

# Report

Report to:	<b>Education Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>27 November 2018</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Education Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Youth Engagement Update</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to: -

- ◆ provide an update on engagement activities with young people in respect of:-
  - the Year of Young People 2018 Rural Youth Summit in the Biggar Learning community
  - the planned process and timescales for the Scottish Youth Parliament 2019 elections

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s): -

- (1) that the commitment and contribution of young people, in particular South Lanarkshire Youth Council (SLYC) members, Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) and Year of Young People (YoYP) ambassadors, to the youth agenda be noted.
- (2) that the process of registration and voting for the Scottish Youth Parliament elections be noted.
- (3) that the continued contribution and participation of young people in local planning issues be noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Youth, Family and Community Learning Service's (YFCLS) commitment to youth engagement and democracy remains a key priority for the new service moving forward and during this year 2018/2019.
- 3.2. Empowering young people and partnership working are two of the key themes which are leading to successful engagement with young people. Events which engage, celebrate and understand the changing needs of young people have continued to take place successfully as a result of the good practice model embedded within the service and recently highlighted as 'strong' within the recent HMIE Inspection report of CLD in South Lanarkshire.
- 3.3. This report provides details of 2 activities which exemplify the Council's commitment to working in partnership to ensure young people are at the heart of shaping and influencing services across South Lanarkshire, and improving the way engagement takes place.

#### **4. Biggar Rural Youth Summit**

- 4.1. On 3 September 2018, SLYC, MSYP and YoYP ambassadors delivered a rural youth summit market place event in Biggar Memorial Hall.
- 4.2. Through consultation, SLYC members identified that young people in this community felt isolated and not fully informed about opportunities and services. As a result, the SLYC Board successfully applied to Year of the Young People Create18 team for funding to plan, design and deliver a rural youth summit in the Biggar learning community.
- 4.3. Having secured funding of £820, the members worked in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council, Biggar High School, Biggar Youth Project, local youth groups and partners to deliver a youth market place to provide information and promote opportunities for young people. Over 600 young people participated in the event with 24 partners and services contributing to the event.
- 4.4. 6 SLYC/YoYP members delivered the day's events managing everything from pupil groups, evaluations, photography, support and advice, to catering. The partnership was built up over several meetings beforehand and proved successful. All Biggar High School pupils attended in their year groups.
- 4.5. It is worth noting that pupils had access to various volunteering opportunities, further education establishments, safety information from Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, information on housing and homelessness and volunteering opportunities. Councillor Julia Marrs, Council Spokesperson for Youth also attended, engaging with young people and supporting the event.
- 4.6. Feedback was very positive from the young people and from the various partners about the uptake on their services. A summary of their views in a wordle is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.7. The event was highlighted in the recent Housing News Edition 26 where members of Housing and Technical Resources' team recorded that they had received a variety of ideas to support the Council's Home+ programme that they hoped would meet the future needs and aspirations of South Lanarkshire's young people.

The newsletter can be accessed via this link:

[https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/12495/housing\\_news\\_-\\_edition\\_26\\_-\\_autumn\\_2018](https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/12495/housing_news_-_edition_26_-_autumn_2018)

- 4.8. A key feature that young people requested was broadband and WiFi.

#### **5. Next steps**

- 5.1. To build on the success of the event, consideration is being given to hosting a similar event each year to maintain a focal point for all young people within the Biggar area.
- 5.2. The Scottish Youth Parliament's campaign for 2018 – 2019 is transport which is a matter which young people living in rural areas raise frequently.

Opportunities to continue engagement through South Lanarkshire Youth Council were identified, and to explore further, the issue of transport and other matters which young people in the rural area face.

## **6. Scottish Youth Parliament elections 2019**

- 6.1. Members of SLYC and Youth, Family and Community Learning staff in partnership with secondary schools, colleges, universities, local youth groups and uniformed organisations have been involved in helping to organise and deliver council wide elections to democratically elect 9 young people from South Lanarkshire to be members of the Scottish Youth Parliament.
- 6.2. Set up to act as the voice of young people in Scotland, the Scottish Youth Parliament offers young people aged between 14 and 25 the opportunity to get involved in the democratic process.

The SYP has 200 members, elected from local youth forums or national youth organisations, and from young people who have stood as individuals. The SYP represents and advocates the views of young people in Scotland and aims to:

- offer young people in Scotland a collective national youth voice;
- make a difference in society by increasing young people's participation;
- promote a positive image of young people;
- connect the process of policy making and development with young people;
- be an independent and youth-led organisation free from influence where young people can give their views to policy makers without hindrance, fear or barriers.

## **7. Scottish Youth Parliament elections 2019 process**

- 7.1. A fitting way to mark the 'Year of Young People' is to ensure that young people are involved in the democratic process and are supported in their local community.
- 7.2. The elections to the SYP in 2019 will provide an opportunity for young people to be engaged and involved in their own elections to ensure their voice is heard.
- 7.3. Replicating existing practice in South Lanarkshire, the election process will be a paper ballot to reflect the current process for local and national elections.
- 7.4. It should be noted that although the elections can be carried out electronically using the National Entitlement Card, the paper ballot process prepares young people for the existing local and national democratic processes as they move forward into adult life.
- 7.5. Below is a summary of the process for South Lanarkshire: -
- from August 2018, candidate registration has been open on line for young people aged 14-25 to stand for election
  - candidates are required to complete an on line registration and will be automatically sent a confirmation e mail and contact details of the local election co-ordinator
  - the registration process requires candidates to complete a simple on line module to ensure they know what the SYP does and the roles and responsibilities of elected Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs)
  - canvassing is done using online posts, appropriate social media sites and through visits to schools, youth groups etc.
  - school visits have begun including presentations to school assemblies and classes, break time and lunchtime information stalls and video presentations for the school TV network
  - evening visits to identified youth groups throughout South Lanarkshire are planned to ensure young people are informed of their opportunity to be heard and to be active participants through the democratic process
  - the deadline date for end of registration is flexible, but is expected to be in November 2018

- candidates will be supported to produce a manifesto to help with their campaign for election
- from now until voting takes place, candidates are grouped into their constituencies and campaign visits are arranged to local schools, colleges and youth groups. These visits are arranged and supported by Youth, Family and Community Learning Service staff
- the Council is an active participant through the Chief Executive's office and the election team staff to arrange for ballot boxes and polling stations (50 ). South Lanarkshire's printing services will provide up to 25,000 ballot papers
- each polling station is run by local staff in schools, youth facilities and community centres and supported by SLYC members and Youth, Family and Community Learning staff
- young people not involved in the election process are encouraged to volunteer to help. In previous years, this has helped in more young people voting as well as offering a learning opportunity for volunteers to be recognised through the Saltire volunteering awards
- the close of poll is expected in mid-March
- the count is organised by South Lanarkshire elections staff and up to 30 young volunteers from a local school. All candidates and their families are invited to observe the process and the final election results (East Kilbride Universal Connections)
- the Council's Chief Executive has volunteered to be the Returning Officer

7.6. Throughout March to June 2019, the newly elected MSYPs will attend training and workshops on their roles and responsibilities and to plan for their first national sitting in June 2019.

## **8. Employee Implications**

8.1. The employee implications are highlighted in the report.

## **9. Financial Implications**

9.1. The financial costs associated with the voting process can be met from existing budgeting resources.

## **10. Other Implications**

10.1. There are no significant risk implications in terms of the information contained within this report.

10.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained within this report.

## **11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

11.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

11.2. Consultation and engagement continues to be carried out with appropriate stakeholders including young people, youth councillors, Scottish Youth Parliament, Youth Learning Services Council staff and partners.

**Tony McDaid**  
**Executive Director (Education Resources)**

5 November 2018

**Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives**

- Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- Ensure schools and other places of learning are inspirational
- Support communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation, and supporting aspiration

**Previous References**

None

**List of Background Papers**

None

**Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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