



2017 Youth Voice Self-assessment and Snapshot Report

British Youth Council (BYC) is the Government's key partner in promoting involvement of young people in local and national decision making. BYC has been asked by Government to produce a self-assessment toolkit to help 'Youth Voice Vehicles' and local authorities to review their current arrangements and identify how they can be even more successful in listening to and acting on the views of young people.

BYC has worked with the Network of Regional Youth Work Units: England to draw on this toolkit. Young people involved in Youth Voice Vehicles (Youth Councils, forums, cabinets and parliaments) in their local areas and the youth participation workers who support them have been asked for their views on the content and format of the toolkit.

What is the assessment?

It is designed to be a simple mechanism for local councils to identify the strengths and areas for development in the ways you involve young people in decision making in your area. This is not a generic guide to youth participation: it focuses on the effectiveness of the 'top tier' Youth Voice Vehicle in 'top tier' local authorities

Seven areas are explored (Representative, Accountable, Independence, Support, Political & Officer buy-in, Power & Influence, and Impact), using a total of 29 questions respondents are asked to rate the criteria using a Red, Amber and Green system.

Year on Year Comparison

	2015			2016			2017		
	Green	Amber	Red	Green	Amber	Red	Green	Amber	Red
Representative	62%	34%	4%	62%	33%	5%	57%	38%	5%
Accountable	51%	41%	8%	53%	36%	11%	51%	39%	10%
Independent	29%	37%	34%	32%	29%	39%	34%	25%	41%
Support	73%	25%	2%	66%	31%	3%	61%	38%	1%
Buy-in	52%	38%	10%	54%	34%	12%	50%	40%	10%
Power and Influence	32%	51%	17%	33%	50%	17%	35%	48%	17%
Impact	43%	49%	8%	51%	40%	9%	39%	50%	11%

	2015			2016			2017		
Representative	Green	Amber	Red	Green	Amber	Red	Green	Amber	Red
Accountable	62%	34%	4%	62%	33%	5%	57%	38%	5%
Independent	51%	41%	8%	53%	36%	11%	51%	39%	10%
Support	29%	37%	34%	32%	29%	39%	34%	25%	41%
Buy-in	73%	25%	2%	66%	31%	3%	61%	38%	1%
Power and Influence	52%	38%	10%	54%	34%	12%	50%	40%	10%
Impact	32%	51%	17%	33%	50%	17%	35%	48%	17%
	43%	49%	8%	51%	40%	9%	39%	50%	11%

2015			2016			2017		
Green	Amber	Red	Green	Amber	Red	Green	Amber	Red
62%	34%	4%	62%	33%	5%	57%	38%	5%
51%	41%	8%	53%	36%	11%	51%	39%	10%
29%	37%	34%	32%	29%	39%	34%	25%	41%
73%	25%	2%	66%	31%	3%	61%	38%	1%
52%	38%	10%	54%	34%	12%	50%	40%	10%
32%	51%	17%	33%	50%	17%	35%	48%	17%
43%	49%	8%	51%	40%	9%	39%	50%	11%

Breakdown of 59 responses

Is the Youth Voice Vehicle (YVV) representative of the youth population in the authority?			
	Green	Amber	Red
Young people are elected to the YVV through a transparent recruitment and election process with a turnout of more than 25% of the relevant youth population	37.84%	56.76%	5.41%

The YVV regularly reviews its membership and has a transparent strategy to ensure that the YVV represents the diversity of the youth population of the area (this could include reserved places for under-represented groups, outreach campaign to ensure people from under-represented groups stand for election etc)	54.05%	37.84%	8.11%
The YVV is linked to single issue and special interest young people's voice groups in the area (e.g. Young People in Care Forum, Environment Groups) with clear mechanisms for representing the interests of these groups	54.05%	35.14%	10.81%
Schools, colleges and academies in the local authority area recognise the YVV as a powerful voice for young people and support its elections and campaigns	48.65%	48.65%	2.70%
YVV meetings are accessible to young people with particular needs, whether physical, cultural or emotional.	83.78%	16.22%	0.00%
The YVV has a transparent strategy to ensure that it provides appropriate access for all its members, including transport, access to ICT, care requirements etc	64.86%	35.14%	0.00%

Is the YVV accountable to the youth population in the authority?			
	Green	Amber	Red
The YVV produces an annual manifesto/work plan, endorsed by supporters/ members	48.65%	37.84%	13.51%
The YVV regularly consults with young people on priorities and significant issues	64.86%	32.43%	2.70%
The YVV regularly liaises with other youth forums (e.g. district forums, special interest groups)	51.35%	43.24%	5.41%
The YVV has a clear Communications Strategy (which includes regular publication of priorities and achievements, web-site regularly updated with interactive consultation opportunities, creative and appropriate use of new social media to promote the activities of the YVV, mailing list of supporters/member organisations who are regularly asked for their views, engaging with schools, colleges and academies, annual report on activities, agreed protocols for media engagement by YVV, targets for positive media mentions for YVV activities)	37.84%	43.24%	18.92%

How independent is the YVV?			
	Green	Amber	Red

The YVV has terms of reference or a constitution which state that it is an independent body with young people as elected officers. Its constitution enables it to campaign on issues that may not be priorities for the local authority	56.76%	27.03%	16.22%
The YVV has its own bank account and is responsible for managing its budget. It generates income to support its campaigns from a number of sources	16.22%	13.51%	70.27%
The YVV's Communications Strategy enables it to manage its own media relations, independent of the local authority	29.73%	35.14%	35.14%

Does the YVV receive sufficient support from the local authority to enable it to fulfill its role?

	Green	Amber	Red
The YVV determines the support it needs in order to effectively represent the voice of young people, and has negotiated a support package with the local authority	56.76 %	43.24 %	0.00 %
The local authority demonstrates its commitment to hearing the voice of young people	64.86 %	32.43 %	2.70 %

How much political and senior-level buy-in from the local authority is in place?

	Green	Amber	Red
The local authority has an overall strategy for listening to the views of children and young people, which goes beyond the Directorate for C&YP Services, recognising young people as having a voice in wider community matters.	54.05 %	40.54 %	5.41%
The local authority identifies a 'Youth Voice Champion' at elected member level to meet regularly with the YVV and be a first point of contact for YVV strategic concerns	51.35 %	35.14 %	13.51 %
The local authority invites the YVV to 'youth-proof' policy changes to assess their impact on young people	27.03 %	51.35 %	21.62 %
The local authority commissions a package of support (in kind and financial) with the YVV to provide effective representation of young people's voice	56.76 %	40.54 %	2.70%
The local authority encourages dialogue with young people through the YVV, going beyond its statutory duties to consult.	61.11 %	33.33 %	5.56%

How much power and influence does the YVV have?

	Green	Amber	Red
The YVV and/or associated young people's organisations have a clearly articulated role as a partner in all aspects of commissioning services for young people, Grant aid decisions for youth facilities, Scrutiny/review of council services, 'Youth-proofing' new policies, Shadowing Cabinet members and senior council officials	29.73 %	54.05 %	16.22 %

The local authority involves the YVV as a partner in multi-agency local strategies that affect young people (e.g. transport strategies)	40.54 %	45.95 %	13.51 %
There is a clear decision making process, in which recommendations from the YVV are given serious consideration, and where they cannot be implemented, the local authority provides a written explanation of the reasons for the decisions made.	32.43 %	51.35 %	16.22 %
The YVV has a representative role with statutory bodies beyond the local authority, including police and health authorities	38.24 %	41.18 %	20.59 %

What impact does the YVV have on policies and services for young people?			
	Green	Amber	Red
The YVV and local authority conduct regular surveys of young people and periodic evaluations to assess the impact of YVV involvement	32.43 %	56.76 %	10.81 %
The local authority is able to identify differences that have been made as a result of YVV involvement	27.03 %	62.16 %	10.81 %
More positive coverage of young people's concerns in the local media	45.95 %	43.24 %	10.81 %
Future plans for the YVV build on the feedback received about their impact on young people's lives	51.35 %	37.84 %	10.81 %

Snapshots

The different mechanisms and groups Local Authorities use to engage young people

Which of the following do you have					
	Yes		No		Total
LGBTQ Forums	73.33%	33	26.67%	12	45
Healthwatch	82.98%	39	17.02%	8	47
Health Forum	52.50%	21	47.50%	19	40
Anti Bullying group	19.44%	7	80.56%	29	36
LA wide school pupil forum	36.84%	14	63.16%	24	38



byc briefing

Young Mayor	27.78%	10	72.22%	26	36
BME Forum	28.21%	11	71.79%	28	39
Youth Council/Forum/Cabinet (LA wide)	94.64%	53	5.36%	3	56
Youthbank/YOF	21.88%	7	78.13%	25	32
UK Youth Parliament	98.18%	54	1.82%	1	55
Scrutiny panels	63.04%	29	36.96%	17	46
Young disabled forum	64.29%	27	35.71%	15	42
Young Asylums/Refugees Forum	29.41%	10	70.59%	24	34
Children in Care Council	94.83%	55	5.17%	3	58
Young Carers Forums	82.61%	38	17.39%	8	46
Housing/Tenants Forums	51.43%	18	48.57%	17	35
CAHMHS/Mental Health group	78.57%	33	21.43%	9	42
Commissioning	57.50%	23	42.50%	17	40
Youth club forums	66.67%	26	33.33%	13	39
Young Inspectors	57.89%	22	42.11%	16	38
Child Trust Boards	50.00%	17	50.00%	17	34
Police Youth Forum	52.50%	21	47.50%	19	40

Thinking about the 'Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being' have you:

	Yes		No		Not sure		Total
Taken steps to ascertain the views of young people and to take them into account in making decisions about services and activities for them	94.34%	50	1.89%	1	3.77%	2	53
Enabled young people to inspect and report at least annually on the quality and accessibility of provision	53.70%	29	24.07%	13	22.22%	12	54