EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Helping to create the next generation of civic leaders in Scotland

A study on young people engagement in Scotland by John Ross Scott and Kristopher Leask
Introduction

This is the draft executive summary of ‘Being Heard’ – one of the largest studies ever undertaken into young people engagement within Scottish Local Authorities – and, as such, it can only focus on some of the contents of this important document.

The main report gives – for the first time – details of what is happening within all 32 Scottish Councils when it comes to young people’s participation and engagement with decision makers; gives the current statutory requirements regarding youth engagement; highlights how the electoral system can be adjusted to allow better age-equality levels of elected members in Scotland by following a Norwegian model; and undertakes studies into the key initiatives being used in Scotland today to engage young people in decision making, including interviews with young people and adults in the front line.

Initiatives studied include:

- Young People Serving on Committees (Moray, Dundee, Perth & Kinross, Shetland, Glasgow, Scottish Borders)
- An Appointed Youth Convener (Highland)
- Councillors as Young People Champions (Dumfries and Galloway, Renfrewshire, Dundee, Inverclyde and Western Isles)
- Youth Councils
- Young People’s Cabinets
- Children’s Champions Boards
- Participatory Budgeting (Dundee, Western Isles, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, East Lothian, Edinburgh, Renfrewshire, Scottish Borders)
- Gatherings (Stirling, Renfrewshire and Dumfries and Galloway)
- Incentives.

For full details of all these, turn to the full report which is available at https://adobe.ly/2RcOgcI
# Contents

Listening to the voice of young people ................................. 2

Purpose of this study: Creating a legacy ............................... 4
  Limitations of this Study .................................................. 4
  Key questions addressed by the study: ............................. 4

Creating civic leaders ....................................................... 5

Current statutory requirements ......................................... 6

Our findings: is what we do effective? ............................... 8

Our recommendations ..................................................... 11

Acknowledgements ......................................................... 13

Appendix ........................................................................ 14

Endnotes ......................................................................... 15
Listening to the voice of young people

Maree Todd MSP
Minister for Children and Young People

“One of the most powerful legacies we have of the Year of Young People is seeing young people involved in decision making in a meaningful way. Not just in a tokenistic way but giving them the power to be heard. When young people are involved in a meaningful way, we see the benefits through their energy, creativity and new ideas and, of course, we want that to continue. This should not only be a fruitful experience for the young people involved, but the nation will benefit.”

Suki Wan
Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament

“Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that young people have the right to have their views heard and for those views to be taken seriously. At the Scottish Youth Parliament, we can see for ourselves, every day, just how much young people thrive when they are given a channel to have their voice heard. It is great to read in this report how much progress has been made to ensure young people are listened to in local authorities across Scotland, and I hope that its publication will catalyse even greater progress across Scotland on this vital issue.”

Councillor Stephen McCabe
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities Children and Young People Spokesperson

“With the Year of Young People drawing to a close, it is vital that we continue to work with our partners to ensure that young people are meaningfully involved in every level of governance in Scotland. This is, arguably, most important at local government level where decisions are taken that affect the day-to-day lives of young people, their families and communities. Decisions that affect our communities should be made by those who understand the issues they face, and to achieve this we must all work towards improving diversity within local democracy.”

Esme Leitch
Highland Youth Convenor

“I don’t like it when people say that they are keen to give young people a voice. Young people already have a voice. I don’t see this as being about adults giving young people a voice it is more about adults listening more actively to the voices that are already there.”
Bruce Adamson
Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland

“We don’t ask children and young people for their views just because it’s a nice thing to do or because we are told we have to. There’s a reason that the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child identifies Article 12, ‘the right to be heard’ as one of the four general principles of the UN Convention. Participation matters; it helps inform better decisions and can transform services and communities. Embedding children’s rights in the planning and delivery of services will not only improve the way our public services are run, it will lead to more engaged children and young people who are part of cohesive, more equal and respectful communities. The best way to guarantee this happens is by full incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots law. Incorporation would demonstrate that Scotland truly is a rights-respecting society that values the views and experiences children and young people.”

Huw Sherrard
The United Kingdom’s Youth Delegate to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

“Scotland is almost unparalleled internationally for our progress in engaging young people in decision-making, which we owe to the tireless work of the Scottish Youth Parliament and others. However, as this report highlights, young people still face a postcode lottery for their engagement in decisions made by their local authority. With budgets tightening, and decisions made by councils becoming more and more important, it’s vital that innovative approaches to local youth participation – like those described in this report – are championed across Scotland.”

Young people have been at the forefront of changes throughout the Twentieth Century.

In 2014 the Scottish Independence Referendum reawakened their interest in politics in a new world linked by social media, then the Year Of Young People 2018 helped inspire and heighten that enthusiasm, opening doors to a different kind of engagement between politicians, at all levels, with young people. This has giving the voice of youth full credence and allowing it to influence decision makers.

This Independent Report – one of the most extensive undertaken in Scotland – has been written to act as a legacy for the Year of Young People. In it we hope to highlight ways in which good practice in youth engagement across Scotland can be shared, to the benefit of all, and – as a result bolster Scotland’s lead in this field and help create a new breed of Scottish civic leaders to orchestrate change in the future.

John Ross Scott and Kristopher Leask
Purpose of this study: Creating a legacy

Research on the level of youth engagement being carried out by councils across Scotland has not been undertaken on this scale.

This report aims to fill the void of unawareness that has led to young people in certain areas being left behind in local policy making. In places there is an inequality in opportunities for young people to engage with local politics and reap the multitude of benefits this entails. Local authorities also – as things stand – risk losing out on the contribution of young people to local policy making that international studies show is beneficial to all involved.1

The Year of Young People initiative has provided a focus for all local authorities in Scotland to build on current work being done to involve children and young people – aged 12-25 – in local decision making. Improving youth engagement in Scotland is a much-needed legacy for the Year of Young People and if carried through should help create the next generation of Scottish civic leaders.

This independent research is intended to compliment and build on the study ‘The impact of Children and Young People’s Participation on Policy Making’2 which was commissioned by the Scottish Government in 2017. This ‘Being Heard’ report, however, highlights the current position of youth engagement in all 32 Scottish Councils whereas the earlier study looked at how young people are engaged within six selected organisations.

Limitations of this Study

This study is broad as it covers all 32 local authorities of Scotland. It attempts to log the variation of initiatives and structures used in all councils. Its limitation lies in its breadth compromising its focus. Any further study could aim to increase localised detail.

Furthermore, this study is limited in its reference to quantitative data. As a result, it relies solely on secondary qualitative data from interviews with those involved in initiatives or structures but, even so, it goes a step ahead of past studies which have focused more on selective areas where young people engagement works well.

It was not within the scope of this study to generate data on the impact of initiatives and structures. On this, further research would be required.

Limited resources restricted our ability to research and experience first-hand how these initiatives and structures function, but contacting more than one person in each local authority ensured a broad view.

Key questions addressed by the study:

1) What are the initiatives and structures currently in place in Scottish local authorities that allow young people to get better involved in local governance?

2) What are the concerns associated with these initiatives and structures and what is regarded as best practice when it comes to the ways young people are currently engaged in policy-making?

3) Looking to the future, how could what we have been improved to secure effective and sustainable engagement with young people in years to come?

4) What can we learn from elsewhere to grow our youth participation in decision making?
Creating civic leaders

Youth engagement should not be seen as something trivial to be conceded to young people. It offers serious benefits not only for young people but the whole community.

Engagement at a local level nurtures an interest in local government. Findings from this study reflect this as many of the young people interviewed are or will be moving on to pursue studies in related areas such as Law, Politics, History or International Relations.

There is limited study into the benefits of youth engagement at a local level in the UK and internationally. Research which has been conducted, however, in the USA shows that increased youth civic involvement leads to greater adult community and political involvement which is crucial for any kind of volunteering. Furthermore, research shows that when young people get involved in their communities at an early age, they develop bonds and social networks within the community. This in turn creates a sense of civic identity and morality resulting in adults who feel a strong sense of civic responsibility and pride in their local community. Finally, getting young people involved in local politics produces the local leaders of tomorrow. Improved political youth engagement leads to responsible, informed and valuable members of the workforce and civic leadership.

"Now that 16 and 17-year olds can vote in all Scottish elections it is important to ensure that they have an equal role in democracy."

A more informed electorate composed of various interests also produces a better local democracy. Local politicians should be held to account by the entire community they represent. Now that 16 and 17-year olds can vote in all Scottish elections it is important to ensure that they have an equal role in democracy.

To deny all members of an electorate the ability to hold their elected representatives to account while in office is unjust as stated in the European Commission White Paper 2001, “one of the most compelling reasons for engaging with young people is that they themselves tell us that they want more and better opportunities to participate in decision making. Consequently, it is up to the public authorities to bridge the gap between young people’s eagerness to express their opinions and the methods and structures which society offers”
Current statutory requirements

Taking account of children’s views in decisions that affect them is now a statutory requirement for Ministers when delivering their duties under Part 1 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. But – as highlighted in the State of Children’s Rights in Scotland report (2016) – this type of engagement remains ‘ad hoc’ with younger children and those with additional support needs perhaps missing out. Furthermore, legislated requirements for local authorities to consult with children and young people are even more limited. For example, Part 3 of the 2014 Act requires consultation with organisations that represent children and young people through children’s services planning processes, but not directly with children and young people themselves.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognises that young people in Scotland have rights. Article 12 is aimed at ensuring that young people have the right to have their views heard on matters that affect them and for those to be taken seriously. In “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” section A – the Legal Analysis – stipulates that Article 12 “imposes a clear legal obligation on States parties to recognize this right and ensure its implementation by listening to the views of the child and according them due weight.” The Legal Analysis importantly goes on to designate young people as holders of rights distinct from having their rights “derived from her or his vulnerability (protection) or dependency on adults (provision).”

Furthermore, the General comment directly instructs states to work on the presumption that children have the capacity to form their own view and thus that it is not up to the child to “first prove her or his capacity” and that decision makers must ensure young people have “sufficient understanding to be capable of appropriately forming her or his own views on the matter” as “[the] right to information is essential, because it is the precondition of the child’s clarified decisions.”

The General Comment also tackles tokenistic approaches to youth engagement. Point 28 re-enforces Article 12’s stipulation that “simply listening to the child is insufficient; the views of the child have to be seriously considered when the child is capable of forming her or his own views.” In section D the UNCRC’s general comment further argues against a tokenistic approach very clearly; “The Committee urges States parties to avoid tokenistic approaches, which limit children’s expression of views, or which allow children to be heard, but fail to give their views due weight.”

On the meaningfulness of youth engagement, the General Comment also guides decision makers. Point 133 outlines that if “participation is to be effective and meaningful, it needs to be understood as a process, not as an individual one-off event” Point 134 details nine criteria areas which determine how meaningful youth engagement is which are; respectful, relevant, child-friendly, inclusive, supported by training, safe and sensitive to risk, and accountable. A full description of each is available on page 30 of the General Comment.

In the General Comment’s conclusion concisely lays out the changes necessary to achieve meaningful implementation of Article 12 as a “dismantling [of] the legal, political, economic, social and cultural barriers that currently impede children’s opportunity to be heard and their access to participation in all matters affecting them. It requires a preparedness to challenge assumptions about children’s capacities, and to encourage the development of environments in which children can build and demonstrate capacities. It also requires a commitment to resources and training.”

The dismantling of barriers and challenging of assumptions is, as the General comment says, a “clear and immediate legal obligation of States parties under the Convention. It is the right of every child without any discrimination.”

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Helping to Create the Next Generation Of Civic Leaders in Scotland

The proposals we list in this report go to the heart of that principle or beyond it and we believe that the more local authorities that put measures or structures in place of the kind referred to will go a long way to improving not just the rights of the child but also encourage young people to take more interest in politics and democracy.

Two important policies passed and now embedded into the workings of the Scottish Youth Parliament are:

- Scottish Councils should have a legal responsibility to facilitate and fund a youth-led representative body for all 12-25-year olds (inclusive) in the local authority as a minimum standard, and
- All young people should be involved in the services that affect them and should have the opportunity to get involved in local decision-making opportunities.

Added to this – in June 2018 – the following policy was passed by the Youth Parliament:

- All local authorities should have in place a formal structure to consult young people on decisions that will affect them, which includes a youth representative on key committees such as Education and Planning.

The Inclusion Charter also states that all children have the right to be included in every aspect of society and that Disabled Children should not have to ask or fight to be included in things other children do. Inclusion is a right in UK law (The Disability Discrimination Act) and that every child has the right to communicate.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 allows the Children and Young People’s Commissioner to investigate cases affecting individual children and young people. So, children, young people, their parents and other adults who support them can ask the Commissioner to decide whether an individual’s rights have not been respected, and he will then be able to make recommendations about what should be done to make things better.

Community Learning and Development sections in each council should ‘empower people, individually and collectively to make positive changes in their lives and their communities through learning.

The principles that underpin practice are:

- **empowerment** – increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence matters affecting them and their communities;
- **participation** – supporting people to take part in decision-making;
- **inclusion, equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination** – recognising some people need additional support to overcome the barriers they face;
- **self-determination** – supporting the right of people to make their own choices; and
- **partnership** – ensuring resources, varied skills and capabilities are used effectively.

In addition, the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc Act 2000 places education authorities under a duty to secure that the education provided is directed towards the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the children and young people to their fullest potential. In order to achieve these aspirations, it is critical to engage children and young people.
In some areas there was a clear disconnect between Councillors and Young people. This was particularly evident regarding young people serving on committees, where most young people enthused over having a say at the heart of decision making but many Councillors were dubious about the benefits of their inclusion. Many Councillors refused to be questioned on the issue, deferring any comments to council officers, and some of those that did comment refused to allow us to publish their views. We thank all the councillors that agreed to allow their comments to be used. A key factor which we found heavily impacted on how meaningful young people were being engaged was the level of education they had concerning the issue they were discussing or the format of the meetings they were taking part in (e.g. Council committee). This is a right which is outlined by the General comment on Article 12 by the UNCRC.

Community Planning Partnerships are viewed by the Scottish Government as the conduit for ensuring partnership working takes place between bodies providing public services and the voluntary sector. Many councils do have young people as members of their planning partnership boards, but not all. While many have only one young person involved, a general view by youth work professionals is that this works better with more than one young person present or having someone on the board who can give clear evidence of the views of young people.

Overall, the approaches made by local authorities to engaging young people is disjointed with no universal structures or programmes in place on a national scale. But, having said that, a lot of innovative work is taking place that deserves to be shared.

While Community and Learning Development staff, youth workers and officials designated to assist young people, were helpful, and clearly switched on to the needs and aspirations expressed, many elected members were less encouraged and some appeared to view youth engagement as more of a tick-box exercise. From interviews with some of the councillors who were unwilling to be quoted we got the impression that their concern was not with the feasibility or value of programmes but rather a denigration of their own power and, to a lesser degree, being put under greater accountability.

Party politics in some areas also got in the way of a effective engagement.

Seminars and Get-To-Know-You sessions on issues relating to young people were in general poorly attended by Councillors, most notably those on issues such as LGBTQ+ in schools, a subject which we found many councillors appeared to take little interest in.

Young people on the other hand were open and transparent about the positives and pitfalls embedded in full engagement at committee level and the challenges they faced engaging at a local level. Those that served on decision-making committees, while taking time to adjust, generally, admitted that after a month or two they felt welcomed and accepted.

Our findings: is what we do effective?

Overall in the course of our interviews we found a mixed picture of engagement with young people at local government level, despite strong commitment and performance by youth workers and Community Learning and Development staff.
Where engagement with young people really seemed to work was when the Chief Executive, Council Leader or a Councillor designated as a Young People’s Champion took a keen interest in the process and acted as a mentor or encourager to young people in the front line. Good examples of this are in North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Aberdeen City and Perth and Kinross. The influence of a Chief Executive taking time to attend youth forums and having set meetings with young people, to register their views and understand their wishes, seemed to really have an impact with clear results of their actions being shown.

We asked Elma Wallace, the recently retired Chief Executive of North Ayrshire Council why this might be so, and she said: “Increasingly I find that involving, and meaningfully listening to, young people about how we can improve and reform public services adds a richness and a depth to our work. At Young Scot we have actively pursued the design, production and delivery of services by young people. This is now being taken further by local authorities, of which North Ayrshire has been one of the leaders. not just for young people's services but across a whole range of services. A further benefit of this is that it encourages young people to be more confident and more willing to step up to assist with making Scotland a better country in which to grow up.”

Young People on Education committees were grateful for the briefing sessions they received from officials or committee chairs before meetings and found them extremely beneficial in helping them get to grips with the often-complex content of heavy agendas. Many agreed that undertaking these briefings with parent representatives, who are also no-voting members of the committee, was also viewed as being beneficial.

There was a mixed view on whether having young people on decision-making committees was the right approach. While this appeared to be working well and was a positive experience for most, outliers like East Dunbartonshire and Stirling had struggled with this initiative.

Across Scotland, local authorities pigeon-hole young people as being in the ‘education box’. The reality, however, is that young people are interested in a much broader range of issues – most notably Mental Health, Transport, Sexual Health and the Environment – which cannot always be voiced under the education umbrella. Interestingly, over the past year more credence seems to be afforded to an all-inclusive approach, most notable in areas like Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen.

The role of Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament in engaging young people throughout Scotland should be commended. Interestingly most elected members we spoke to acknowledged this but added a caveat, or expression of concern, that the MSYPs were not ‘typical young people’ and were in many cases not able to gather the wide range of views from all young people. However, it should be noted that the SYP dispute this (see appendix point 1 for details of SYP diversity and the breadth of views gathered by SYP Parliamentarians) – MSYPs are elected by young people and are leading the way when it comes to engagement – it is hoped that in time this will encourage others to speak out.

There is clear evidence to suggest that the majority of young people who served on council committees – many of them MSYPs – move on to study Politics, Law, Business Studies, History or International Relations – subjects which often lead to civic leadership roles.

There were some councils that managed to engage with young people without having them on key committees – Stirling, Aberdeen City, North Lanarkshire and North Ayrshire are good examples of this. North Ayrshire, in particular, is an outstanding example of how an authority manages to ensure that the Young People’s voice is heard throughout an organisation, underpinning all it does. This authority seems to have developed real engagement with consultation developed in a co-production model. The work of this council, alongside that of North Lanarkshire, deserves to be commended. It has a strategy which has been developed by its young people which contains a robust structure that allows robust engagement and young people being placed at the heart of the process.

As there are many competing demands on young people’s time, incentives may be needed to motivate them including accreditation, social opportunities, remuneration or achieving quick
Above all, young people need to see changes as a result of their input but also learn that not all they ask for will be given. Often a young person, instead of being fobbed off or patronised, prefers to receive a direct ‘No’. A direct but negative response is in itself meaningful engagement and not tokenistic.

Highland Council’s initiative of allocating a bursary to a young person to undertake the role of Youth Convener for its vast geographic region for a year – coupled with the council’s establishment of a network of Pupil Councils and Youth Forums feeding into a Highland Youth Parliament – certainly deserves recognition. Here the young person selected is given access to all committees and tasked with gathering the view of all young people in the Highlands and bringing them to the heart of decision making. The scheme – run by High Life Highland on behalf of the council – has been in place for 13 years with generally good results, it is therefore surprising that it has not been emulated elsewhere.

One of the strengths of having young people at the heart of decision making is that they come from outside the political sphere and do not feel pressured to maintain a political image or tow any party line.

We want all young people in Scotland to have ambition and become confident individuals, successful learners, effective contributors and responsive citizens and what we have found that in many local authorities this is not being afforded to them.

Through mentoring and encouragement, young people can excel and take a keen interest in local politics and local decision making and there is evidence to suggest that those who gain support at a local level do go on to take a further interest in engaging with others.

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Improvements we can make:

Our overall recommendation is that local authorities should be supported more by the Scottish Government, and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, through the sharing of good practice found elsewhere.

This will assist those in the front line of engagement, and prevent any council from working as an isolated unit as some seem to be doing at present. A national framework which guides local authorities and benchmarks progress is necessary although enforcing programmes or structures on local authorities risks a one-size-fits all approach which should be avoided. The innovative work currently being undertaken in young people engagement within many councils should be applauded and such progress and experience should be tracked and shared across all 32 local authorities.
Our recommendations

1. While it should be recognised that one size should not fit all, if young people are interested in serving on council policy-making committees in a non-voting capacity in Scotland they should be afforded the chance to do so on all relevant committees (excluding finance where legislation does not allow it).

2. Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament should – due to their unique democratic mandate – be viewed as the natural candidates for representing young people at committee level within local authorities. However, other young people should not be discounted. Workloads and time pressures must be taken into consideration. Any young person taking part in committee work must be fully briefed and gather views from youth organisations or groups in the areas they represent.

3. All councils – if they have not already done so – should be encouraged to create a Youth Engagement and Participation Strategy detailing plans for engaging young people more in all areas of council work.

4. All councils should develop a mentoring programme for young people participating in policy and decision making so that the young people involved are helped through the process of getting to grips with new procedures, formats and information.

5. All Council Leaders and Chief Executives should be encouraged to take more of a lead role in engaging young people.

6. Each council should have a Young People’s Champion with a defined role in statute to advocate for young people.

7. Further work should be undertaken to devise a programme of best practice that can be shared amongst councillors akin to the Local Government Association’s ‘A Councillors workbook on engaging with young people’.

8. All Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) in Scotland are required to develop or adopt processes so that all children and young people can become aware of their rights and routinely have opportunities to exercise them through Community Planning, yet not all CPPs have young people on their boards. All CPPs should be encouraged to co-opt two young people to their board or a youth worker who can – through evidence – provide the clear views of young people on set issues.

9. The Year of Young people should not be the pinnacle for the way we engage with young people, but rather a legacy of meaningful change which embeds the views of young people within Scottish local policy-making.

10. The role of Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament in the development of youth engagement throughout Scotland should be commended and their access to meet and discuss issues with Council Leaders and Chief Executives should become part of normal practice for all councils.
The appointment of a paid Youth Convener (as in Highland Council) should be considered by local authorities.

When it came to equality many government and independent agencies such as Audit Scotland highlight gender imbalance as a concern in local government, but little reference is made to age imbalance. In Norway, political parties make efforts to ensure people under the age of 33 have a better chance of getting elected. By doing so each local authority takes into consideration the views of all ages and is more representative of the community at large. Political Parties in Scotland by adopting a similar quota system could, no doubt, attract more young voters to their ranks for doing so. The Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) should encourage political parties to follow the lead shown by Norway as a means of assisting age equality on councils.

A national framework which guides local authorities and benchmarks progress is necessary. Enforcing programmes or structures on to local authorities risks a one-size-fits all approach being taken. Progress and experience should be tracked and shared across all 32 local authorities.

Incentives such as accreditation for developing skills should be provided for young people to allow them to gain academic credits for the role they play in engaging with policy makers. This would not only benefit young people in their further career/education goals but also give tangible benefits to local political engagement.

All Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament should use this report as a tool to encourage their respective local authorities to endorse and implement these recommendations.

The role of young people involved in local decision making should be promoted and shared more widely through various mediums such as short films, social media and community awareness campaigns.

CoSLA and/or the Scottish Government should engage in a constant sharing of good practice vis a vis youth engagement as a means of continual mutual learning and improvement across all 32 local authorities.

Young People – over the age of 16 – should be encouraged to take part at Community Council level. There is evidence of success of this in Fife. All Community Councils should consider co-opting young people to their ranks.

In compiling this report we decided against collating evidence through Freedom of Information requests but instead contacted relevant young people, councillors and officials to get a better idea on how things are on the ground. This all took time. There is still room for further research in this subject through more detailed in-person investigation. The study could also be extended to include the engagement experience during the transition from secondary to further and higher education.
Acknowledgements

In drawing up this report we wish to acknowledge the support and guidance we have received from officials within the Scottish Youth Parliament, Young Scot, Youth Link and the Children and Young People Commissioners office, from Mathew and Lucy at LBD Creative, and officers within all 32 Scottish Councils that – with varying degrees of enthusiasm – helped us draw together this, the first extensive collation of examples of young people engagement happening at local government level across Scotland.

We dedicate this report to all young people in Scotland in the hope that it acts as a legacy to the Scottish Parliaments ‘Year Of Young People’ initiative and leads to lasting improvements in engagement between themselves and decision-makers across Scotland.

Writers

Councillor John Ross Scott is an award-winning journalist with over 32 years of experience in public service, including 25 years as an elected member in the Borders and Orkney and eight years as Chair of NHS Orkney. This is his second Independent Report – the first being ‘Beyond Tweedbank: The case for the reinstatement of a Borders Rail Link to Hawick’ (2004) which was sponsored by the Joseph Rowntree Trust.

Kristopher Leask is an Orcadian student, currently at University of St Andrews in his second year studying International Relations. His interests include politics, both international and local, and Scottish education. An ambition of his is to work to increase the range and quality of opportunities available to young Scots across the whole country.
Endnotes


3 Also found by Berther, Gerardo. 2014. “Youth Political Participation in Local Governments: Initial Evidence from Latin America” in Social and Economic Studies 63:3 p. 109


5 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 8

6 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 8

7 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 9

8 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 9

9 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 10

10 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 11

11 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 29

12 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 29

13 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 30

14 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 31

15 UNCRC. 20 July 2009. “General comment No. 12 (2009): The right of the child to be heard” p. 31
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