organisation that creates an environment where the voices, of children and young people are listened to in different and active ways throughout an organisation.

It is where participation enters the ways of thinking and everyone in the organisation and becomes the norm rather than a special type of activity. It is also where the behaviours of meaningful engagement of children and young people is everyone's responsibility, it is embedded into policy and practice.

Understanding what participation means in practice is key for staff at all levels and in all positions. We will create opportunities for sharing good practice around participation activity through sharing and learning what works. We will create a network or community of participation champions that are engaged in participation to lead the process of embedding participation across the organisation.

To embed this priority into our practice we will:

-  Implement the seven golden rules (developed by young people)
-  Involve children and young people in the commissioning cycle. Involvement of children and young people will be an integral part of the different stages of the commissioning cycle. We will co-produce a participation policy for commissioning with young people.
-  Provide training and development opportunities for staff including practice experience underlying principles and methods
-  Support staff to reflect and evaluate their participation practice
-  Discuss participation work in supervision and staff meetings including overcoming the barriers to participation
-  Create a network of participation champions
-  Provide opportunities and encourage discussion around participation practice with others both internally and externally
-  Carry out regular assessments of children and young people's participation activities

Priority 2

Enable children and young people to participate

The quality of children and young people's participation and their ability to benefit from it are strongly influenced by the efforts made to create a positive environment for their participation.

Young people express the importance of relationships that are based on trust, respect, and non-judgement. Having strong links with partner organisations who specialise in supporting children and young people is essential as their practitioners have pre-existing relationships with the children and young people.

To embed this priority into our practice we will:

▶ Ensure that our ways of working build the confidence and self-esteem of children and young people so that they feel they are valued and able to contribute their experiences and views.

- ▶ Provide support where necessary to build skills and capacity to enable children and young people, individually and collectively, to participate effectively
- ▶ Ensure that our participation activities are age appropriate
- ▶ Work alongside practitioners who have pre-existing relationships with children and young people
- ▶ Implement the seven golden rules (developed by young people)



Priority 3


A Coherent structure for the voice of children and young people to be heard, with clear pathways of influence.

We will implement a coherent structure where children and young people are empowered, and participation activity will influence and change services for children and young people. A structure which influences local, regional, and national decision making.

The engagement of young people in local democratic processes is essential; it fosters a sense of belonging and allows communities to become stronger. The structure will have direct links to local area committees allowing children and young people to influence decisions in their local communities.

To support a joined-up approach across the Cumbria County Council departments including community, youth offending service, inclusion, education and children and families, we will identify a 'strategic lead for participation, who will take a lead on the process of embedding participation across the organisation.

To embed this priority into our practice we will:

 Use the voice of children and young people to enhance the work of the established partnerships for example, Childrens Trust



Board and the CSCP (Cumbria Safeguarding Children partnership), HWB (health and wellbeing board), Safer Cumbria



Use the voice of children and young people to strengthen the Corporate Parenting Board



Identify a strategic lead for participation who oversees the theme of participation in the Children and Young People's Plan & the work within the Council



Create opportunities for children and young people to have stronger links with elected members and links to Local Area Committees

Priority 4

Governance

It is vitally important that children and young people know how their voices have been listened to and what actions have been taken as a result of their involvement. It is equally as important for them to understand how and where this will be reported and what impact their contribution has made.

To embed this priority into our practice we will:

- ▶ Establish monitoring, reporting, and recording systems that will allow us to monitor and evidence participation activity and its impact.
- ▶ Publish annual reports on performance and participation activity
- ▶ Engage senior leadership through reporting to children's DMT on a quarterly basis
- ▶ Encourage evaluation to measure the impact of participation
- ▶ Carry out independent monitoring of performance by involving children and young people in review and assessment.



Priority 5

A visible participation ‘offer’

To help us to internalise this new way of working we will work alongside children and young people to co-produce a vision for Cumbria. This will ensure that everyone understands why and how children and young people are involved in participation throughout the organisation.

To embed this priority into our practice we will:

- ▶ Co-produce a participation ‘Vision for Cumbria’ with children and young people
- ▶ Develop a Communications Strategy which includes:
 - ▶ showcasing and celebrating of achievements
 - ▶ regular publication of priorities and achievements
 - ▶ website regularly updated with interactive consultation opportunities and appropriate use of new social media to promote the activities
 - ▶ engaging with schools, colleges, and academies
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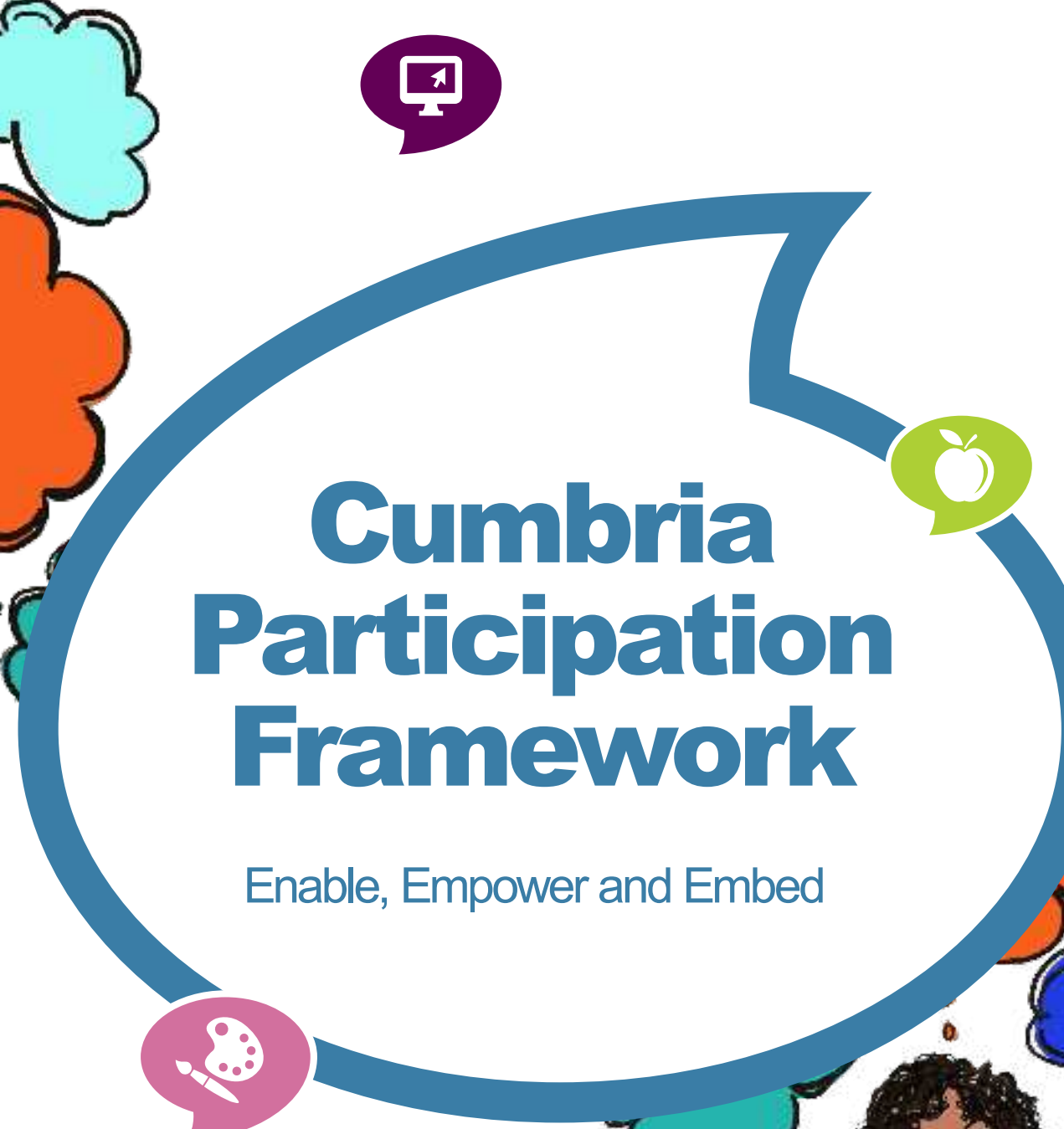
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National, Regional and Local Partnerships



Westmorland
Childrens
Scrutiny
Panel

Westmorland
Cabinet

Cumberland
Childrens
Scrutiny
Panel

Cumberland
Cabinet

UKYP
(UK Youth
Parliament)
1 MYP,
2 Deputy
MYP's

Youthforia
Regional YC
representation

UKYP
(UK Youth
Parliament)
1 MYP,
2 Deputy
MYP's

Youthforia
Regional YC
representation

Westmorland
& Furness
Youth Council

Cumberland
Youth
Council

Special Interest
Groups e.g.
Young Carers
Children
Looked After
BAME
SEND

Special Interest
Groups e.g.
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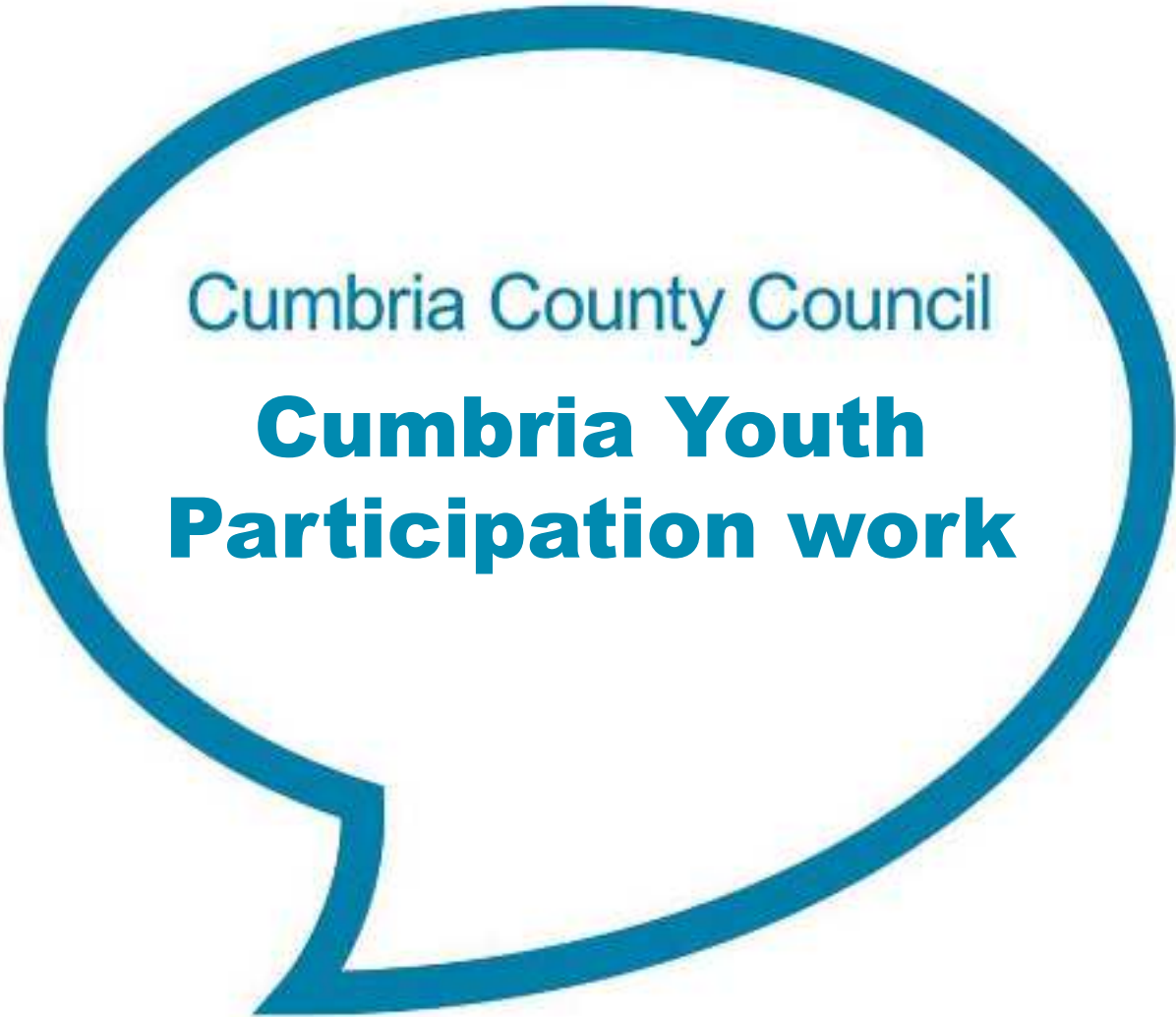
Vote onto
Youth Council

Vote onto
Youth Council

Young People 11 to 19 yrs

School Councils, Youth Groups, Special interest groups

Young People 11 to 19yrs

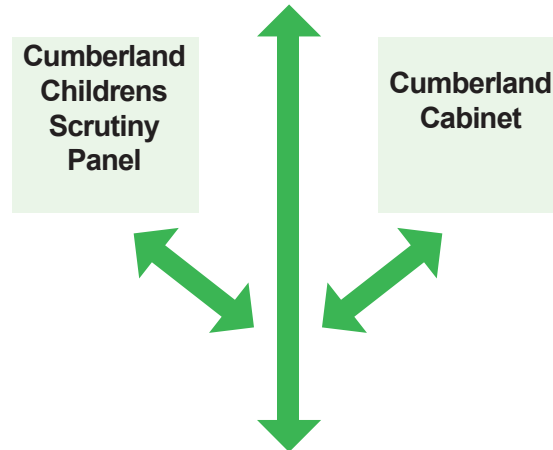
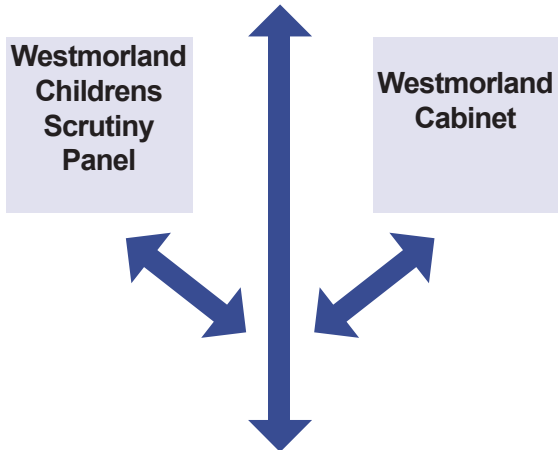


Cumbria County Council
**Cumbria Youth
Participation work**

Youth Participation Work



National, Regional and Local Partnerships



UKYP
(UK Youth Parliament)
1 MYP,
2 Deputy MYP's

Youthforia
Regional YC
representation

UKYP
(UK Youth Parliament)
1 MYP,
2 Deputy MYP's

Youthforia
Regional YC
representation

**Westmorland
& Furness
Youth Council**

**Cumberland
Youth Council**

**Special Interest
Groups e.g.**
Young Carers
Children
Looked After
BAME
SEND

**Special Interest
Groups e.g.**
Young Carers
Children
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SEND

**Vote onto
Youth Council**

**Vote onto
Youth Council**

Young People 11 to 19 yrs School Councils, Youth Groups, Special interest groups Young People 11 to 19 yrs

Cumbria Participation

Framework

- Aims to **enable** young people to work with adults to make decisions that impact their lives
- Aims to **empower** young people by providing a clear pathway for them to have their voice heard by influential adults
- Aims to **embed** a culture of participation amongst adults who are interested in the voices of children. So children can be as involved in the decision making process, as much as possible.

7 Golden Rules (2016)

They are a set of principles designed to help anyone working with, and for, children and young people to support them understand, experience and exercise their participation rights.

The Golden Rules inform adults what children and young people's participation should involve and feel like

The Golden Rules are directly informed by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No.12

They are fundamental principles.



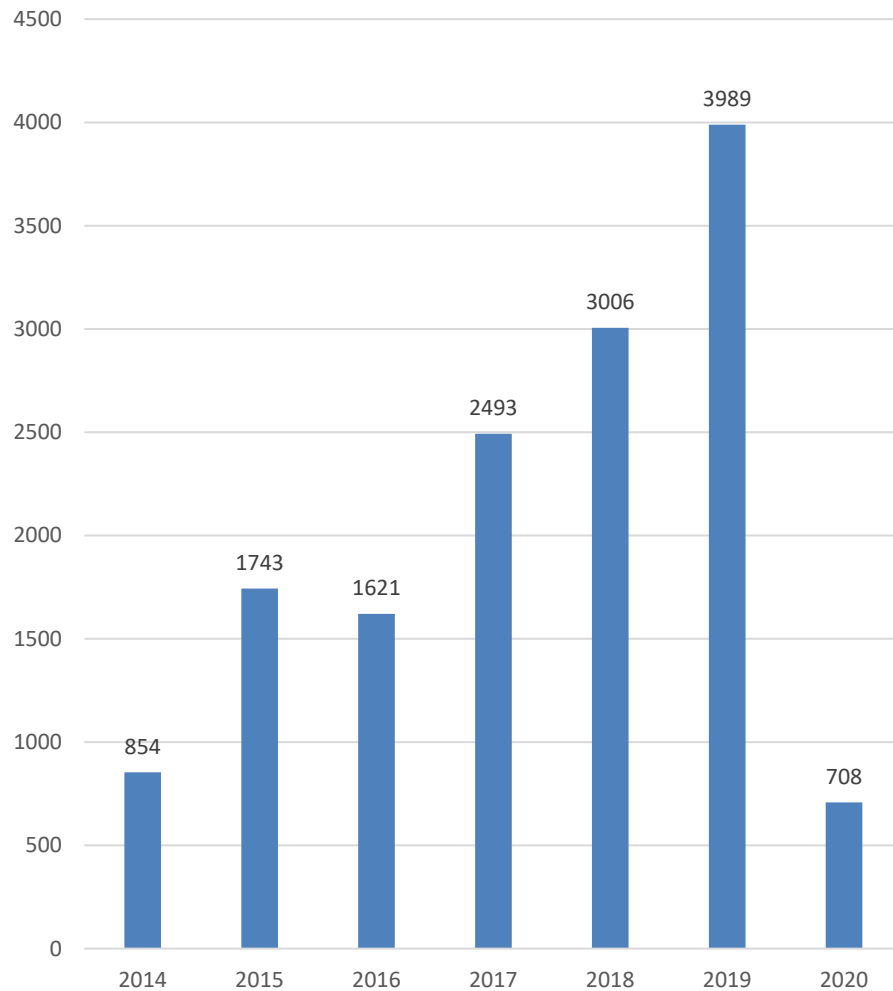
Ongoing activity

- Youth Councillors in dialogue with public health, NHS and elected member about youth sexual health and relationships services
- Recruitment of new youth councillors
- Meeting young people in schools, college and training centres
- Reestablishment of face to face meetings
- Attendance at Youth Climate Summit and Youth Climate Fest (2022)
- UK Youth Parliament Election (Feb 2023)
- Carlisle Youth and Community work Conference
- Attending John Stevenson M.P's skills fair (Jan 23)
- Monthly youth council meetings
- Dialogue with partners about youth voice within mental health and other health services

Focus on health and well being

Cumbrian youth votes for mental health issues

Youth votes for 'mental health'



Year	Youth votes for 'mental health'	Position in ballot
2014	854	6th
2015	1743	3rd
2016	1621	3rd
2017	2493	1st
2018	3006	1st
2019	3989	2nd
2020	708	1st

Youth Inspection Programme

- **What are Young Inspectors?**
- **Young inspectors are young people who inspect services delivered to children and young people, providing advice and recommendations on how those services can improve.**
- **Currently inspecting school holiday and food provision in Cumbria**
- **Full application details on our web page**
- **Inspection reports and application form available via our web page**



Photo index:

Top left: In the House of Commons 2019

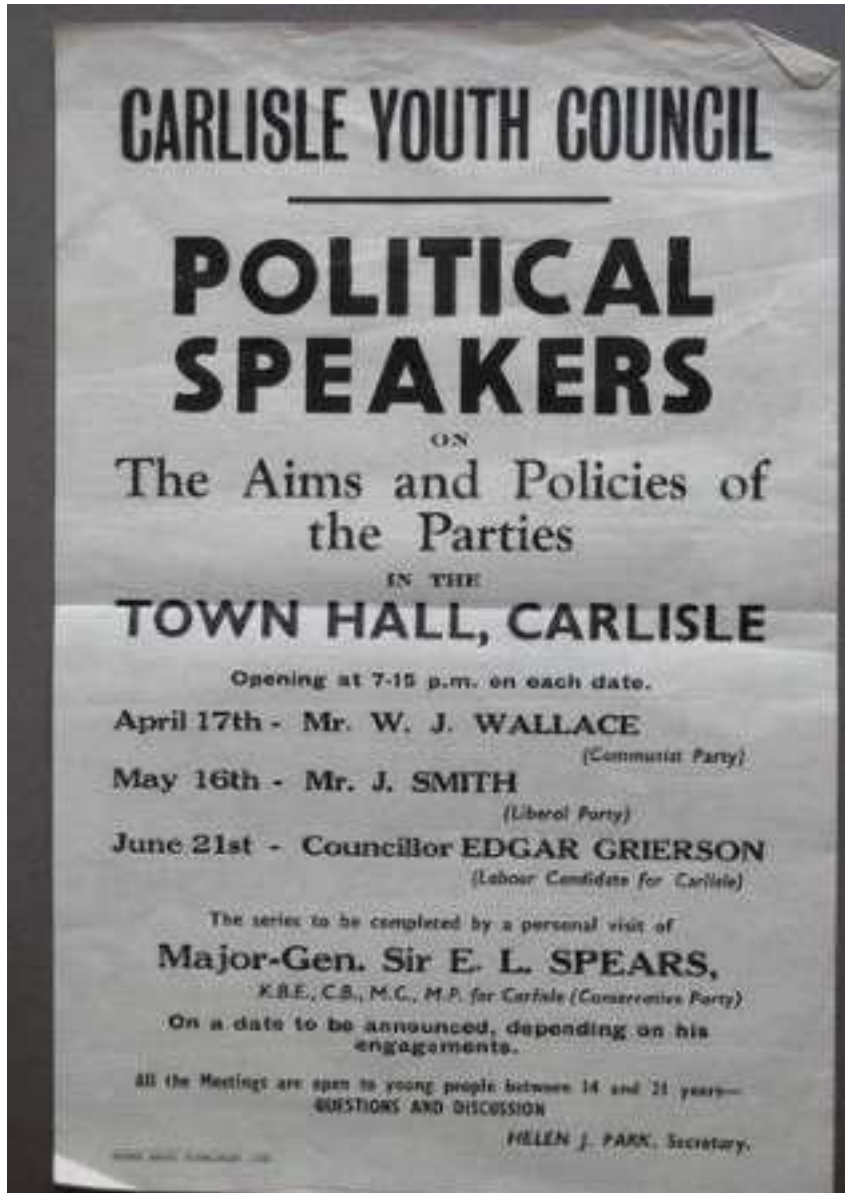
Left: Cumbria Pride 2018

Top mid: Skills Fair 2019

Top right: Carlisle College 2022



How can we remain in touch?



Carlisle Youth Council is open to any member or officer to have dialogue with young people.

Get in touch

Email me to refer a young person

chris.barry@cumbria.gov.uk

Phone: 07788396257

Our webpage

[Rights and Participation | Cumbria County Council](#)

Team manager:

susan.hodkin@cumbria.gov.uk

Left: The first youth council in Carlisle?

Approximate date - 1945