

Measuring  
the impact  
and success  
of your youth  
voice vehicle

representative  
accountable  
independent  
support  
buy in impact  
power and influence

A guide for staff, councillors and young  
people involved in youth voice with a  
local authority



# Contents

	Page
<b>1</b> Introduction	3
<b>2</b> Aspects of the toolkit	7
<b>3</b> Using the toolkit	12
<b>4</b> And finally...	14
<b>A</b> Appendices	15
<b>5</b> About BYC and How We Can Help	27

# Introduction

## 1

### How did this come about?

'Positive for Youth', the cross-government policy for young people aged 13-19 (December 2011) urges national and local government and other statutory bodies to listen to the voices of young people and engage them as partners in decision making. While each local authority must decide for itself how best to achieve this, the Government want to be assured that young people in all local authority areas have an effective mechanism through which they can influence policies, services and decisions that affect their lives.

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 produce 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.



## **This is NOT another guide to young people's participation...**

We don't want to reinvent the wheel – we know there are plenty of excellent participation guides out there (and we have drawn on some of them in this toolkit).

We expect that if you are using this toolkit you will already be very knowledgeable about what works in enabling young people to have a strong voice in local decision making. You are probably either:

- A young person involved in representing young people's views in the area you live
- Employed (paid or unpaid) to support young people's participation in decision making in your area
- A local authority manager or commissioner with strategic responsibility for ensuring young people have a voice in decision making
- An elected member of a local authority with a leadership role in supporting young people's participation in decision making

The toolkit is designed to be a simple mechanism for you 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 (County Councils, Unitary Authorities, Metropolitan and London Boroughs).

## **What is a 'Top-Tier Youth Voice Vehicle'?**

We acknowledge that 'Top-Tier Youth Voice Vehicle' (YVV) is a clunky term, and we are pretty sure that nobody out there actually uses it to describe the mechanisms available to hear young people's voices locally. We don't expect people to start using it either! However, in order to write this toolkit we needed a generic term that could encompass all the different, creative forms that young people's participation takes. We know you are all busy working with:

- Young Commissioners
- Councillor Shadowing
- Disabled Youth Council
- Young People Scrutiny Panel
- Young Mayors
- Youth Steering Groups Boards
- Children and Young People's Advisory Boards
- Youthbank
- Locally based Youth Council/Forum/Cabinet
- Authority wide Youth Council/Forum/Cabinet
- UK Youth Parliament
- Children in Care Councils

All of these are fantastic ways of involving young people in decision making, and we do not want to give the impression that BYC or the Government has one chosen model they think is better than the rest. That's why we use Youth Voice Vehicle throughout this toolkit – but we urge you not to change the name of your own body!

By **top tier YVV** we mean:

- A body that covers the whole local authority area, possibly by drawing together more local and special interest young people's forums
- A body whose membership is representative of and accountable to the youth population of the local authority area
- A body with a broad spread of interests and priorities that reflect the demands of the youth population as a whole
- A body which is recognised by the local authority and other decision makers as representing young people's voice across the area
- A body where young people speak directly to adult decision makers through consultations, scrutiny processes etc.

### And if we have no 'top-tier YVV'?

In some local authorities there is not one single top tier YVV: rather there are a number of young people-led organisations with whom the council and other statutory bodies consult on particular issues. The absence of a single body may be planned, as part of an overall strategy to listen to a range of voices, or the need for an overall body may not have emerged. Where this is the case, we suggest that this toolkit is applied to the local authority's **overall strategy for youth voice**, and involves young people from the range of young people led organisations that are in place.

The **age range** covered by the YVV is a matter for local agreement – we would only say that young people should be involved in deciding what the appropriate age group for involvement in the YVV should be. We are using the term '*young people*' generically: locally it could mean all children and young people up to 19 years, 11-18 year olds, or include young people up to the age of 25 – that is your choice. The age range chosen will to some extent inform the ways in which your YVV is organised.

### What is this toolkit for?

A cornerstone of the Government's 'Positive for Youth' policy is the engagement of young people in local democratic processes, so that young people have a sense of belonging, communities become stronger, and the services that are offered locally have the best chance of making an impact. This reflects the Government's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and recognises the excellent progress, over a number of years, on engaging young people in decision making and commissioning services

as a result of a combination of enthusiastic and committed young people and resources to support them in organising together.

The Government wants each local authority area to have the best possible structures and mechanisms to enable young people to have a voice in decision making. This self-assessment toolkit provides a way of reviewing your YVV arrangements and highlighting aspects of good practice, how the YVV has made a difference to policies that affect young people, and areas where you could develop further. We hope the toolkit will be useful to you at local level, and we also hope that you will be prepared to share what you learn from it with us and with your peers.

Alongside the self-assessment framework, there will also be **support and guidance** to help local authorities and YVVs get even better at involving young people in decision making. Everyone involved in producing the toolkit believes in the power of sharing best practice and learning from what works elsewhere. The toolkit suggests features of a successful YVV, drawn from real examples across the UK. BYC and the Regional Youth Work Units (RYWUs) can provide support to YVVs and local authorities who want to enhance their youth voice arrangements, and in most regions there is a Participation Workers Network where YVV support workers regularly share successes and challenges and provide peer support. Most YVVs are members of BYC and have access to support, information and training.

# Aspects of the toolkit

## 2

### Principles and values

This toolkit is underpinned by a set of principles which we believe should inform the involvement of young people in decision making.

- Young people have the *opportunity* to be involved in making decisions on what their involvement should be and which vehicle is used.
- YVVs should have a clear *vision and purpose*, shared by young people and understood by the local authority and support providers
- Local authorities should recognise the value of involving young people in decision making at a strategic level, and make *sufficient resources* available to support their involvement
- YVVs should be *inclusive* of young people from different backgrounds and with different needs, and should ensure that their ways of working do not exclude or discriminate against specific groups
- YVVs should be *representative of the diversity* of the young people living in the local authority area
- Adults involved in supporting, advising and liaising with YVVs should fully *understand and support the processes of young people's involvement*
- Young people should be involved in developing and deciding on appropriate *resources, support and training* required to establish a productive environment for young people's participation
- YVVs and local authorities should be *outward focused* and draw on good practice in other settings and organisations
- YVVs and local authorities should regularly *assess the impact* of young people's involvement to ensure that investment in young people's voice is making a difference to young people's lives
- YVVs and local authorities should be able to *articulate the benefits* they have seen from involving young people in decision making

### Key Questions and Good Practice Indicators

We have identified 7 Key Questions for YVVs and local authorities, to test the strength of their youth voice arrangements. For each of the questions we have suggested some indicators of best practice. You could add your own indicators if there are aspects that we have not covered. We think they will help you to consider how well your current arrangements are working for young people, and maybe think about ways in which they could be strengthened. The Key Questions form



the basis of a self-assessment toolkit, which, we suggest, would get the best results if used jointly by young people from the YVV and strategic leaders from the local authority, to share your different perspectives. The table below sets out the questions and indicators.

Key Questions	Indicators of best practice
<p>Is the Youth Voice Vehicle (YVV) <b>representative</b> of the youth population in the authority?</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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, Voluntary Sector) with clear mechanisms for representing the interests of these groups.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>YVV meetings are accessible to young people with particular needs, whether physical, cultural or emotional.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Is the YVV <b>accountable</b> to the youth population in the authority?</p>	<p>The YVV produces an annual manifesto/work plan, endorsed by supporters/ members.</p> <p>The YVV regularly consults with young people on priorities and significant issues.</p> <p>The YVV regularly liaises with other youth forums (e.g. district forums, special interest groups).</p> <p>The YVV has a clear Communications Strategy which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regular publication of priorities and achievements</li> <li>• web-site regularly updated with interactive consultation opportunities</li> <li>• creative and appropriate use of new social media to promote the activities of the YVV</li> <li>• mailing list of supporters/member organisations who are regularly asked for their views</li> <li>• engaging with schools, colleges and academies</li> <li>• annual report on activities</li> <li>• agreed protocols for media engagement by YVV</li> <li>• targets for positive media mentions for YVV activities</li> </ul>



**How independent is the YVV?**

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.

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.

The YVV's Communications Strategy enables it to manage its own media relations, independent of the local authority.

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

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 which includes:

- Experienced and skilled Youth Workers to enable young people to participate in elections, play a role in the YVV, access opportunities locally, regionally and nationally and support the development of the YVV
- Appropriate and accessible meeting space and office accommodation for the YVV
- Support for young people with additional needs to enable them to play a full part in the YVV
- Transport arrangements to enable young people to attend local, regional and national meetings safely
- Technical support for elections, technology and campaigns
- Access to specialist expert advice from council officers and others to inform YVV decisions
- Training and mentoring for young people taking on representative roles in YVV
- Guidance on safeguarding issues for young people involved in YVV activities
- Opportunities to gain accreditation for the skills and experience young people gain through involvement with the YVV

The local authority demonstrates its commitment to hearing the voice of young people by:

- Ensuring that consultations with the YVV are conducted in settings and through methods that facilitate young people's participation and are not intimidating
- Providing training on young people's participation (possibly in partnership with the YVV) for officers and elected members
- Facilitating relationships between the YVV and other statutory bodies, including police and health authorities

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

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.

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.

The local authority invites the YVV to 'youth-proof' policy changes to assess their impact on young people.

The local authority commissions a package of support (in kind and financial) with the YVV to provide effective representation of young people's voice.

The local authority encourages dialogue with young people through the YVV, going beyond its statutory duties to consult.

**How much power and influence does the YVV have?**

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

The local authority involves the YVV as a partner in multi-agency local strategies that affect young people (e.g. transport strategies).

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.

The YVV has a representative role with statutory bodies beyond the local authority, including police and health authorities.

**What **impact** does the YVV have on policies and services for young people?**

The YVV and local authority conduct regular surveys of young people and periodic evaluations to assess the impact of YVV involvement.

The local authority is able to identify differences that have been made as a result of YVV involvement, for example:

- Increase in the number of opportunities for young people to get involved in decision making
- Improved decision making processes
- Savings to council spending through more youth focused services
- Changes to multi-agency strategies as a result of young people's involvement
- Improved quality of young people's services
- More young people volunteering in community organisations

More positive coverage of young people's concerns in the local media.

Future plans for the YVV build on the feedback received about their impact on young people's lives.

## **Self-Assessment Checklist**

Our template for the self-assessment checklist can be found at Appendix A. Do download or photocopy it to help you record your self-assessment. It includes an explanation of how we think you could use it.

When you have completed the self-assessment checklist we would like you to send it to British Youth Council, so they can use the information to inform government about progress on youth voice arrangements in local authorities.

## **Planning Tool**

Our template for the Planning Tool can be found at Appendix B

Do use the Planning Tool as an Action Plan, so you can update and monitor your progress as you go. It includes an explanation of how we think you could use it.

# Using the toolkit

## 3

### Who should use this toolkit?

We have designed the toolkit specifically for what we are calling 'top-tier Youth Voice Vehicles'. While elements of it will be applicable to other youth participation forums, it is best used for authority wide, generic youth voice bodies. We suggest that the toolkit is used collaboratively, by

- Young members of the YVV
- YVV Support Workers
- Local authority Youth Voice Champions/Strategic Leads

There are two parts to this process: (i) the Self-Assessment Checklist, and (ii) the Planning Tool. We suggest you start with the Self-Assessment Checklist – let's call it SAC for short.

### How you might use it

Once a year, we suggest that you have a review meeting, including members of the YVV, the main support worker for the YVV and the person in the local authority who has the main responsibility for listening and responding to the voices of young people. This might be a councillor/elected member, or a senior officer. At the meeting you can reflect on how far you have travelled towards achieving the 'Good Practice Indicators' under each of our 'Key Questions'.

The SAC framework invites you to assess your YVV's progress against each of the key questions, and rate your YVV under each question using the 'traffic lights' method, as either:

- **Green:** achieving all or nearly all of the Good Practice Indicators for that question
- **Amber:** achieving most of the Good Practice Indicators, but with room for improvement in some areas
- **Red:** you might be achieving a few of the Good Practice Indicators, but there are significant areas where you would want there to be more progress

To help you remember your strengths, and the things you need to develop, we suggest that you list the positive points in the 'What do we do in this area?' column, and use the 'What could we do better in this area?' to remind you of aspects of your YVV and its relationship with your local authority that you want to improve. The SAC can be downloaded as a Word document, so can be expanded to fit whatever you need to say.

When you have considered each of the 7 Key Questions, you will be able to see how you think you are doing overall, and which areas you want to do differently. Once you have agreed this, you will be able to see whether you have a majority of Green, Amber or Red responses.

You might want to use this process to help you plan for the coming year, and we hope that the Planning Tool will help you do this. It allows you to be more specific, and decide on actions to take, and set timescales to make things happen. You can then monitor progress throughout the year, to help you stay on track.

## **Role of British Youth Council Nationally**

BYC are able to provide support, guidance and advice to local authorities where they know they need to make more progress. To help this process, we will need you to let BYC know how you have rated your local authority and its YVV under each of the key questions, by sending BYC a copy of your completed SAC.

BYC will treat your information carefully, and check with you before using any information that could be used to identify your organisation/local authority. We will want to publically praise those who achieve a green standard, but will seek your consent before doing so. We will be publishing unnamed overall percentages for green, amber and red ratings as well progression over time, in order to let the Department for Education know what percentage of local authorities have strong YVVs, and the percentage that require further support.



## And finally...

# 4

We hope that you find this process useful – it aims to make sure you have the best possible opportunities to involve young people in decision making, and design services and facilities that are responsive to young people’s ambitions, aspirations and needs.

We really want to learn from the good practice that is out there, and to help share that with others. We think this process will help that to happen, and we hope you do too.

If you want to give any feedback on the process, then do contact David Clark (David.Clark@byc.org.uk) at British Youth Council.

British Youth Council and the Regional Youth Work Units can provide guidance and support in enhancing your YVV arrangements, through training, advice and tailored development. If you would like to contact us and access support and training then use the contact information below:

### **British Youth Council:**

[www.byc.org.uk/training-and-services.aspx](http://www.byc.org.uk/training-and-services.aspx)

BYC has Youth Democracy Coordinators across England who can provide you with support and advice around Youth Voice Vehicles.

To contact your nearest one email:  
training@byc.org.uk or call 0845 458 1489

### **Regional Youth Work Unit at Learning South West:**

[www.learning-southwest.org.uk/page/Voice-and-Influence](http://www.learning-southwest.org.uk/page/Voice-and-Influence)

Sharon Adams or Gill Millar on 01823 335491  
Sharon\_adams@learning-southwest.org.uk  
Gill\_millar@learning-southwest.org.uk

### **North West Regional Youth Work Unit:**

[www.nwrywu.org.uk](http://www.nwrywu.org.uk)

Dan Moxon or Elizabeth Harding on  
01925 295837

Dan.moxon@nwrywu.org.uk  
elizabeth@nwrywu.org.uk

### **North East Regional Youth Work Unit:**

[www.rywu.org.uk](http://www.rywu.org.uk)

Kevin Franks on 0191 440 4410  
kevin@rywu.org.uk

### **Youth Work Unit – Yorkshire and Humber:**

[www.youthworkunit.com](http://www.youthworkunit.com)

Bill Eve on 0113 270 3595  
BillEve@youthworkunit.com

### **Participation Works:**

[www.participationworks.org.uk](http://www.participationworks.org.uk)

Participation Works is an online gateway for children and young people’s participation. This is a hub for information, resources, news and networking on the involvement of young people in dialogue, decision making and influence across a wide range of settings.

# APPENDIX A: Self-Assessment Checklist



We think the best way to use the checklist is to involve the Local Authority Youth Voice Champion, and/or the Strategic Lead for Work with Young People, the YVV Support Worker and members of your YVV. It might be a good annual review process to help the organisation develop. The Key Questions and Good Practice Indicators provide a guide to help you structure the process. At the end of the process, we hope you will feel good about your current arrangements, and we expect you will have found ways to make your YVV even more effective.

If you are happy to share the information in the checklist, please return a copy of this self-assessment checklist to British Youth Council, to help them report to government on progress on youth voice arrangements in local authorities.

## Key:

**Green** - in place and have evidence

**Amber** - in place but needs some improvement

**Red** – nothing in place





Key Questions	Indicators of best practice	Self Assessment Rating (Green/Amber/Red)
<p><b>Is the Youth Voice Vehicle (YVV) <b>representative</b> of the youth population in the authority?</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>YVV meetings are accessible to young people with particular needs, whether physical, cultural or emotional.</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p><b>Is the YVV <b>accountable</b> to the youth population in the authority?</b></p>	<p>The YVV produces an annual manifesto/work plan, endorsed by supporters/ members.</p> <p>The YVV regularly consults with young people on priorities and significant issues.</p> <p>The YVV regularly liaises with other youth forums (e.g. district forums, special interest groups).</p> <p>The YVV has a clear Communications Strategy which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regular publication of priorities and achievements</li> <li>• web-site regularly updated with interactive consultation opportunities</li> <li>• creative and appropriate use of new social media to promote the activities of the YVV</li> <li>• mailing list of supporters/member organisations who are regularly asked for their views</li> <li>• engaging with schools, colleges and academies</li> <li>• annual report on activities</li> <li>• agreed protocols for media engagement by YVV</li> <li>• targets for positive media mentions for YVV activities</li> </ul>	

<p><b>How independent is the YVV?</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The YVV's Communications Strategy enables it to manage its own media relations, independent of the local authority.</p>	
<p><b>Does the YVV receive sufficient support from the local authority to enable it to fulfill its role?</b></p>	<p>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 which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experienced and skilled Youth Workers to enable young people to participate in elections, play a role in the YVV, access opportunities locally, regionally and nationally and support the development of the YVV</li> <li>• Appropriate and accessible meeting space and office accommodation for the YVV</li> <li>• Support for young people with additional needs to enable them to play a full part in the YVV</li> <li>• Transport arrangements to enable young people to attend local, regional and national meetings safely</li> <li>• Technical support for elections, technology and campaigns</li> <li>• Access to specialist expert advice from council officers and others to inform YVV decisions</li> <li>• Training and mentoring for young people taking on representative roles in YVV</li> <li>• Guidance on safeguarding issues for young people involved in YVV activities</li> <li>• Opportunities to gain accreditation for the skills and experience young people gain through involvement with the YVV</li> </ul> <p>The local authority demonstrates its commitment to hearing the voice of young people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that consultations with the YVV are conducted in settings and through methods that facilitate young people's participation and are not intimidating</li> <li>• Providing training on young people's participation (possibly in partnership with the YVV) for officers and elected members</li> <li>• Facilitating relationships between the YVV and other statutory bodies, including police and health authorities</li> </ul>	

<p><b>How much political and senior-level <b>buy-in</b> from the local authority is in place?</b></p>	<p>The local authority has an overall strategy for listening to the views of children and young people, which goes beyond the Directorate for C&amp;YP Services, recognising young people as having a voice in wider community matters.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The local authority invites the YVV to 'youth-proof' policy changes to assess their impact on young people.</p> <p>The local authority commissions a package of support (in kind and financial) with the YVV to provide effective representation of young people's voice.</p> <p>The local authority encourages dialogue with young people through the YVV, going beyond its statutory duties to consult.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> </table>					
<p><b>How much <b>power and influence</b> does the YVV have?</b></p>	<p>The YVV and/or associated young people's organisations have a clearly articulated role as a partner in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All aspects of commissioning services for young people</li> <li>• Grant aid decisions for youth facilities</li> <li>• Scrutiny/review of council services</li> <li>• 'Youth-proofing' new policies</li> <li>• Shadowing Cabinet members and senior council officials</li> </ul> <p>The local authority involves the YVV as a partner in multi-agency local strategies that affect young people (e.g. transport strategies).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The YVV has a representative role with statutory bodies beyond the local authority, including police and health authorities.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> </table>					

**What **impact** does the YVV have on policies and services for young people?**

The YVV and local authority conduct regular surveys of young people and periodic evaluations to assess the impact of YVV involvement.

The local authority is able to identify differences that have been made as a result of YVV involvement, for example:

- Increase in the number of opportunities for young people to get involved in decision making
- Improved decision making processes
- Savings to council spending through more youth focused services
- Changes to multi-agency strategies as a result of young people's involvement
- Improved quality of young people's services
- More young people volunteering in community organisations

More positive coverage of young people's concerns in the local media.

Future plans for the YVV build on the feedback received about their impact on young people's lives.


**Local Authority Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EVIDENCE:**

<p><b>Key Question</b></p>	<p><b>What do we do in this area?</b> <i>You should look at the Principles and values on page 7 and the Good Practice Indicators on pages 7-11 and decide whether you meet these. You may also want to add other things you do that we may not have thought of. This allows you to give more detail on what you actually do.</i></p>
<p><b>Is the Youth Voice Vehicle (YVV) <u>representative</u> of the youth population in the authority?</b></p>	
<p><b>Is the YVV <u>accountable</u> to the youth population in the authority?</b></p>	
<p><b>How <u>independent</u> is the YVV?</b></p>	
<p><b>Does the YVV receive sufficient <u>support</u> from the local authority to enable it to fulfil its role?</b></p>	
<p><b>How much <u>political and senior-level buy-in from the local authority</u> is in place?</b></p>	
<p><b>How much <u>power and influence</u> does the YVV have?</b></p>	
<p><b>What <u>impact</u> does the YVV have on policies and services for young people?</b></p>	

**ACTION PLAN:**

<b>What could we do to be better in this area?</b> <i>You can use this column for specific action points you will take to get even better at making young people's voices heard in your local authority area. Have another look at the Good Practice Indicators and see if there are any of these that would work in your area.</i>	<b>Score</b> <i>(Green, Amber or Red)</i>







# B

## APPENDIX B: Planning Tool

Having thought about what you could do to improve your YVV and get better at making young people's voices heard in your local authority area using the Self Assessment Checklist, now decide what actions you *will* take. Again use the Key Questions and Good Practice Indicators to guide you and add anything else you want to do that we may not have thought of. To make sure things get done decide who should do them and by which date the action should be completed or reviewed.



<p><b>Key Question</b></p>	<p><b>What are we going to do to get better in this area?</b> <i>Think about the things you will have to do to improve your YVV in each area. It may be that you can not think of actions in every area. Only add things that you think are achievable.</i></p>
<p>Is the Youth Voice Vehicle (YVV) <b>representative</b> of the youth population in the authority?</p>	
<p>Is the YVV <b>accountable</b> to the youth population in the authority?</p>	
<p>How <b>independent</b> is the YVV?</p>	
<p>Does the YVV receive sufficient <b>support</b> from the local authority to enable it to fulfil its role?</p>	
<p>How much <b>political and senior-level buy-in from the local authority</b> is in place?</p>	
<p>How much <b>power and influence</b> does the YVV have?</p>	
<p>What <b>impact</b> does the YVV have on policies and services for young people?</p>	

**Remember:** a Word version can be downloaded at [www.byc.org.uk](http://www.byc.org.uk)

<b>Who will do it?</b> <i>Who will do the things you have decided need to be done?</i>	<b>When will it be done by?</b> <i>When do you plan to have completed the action or is there a date you want to review your progress?</i>



# 5

## About BYC and How We Can Help

### What we do:

The British Youth Council (BYC) is a charity run by young people for young people. We empower young people across the UK to have their say and ensure their voices are heard.

We inspire and empower young people aged 25 and under to have a positive impact through campaigning, engaging with local, national and international democracy, and as volunteers, decision-makers and leaders.

Our membership encompasses over 130 youth organisations large and small around the UK. We reach out to over 600 local youth councils and our networks reach into local communities and around the world.

Our training workshops develop young people's skills so that they can have a say and be heard, while our consultation services tap into the views and opinions of young people across the UK.

### Online:

Our free online resource centre ([www.byc.org.uk/resources](http://www.byc.org.uk/resources)) is packed with information and briefings to help with the running of your local youth council. We have tips on how to run meetings effectively, different roles that young people can take at meetings, how to campaign effectively and make a difference. There are also resources covering fundraising, campaigning and managing the media.

### In person:

We run a range of events throughout the year to support local youth councils, from delivering training courses right the way through to our annual Conventions which bring youth councillors from different areas together. To find out what is going on and where, check out our online events listings.

We also provide in-house training for local youth councils. Have a look at the training pages of our website ([www.byc.org.uk/training](http://www.byc.org.uk/training)) for the latest training offerings. And if none of these do what you need, we do offer bespoke sessions tailored to your needs.

### On the phone:

Whether you're establishing a local youth council or looking to develop an existing group, we offer support and advice to people looking to set up a local youth council. Give us a call on 0845 458 1489 or email: [lyc@byc.org.uk](mailto:lyc@byc.org.uk).

empowering  
inspiring  
campaigning  
since 1948  
inspiring



To find out more, please contact BYC:

**E:** [mail@byc.org.uk](mailto:mail@byc.org.uk)

**W:** [www.byc.org.uk](http://www.byc.org.uk)

**Facebook:** British Youth Council

**Twitter:** bycLIVE