A new vision for a National Youth Work Strategy for Wales

2013-2018

Summary of responses to the young people’s consultation

Overview

This document provides a summary of responses and feedback from the young people’s consultation on A new vision for a National Youth Work Strategy for Wales carried out by Youth Friendly.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

The consultation documents can be accessed on the Welsh Government website at www.wales.gov.uk/consultations

Contact details

Further information about this consultation can be obtained from:

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Introduction

In July 2013 Youth Friendly was awarded a contract from the Welsh Government to develop a young person friendly document on *A vision for a new national youth work strategy for Wales 2013–2018* and to lead on the consultation with young people across Wales. This document outlines the responses Youth Friendly received from young people on *A vision for a new national youth work strategy for Wales*.

Providing young people with an opportunity to have their voice heard was essential in supporting the development of a new strategy for youth work in Wales. Youth Friendly developed engaging consultation events for young people using innovative and creative approaches. Young people from across Wales were given the opportunity to learn about the draft new vision, learn what the new vision could mean to them and have the opportunity to have their views heard.

The consultation

The Youth Friendly youth advisory group helped shape, tone and style a young person friendly consultation document and consultation questions. Once finalised, the young people’s consultation document was available to all to view and comment through CLIC online.

Youth Friendly developed the content for the young people’s consultation events. A pilot session was run with Blaina Youth Forum. At this session, it was discovered that more time was needed than originally expected to explain youth service concepts, such as; statutory and voluntary sectors, voluntary engagement and a national strategic perspective.

Following the pilot session to help set the scene at each future consultation event a short introductory film was developed to explain what youth work is and it’s numerous expressions and terminology that is used across Wales youth services.

A further introduction film was also developed. This film animated four youth workers; Pedro, Prisca, Pamela and Paul. All were fictitious stereotypical characters broadly representing youth workers in Wales today. Each youth worker was also present at each consultation event as a six-foot tall pop-up banner. The visual banners at each event helped young people’s understanding of certain themes to engage and understand the questions and proposals being presented.

Across Wales five young people consultation events were organised and ran by Youth Friendly.

- 21 August, Powys.
- 22 August, Carmarthenshire.
- 28 August, Wrexham.
- 4 September, Blaenau Gwent.
- 11 September, Cardiff.
A total of 129 young people from a variety of different backgrounds attended and participated in the consultation events.

Youth Friendly also supported Carmarthenshire, Flintshire and Conwy Youth Services with materials to enable them to run their own consultation events with young people.
Consultation sessions

At each consultation event younger staff from Youth Friendly welcomed everyone. During each event the two introductory films were played and Qvizdom voting pad handsets were used to collate young people’s initial thoughts straight away.

Young people were encouraged to provide written responses to each proposal and for the finance question young people wrote their views on £20 notes.

Young people were also given the opportunity to speak directly within a video box. The video feedback is also included within this report.

At each event young people were provided with refreshments and the opportunity to claim £5 towards travel costs or expenses.
Summary of young people’s responses

The young people that attended each event were positive and spent time to really communicate their ideas, concerns and opinions. The results received by young people on the voting pads are shown in the graph format. All verbal and written comments have been summarised within the bullet points.

The vision paper was based around three core themes, plus a proposed new funding structure.

– Delivering education
– Building capacity
– Accountability and results.

Within each theme there were three proposals outlining provisional thinking for the development of a new national youth work strategy for Wales.

To begin we asked young people what their thoughts were on the three core themes.
Theme 1: Delivering education

Proposal 1
We explained that the Welsh Government wants to make sure that youth services are seen and recognised as an important part of supporting young people, and wanted youth services to support young people to make the most of their opportunities in education. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

- Amazing. I definitely think there should be more youth workers in schools.
- It’s a good idea to have youth workers in schools.
- I think having youth workers and youth work in schools is a good idea. Provides young people with more opportunities to learn and become part of a group.
- Good idea for school-based youth work. Youth workers are approachable and work differently. Different approaches to teachers which people may find more friendly and open-minded.
- I like the idea of youth work in schools but not just done in a room and things like babysitting for the school.
- I think working in schools makes youth work more accessible for everyone.
- I think it’s about time they link youth workers and schools, make young people aware that they are available. I also think they will feel more comfortable speaking to a youth worker rather than a teacher.
- Good I think there should be more youth workers in schools and more in the youth clubs.
- It’s good because this brings all young people together and gives them opportunities; also bringing all services together is good.
- There should be more youth workers everywhere.
- Will it be hard to merge youth work in to schools?
- I think it’s good, as it will be useful in allowing students to get involved in something.
- I think it’s quite a good idea, but young people may not like it. In youth club it’s a completely different atmosphere, it could be good or it could go bad, I’m undecided.
- A stronger connection with the school could be good but it could also drive youths away due to reputation or being seen as more to do with school the youths.
- Youth services should be an escape from school.
- I personally believe that the youth service does enough on education and should put its focus somewhere else.
- You run the risk of teachers simply palming off the difficult students on the youth workers instead of them being there for everyone.

Proposal 2
We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to ensure all local authority youth services contribute to the *Youth engagement and progression framework*, supporting young people who are at or who are at significant risk of, disengaging from formal education to provide consistent support. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

We want all local authority youth services to help in the new youth engagement and progression framework.
What do you think of this?

- I think this is a great idea!
- I like this because young people need to stay in education and youth workers are people they trust and will talk to!
- I think it’s a good idea because it gives young people that have dropped out of school support.
- I think it’s a good idea because it provides a wider variety of young people to get the qualifications that they need for life.
- Agree with mentoring, some young people need it but they also need teamwork to build their skills.
- One-to-one mentoring is good. Group therapy might be a good idea too.
• Good idea and the mentoring idea was good, could help a lot of young people as they may see it as better than speaking to a teacher about this.
• It’s good as it helps people through tough family problems even when teachers don’t understand or are too busy.
• Opportunities for people who dropped out of school to learn literacy and numeracy in the youth club setting.
• It’s good how people care for the young people who need the help the youth workers offer.
• It’s a good thing that help is out there for young people who need it.
• Good for people if they need the support or they need something to do to get stuff off their mind.
• I think they should be involved in lots of things that affect young people’s lives.
• I think youth workers need to focus more on the children/teenagers who try hard all the time. Sometimes, it’s only pupils who act out that are noticed.

Proposal 3
We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to ensure that each local authority youth service are providing a range of activities. These include opportunities to gain accreditations, opportunities to use and develop their Welsh language skills and opportunities to learn about health and well-being in a fun way. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

- I think it’s a good idea to have a wide range of activities so that there is something for everyone.
- I like the idea of keeping the activities going.
- All areas are different so have different wants and needs. We need activities that cover more things!
- Education out of school is important.
• It will get young people to learn new qualifications also see the work that goes on around them.
• Don’t need accreditation to prove skills are learnt.
• I like this. I think more young people should learn Welsh.
• I like the idea of learning more Welsh in youth work.
• I think it’s a good idea to get more people learning Welsh and keeping people active is good for a healthy lifestyle.
• I like the idea of more people in Wales learning about the Welsh language and culture, as it is important to maintain the tradition of our country.
• Really like the idea of learning about Welsh culture and also the Welsh language.
• We need more work with the Welsh language.
• Needs to be an emphasis on youth work/services through Welsh language, needs to be more accessible not just after school.
• I don’t like the thought of being forced to learn Welsh but everything else is brill.
• Would like to see ‘play’ mentioned. I think that the service should be increased with more money being spent on youth/play work.
• We should learn other languages as well as Welsh.
• Stop cutting budgets. That puts up barriers to achieving the goals the government sets.
• Don’t change too much!
• There should be youth worker/mentors in schools to point young people in the right direction.
Theme 2: Building capacity

We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to make sure that youth services from both the voluntary and the statutory youth service, are working together, providing a joint offer of youth work activities for young people. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

Proposal 4

- This is great! I don’t like the idea of youth workers not working together. Statutory and voluntary should work together so there is no conflict.
- It’s a good idea for statutory and voluntary working together share good practice and resources!
- I think all youth services’ joining together is a great idea because it gives different services a chance to mix change and progress.
- This is really good! Doesn’t it already happen?
- As for youth work working together is a brilliant idea!
- I think the idea of the joint services would be more efficient.
- More partnership work will benefit more people.
- It’s ok as long as they get on!
- It’s great as long as it’s not competitive for youth numbers.
- This is really good!
- I’m not sure but I don’t know why!
- They already do!
Proposal 5
We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to develop a virtual youth service gateway. That youth service delivery should be enhanced through the development of new web-based youth services. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

We want to look at building a virtual gateway.
What do you think of this?

- 39% They're good
- 30% They're okay
- 14% I'm not sure
- 17% I don't like them

- Virtual gateway should not replace any youth workers, although it could be good for those in rural areas as they might not be able to get to the youth club they may also have poor internet coverage.
- The website is a good idea because if young people can’t go to youth clubs they can access the internet and find out what is going on.
- I think the website is a very good idea.
- I think it’s a good idea but with the website, some people may not have the internet and it shouldn’t be instead of other ideas.
- It can be a good idea to create a youth service website, as this will allow young people who don’t have regular access to services. They will be able to acquire information on local and national services.
- I think it’s a good idea to expand over the internet but shouldn’t be instead of it should be as well, but I think that it’s a good idea?
- Yes but ask for young people input when designing the website.
- Very nice!
- The internet site is a good idea as long as they don’t cut the face-to-face time with my youth workers at club!
- I particularly like the idea of the online support!
- Websites haven’t worked previously so why would they work now? Face-to-face work is proven to work.
- Who would put it together and monitor it?
- The internet site is amazing as long as they don’t cut face-to-face time.
- The internet site is a great idea as long as youth workers are still available.
I think the government should get on with it quickly like other countries.
It's a good idea that there are people always there to help young people all the time.
I think social media should be used more to connect with young people.
I think that as long as the website was not a replacement it would be efficient.
I think all the ideas were good but with the website idea not all the young people have access to the Internet and the website may take over the groups and the youth clubs may be empty.
I don’t think an online website will work. Youth services are all about participating and communication and helping young people building people skills that cannot be done on the computer.
I feel the internet gateway has a danger of isolating young people and reducing their social skills.
Rather than spend more money on a new website, build on existing ones you improve and broaden them.
Some people can’t afford internet, so the youth thing online wouldn’t work even though I’m making a point about the credit crunch.
I don’t think the virtual gateway is a good idea as it could be a possible way of using it for bullying.
Really? Just spend the money on giving us more youth workers or a better youth club!

Proposal 6
We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to improve working with national voluntary youth organisations. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

We want to improve the way youth services work with nationwide voluntary youth organisations. What do you think of that?

- 43% say they’re good
- 36% say they’re okay
- 15% say I’m not sure
- 6% say I don’t like them

- This is good!
- I like it!
- That’s ok as long as they work well.
- It’s good because they may have more choice for us!
- It’s good but what national organisations do you mean?
- I like it but are they working where we live?
- I think it’s ok!
- This is good and I think it could be used for the local youth provision to employ nationwide organisations to come and train young people in aspects that they’re not yet qualified to deliver.
- I think it will help me get more qualifications and sometimes bigger organisations work better!
- Nationwide stuff is important because connections are good and ideas could be shared.
- There is no one best way to do things; this is a risk that every service is encouraged/pushed towards to do things in a similar way. This may discourage/push someone away, who may be using a particular service due to a strong preference in their way of working.
- There are lots of varied thoughts on how organisations run things, is there a risk that the focus will not be on the young people but on how it is run?
- Different things work better in different cities, would be hard to say one thing would work everywhere.
- I think it’s okay as it will allow young people to get support more easily if they can’t get access to youth clubs easily.
- I am a bit skeptical about national voluntary organisations working with government as I think information could go missing.
- Why do you want to do this?
- Why what’s wrong with how they work now?
Theme 3: Accountability and results

Proposal 7
We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to develop a national outcomes framework and quality mark. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this?

![Chart showing percentages of responses to the question: We want to be able to show that youth work makes a difference through a national outcomes framework and a quality mark. What do you think of this?](image)

- I think that making an evidence sheet would be good to show the impact it’s having.
- I like it but I’m unsure how it would be measured in a way that represents what’s actually happening.
- Accountability, evaluating youth work is a complicated matter I think care must be taken.
- Yes! I think it is good to have youth workers respected for what they do.
- I really like this but I’m not sure others will.
- I think this is a good idea but who will judge it?
- It’s ok as long as it’s fair.
- I like it but wonder how it will work.
- I think it’s a great idea, I just don’t know how the Welsh Government will monitor it, check on youth clubs, support those who need more help?
- I think it’s great because sometimes our youth club doesn’t seem to do much.
- I think it’s ok but it may not be fair as different areas of Wales have bigger problems than others so you need to let me know how it will work.
- I think guidelines could work because it could set a standard and help areas that are unsure of what needs to be done.
- How will the quality mark be measured?
- How will success be measured?
• You are trying to put all youth work in to neat little boxes, there is such a range that to fit the sectors in to a framework will cut people off.
• If there are quality marks then centers or organisations without this may be shut or avoided.
• National frameworks and quality marks not sure, I think this might go wrong. First some areas need more money than others; also areas with more people in need may look bad when the youth work is good.
• This could make youth work change in a way that is really bad and become more like all other parts of our lives about hitting targets to make schools look good.

Proposal 8
We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to develop a further consultation on developing statutory guidance. Statutory guidance could help local authorities when they are sharing out their budget they receive from the Welsh Government across departments. Guidance could provide guidelines to local authorities and could make it clear what a youth service should look like. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this?

- I think guidelines could work because it could set a standard and help areas that are unsure of what needs to be done.
- I think that this is a good idea.
- It will help the service.
- This is a good idea if it helps people!
- I think it’s good so that all young people get the same opportunities.
- I like this! I think it’s a good idea to get together and talk about having guidance but then do it! I think that this is a good idea.
- I don’t agree with certain places having more funding/activities. Everyone should have the same opportunities and funding no matter where they are from.
I’m not sure about this because I just think it’s too much time . . . if there’s a problem do something now!
I’m not sure because I don’t know if the reference group will help.
I don’t like this . . . why is everything so hard.
I think the Welsh Government has too much to say over youth work!

Proposal 9
We explained to young people that the Welsh Government wants to develop a new group that will include young people to provide advice Ministers on youth work. Also, that the Welsh Government wants to improve how youth workers share good practice. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

![Bar Chart]

I think youth work needs more recognition, it is often seen as a scapegoat when things go wrong but hardly ever celebrated for the positive impact and good work that does exist.
I feel that more recognition would also help to tackle the negative stereotype attached to young people. This is because we hardly see any good news stories in the media attached to young people and youth work.
I think it's good to involve youth workers in discussions as they see what the youth want maybe more than the government sees.
The government should make sure that they involve people in decision making especially on issues involving them.
I think it’s a good idea to get involved.
I think youth services should be heard and respected a lot more than they are.
It's really good that you're including young people in decisions.
It’s ok but ask young people what they want not what your ideas are.
I believe we have been asked the wrong questions, we should be asked how.
Youth services deserve more of an important role in giving leadership and advice as their views may benefit a young person more than a teacher or parent would.
This is great! Are you telling me you don’t do this already!
I’m not sure as I’m not sure my youth worker would want to do this! Ask them!
Disagree with wanting to develop youth service role in leadership oversight, because it wouldn’t be interesting.

Funding

We then explained to young people to support the delivery of the new strategy the Welsh Government proposed a new way of funding youth services. We asked young people what their thoughts were on this.

### Changes we want to make to funding:

1. A youth service grant.
2. A national voluntary youth service grant.
3. A voluntary youth service fund.
4. A national voluntary youth organisations targeted project activity grant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They’re good</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They’re okay</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t like them</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Where would you spend the money?**

**Across all themes**
- I think all the money should be split evenly between the themes.
- I would split the money between the three themes and put some in to some more fun youth projects.

**Education**
- Sending youth workers in to schools to break down barriers and build relationships with the young people, this wouldn’t be as formal and will help ensure the young people have someone to talk to without being judged or belittled.
- I would spend the money on trips out for young people making them educational.
- I would prioritise spending on youth organisations for educational trips and courses that interest the young people.
- I would spend the money on a more personal one to one approach targeted in schools and on an online aspect too.
- Have youth workers trained in leadership and giving advice.
• I would spend mine on delivering education.
• Delivering education, youth clubs and schools!
• Self-esteem and confidence building classes.
• Budgeting and life skills.
• International and cultural education.
• Improve education outside of school.
• Confidence building in the youth club.
• I think the money should be spent on Welsh education and some towards sports activities.
• Delivering education, especially learning Welsh.
• Good idea to have it to deliver education, not sure if the voluntary and council need to work together to do this.
• I would use it to help get youth workers in more schools.

Building capacity
• A larger variety of free activities for young people.
• I would put the money towards local youth projects.
• Delivering education is definitely needed; however this should not be the only form of youth work. Youth work allows freedom and this is vital.
• Hard-to-reach groups and democracy/forums.
• Hard-to-reach groups and minorities.
• More activities for young people to participate.
• Trips for the youth clubs, days out.
• Outreach team (for drug and alcohol abuse).
• Life maintenance/mentoring and life skills.
• Building bridges between youth workers and schools.
• Focus on education accreditations and beneficial qualifications.
• Local authorities should be in charge of their own budget.
• I wouldn’t spend the money on uniting different youth services (building capacity) as I believe that there would be more money spent on management and this would prove ineffective.
• Delivering education, equality and diversity, through statutory and voluntary organizations working together and more youth workers in schools.
• More, better training available for youth, such as more help planning for the future, CV writing and help job searching.

Accountability and results
• For youth workers to have more training to be able to deliver a better standard of training to the young people who need it.
• I would help with young people’s health and personal lives.
• I would like for my youth club to be refurbished on the outside to make it look nicer and maybe more equipment. More activities for both younger and older youths.

Other suggestions
• New equipment.
• I would give the money to the council to put towards having the youth club open more often and for longer.
• Getting youth workers more involved in communities and making youth centres a hub for young people.
- I would like for my youth club to be refurbished on the outside to make it look nicer and maybe more equipment. More activities for both younger and older youths
- Entertainment in the youth club.
- Facilities and special needs equipment!
- I would like a disabled disco for all the young disabled people.
- More use of technology and social networks in youth work.
- I’d use it to give to youth so they can get to interviews and college or just buy food!
List of consultation respondents

- Ynys Môn – Llais Ni
- RCT – Laura Morgan + Louise.cook@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk
- Youth Cymru – helenmary@youthcymru.org.uk
- UNA exchange – sheilasmith@unaexchange.org
- Prince’s Trust – henna.cheema@princes-trust.org.uk
- URDD – Catrin James catrinj@urdd.org and rhodrihuw@urdd.org
- Cwyvys – Sarah Powell – SJPowell@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
- CWYVYS areas: Kathryn Jones, Zoe A Morgan, Caroline Hodson and Fflur Hughes
- LGBT – andrew.davies@unityproject.org.uk
- Rhondda LGBT www.rhonddalgbt.co.uk
- Powys Youth Service
- Wrexham Youth Service
- Conwy – Deborah.Job@conwy.gov.uk
- Young carers groups
- Monmouthshire Youth Service
- Torfaen Youth Service
- Ceredigion Youth Service
- Pembrokshire Youth Service
- Bridgend Youth Service
- Ceredigion Youth Service
- Cardiff Youth Service
- Gwynedd Youth Service