



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board

Report of the Head of Early Years, Inclusion and Partnerships Hayley Lervy

Matter for Decision.

Wards Affected: All.

Participation & Engagement Strategy.

Purpose of the Report

- To provide Members with information on the proposed new Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Service (ELLLS) Directorate Participation and Engagement Strategy, along with a rationale for why the strategy has been developed.
- To request Members' approval to proceed with the process of formal consultation with all stakeholders to incorporate feedback and finalise, in partnership, the Participation and Engagement Strategy.

Executive Summary:

This report will provide Members with information on the proposed new Engagement and Participation Strategy and how it has been

developed to date. This report also requests permission to consult with key stakeholders on the new strategy.

Background:

Neath Port Talbot (NPT) has established a strong history of participation with children and young people, in particular through the Youth Service. The Neath Port Talbot Youth Council was formed in 1999 and was the first fully elected county wide youth forum in Wales. This strategy aims to build on the good practice already in place, further enhance engagement with children and young people and provide a more systematic approach to participation and engagement that all services within ELLLS can follow.

Welsh Government (WG) is committed to promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as the basis of all its work for children and young people in Wales. Participation is one of the guiding principles of the UNCRC with Article 12 setting out the right of children and young people to express an opinion and to have their opinion taken into account when decisions are being made on any matter that affects them. A children's rights approach is embedded across the new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018(ALNET), in which person centred practice (PCP) places the child or young person's views, wishes and feelings at the heart of decision making. The New Curriculum for Wales 2022, ensures that pupil voice is integral to designing a curriculum around what and how they will learn. These reforms have provided an opportunity to review our approaches to participation and engagement to ensure all opportunities are accessible, appropriate to meet the needs of children and young people, representative and inclusive.

The draft Participation and Engagement Strategy has been developed with contributions from a wide range of stakeholders, including the Youth Council, Young Persons Mental Health Forum, Inclusion Service, Children Rights Unit, schools, Families First, Children and Young People's Service, Youth Service and groups of

children and young people in mainstream and special schools. Discussions further highlighted the need for a strategy to ensure children and young people have opportunities to be involved in purposeful participation on issues and decisions that affect them. Furthermore, the importance of all engagement opportunities being accessible, inclusive and meaningful, with a clear process for feedback on the impact of any participation activity. It was also evident from consultation, that there needed to be greater clarity on how formal groups and participation activity across NPT interlink and communicate.

The strategy will provide a clear framework for participation with children and young people and includes a proposed engagement model. It outlines our aspirations for participation, steps needed to achieve this and how participation will be monitored and evaluated. A participation toolkit and training package will be designed to accompany the strategy. Training will be developed for children and young people, giving them the skills, confidence and understanding to enable them to participate effectively.

The aim is that the draft strategy provides a clear process and guidelines for services within the ELLS to implement, in order to ensure what matters to children and young people is at the centre of how we plan and deliver services (**see Appendix 1**). The draft strategy is in the process of being translated into Welsh and a Welsh language copy will be available during the consultation period.

Financial Impacts: No impact

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A First Stage Impact Assessment has been completed (**Appendix 2**).

Valleys Communities Impacts:

Positive – the strategy will ensure the voices and opinions of communities and groups of children and young people are

considered and that engagement will be purposeful. Training provided for C&YP should ensure they have the skills and confidence to participate in consultations about the issues which affect them.

Workforce Impacts: No impact

Legal Impacts: No impact

Consultation:

Consultation will be undertaken with all stakeholders on the new guidance, including schools, third sector, partner services and agencies, parents/carers and children and young people.

Recommendations:

That Members approve the Participation and Engagement Strategy for a period of consultation.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To finalise and embed the Participation and Engagement Strategy following a period of consultation.

Implementation of Decision:

Decision to be implemented after the three day call in.

Appendices:

Appendix 1- Participation and Engagement

Appendix 2- Impact Assessment- First Stage

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Appendix 2



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Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Permission to consult on a Participation and Engagement Strategy
Service Area: Early Years, Inclusion and Partnerships
Directorate: ELLS

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users	x	
Staff	x	
Wider community	x	
Internal administrative process only		x

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age	x				M	The new guidance will impact on children and young people by providing enhanced opportunities to participate and engage in decision making.
Disability	x				M	The new strategy will encompass learners with protected characteristics and with additional learning needs. The strategy will benefit this group of learners by ensuring all participation opportunities are inclusive.

Gender Reassignment		x				This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
Marriage/Civil Partnership		x				This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal.
Pregnancy/Maternity		x				This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal.
Race		x				This is not a criterion that will be directly impacted upon by this proposal.
Religion/Belief		x				This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal.
Sex		x				This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal.
Sexual orientation		x				This is not a criterion that will be impacted upon by this proposal.

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language		x				Learners who receive their education through the medium of Welsh will have opportunities to participate in Welsh.
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		x				It is expected that participation opportunities will be made for pupils to engage using Welsh.

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		x				There will be no change as a result of this proposal.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		x				There will be no change as a result of this proposal.

6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	x		The guidance will positively impact on the long term well-being of children and young people ensuring they are involved in any decisions that affect them.
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	x		The guidance contributes to Well-being Objective 1 as it will contribute to giving children and young people the best start in life, raising aspirations and developing their skills.
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	x		Numerous groups of children and young people, along with professionals from other services have been involved in the development of the draft strategy.
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	x		The consultation process will included all stakeholders.

Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	x		The guidance will ensure processes for involving children and young people in good quality, effective participation ensuring they are at the centre of decision making processes and strengthen current arrangements for engagement.
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7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	x
Reasons for this conclusion	
There is no significant impact on any areas other than the guidance will provide further support for schools and vulnerable learners.	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

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	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Liz Dennis	Wellbeing & Behaviour Service Manager	E Dennis	13.10.22
Signed off by	Hayley Lervy	Head of Service	H Lervy	13.10.22