

Young People and Participation in Pembrokeshire

Inter-agency Strategic Plan for the Participation of Young People in Decision- Making in Pembrokeshire

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Section 1

1.1 Background

Funding was received in Pembrokeshire through the Young People's Innovation Grant 2006-07 to complete work under a project entitled Particip8. The aim of this project was to develop a fresh and comprehensive policy and strategy for the participation of young people aged 11-25 in appropriate decision-making in Pembrokeshire. Arrangements for children aged 1-10 were not part of this research.

One strand of the work funded was an evaluative audit. The YPP commissioned Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (PAVS) to undertake this work and it was and steered by the Involving Children and Young People in Decision Making Group (ICYPIDMG) sub-group of the YPP. It was presented to the YPP in March 2007.

The research identified current opportunities that exist for young people to participate in decision-making across the Pembrokeshire Young People's Partnership (YPP), its members, and the wider partnership. It also identified gaps in provision. The fieldwork of the research was conducted prior to the launch of the Assembly's National Participation Standards, and it was not, therefore, possible to conduct a full audit in relation to the Standards at that time.

The development of this Strategy for the participation of young people in decision-making in Pembrokeshire forms the second phase of the Particip8 project, and it is intended that this will drive forward the participation agenda in Pembrokeshire. It has been informed both by national guidance as well as the local research which comprised the first phase of the Particip8 Project.

In 2006 the Children and Young People's Partnership commissioned a research report into advocacy services in Pembrokeshire. This Participation Strategy will be implemented alongside the strategy for the service development of advocacy services in Pembrokeshire, thus ensuring synergy between ongoing initiatives.

It was agreed through the Including Children and Young People in Decision Making group that consultation would be carried out with as many groups and individuals as possible, given the time constraints. Interviews, focus groups and questionnaires were all agreed as methods of gathering the required information.

Focus groups were carried out within voluntary and statutory youth provision and with Gennex Youth Assembly members. Questionnaires and interviews were used with a variety of cross sector youth support organisations who took the time to respond to this important issue.

1.2 Aims and Objectives underpinning the future development of Participation in Pembrokeshire

The following aim and objectives were agreed through the consultation process. They cover principles and good practice as well as structures and specific arrangements to achieve consultation and participation. They are based upon locally identified needs and service requirements which are consistent with national research findings.

It has been agreed that the main **aim** which will underpin the future direction of the development of participation in Pembrokeshire is:

To enable young people to be treated as valued members of the community whose voices are heard and needs considered across the range of policy-making.

The agreed **objectives** are to:

- Ensure that everyone knows that young people have the **right** to participate when adults are making decisions that affect them.
- Develop structures to enable young people to influence decision-making at all levels.
- Co-ordinate the participation agenda, leading to a shared understanding of its national priorities, and how these will impact on the work of organisations locally.
- Support agencies to involve young people in decision-making and the planning of services.
- Ensure that there is a commitment to a culture of participation; that it is always a part of service delivery and not tokenistic.

1.3 Statement of intent to support and promote the Participation of young people in Pembrokeshire

The following statement of intent has been agreed by young people and representatives of organisations who have contributed to this Strategy:

- 1 We will work together in a co-ordinated and coherent way.
- 2 We will raise the profile of participation and promote the involvement of young people across Pembrokeshire.
- 3 We will build on existing structures as well as explore new ways of working with young people to plan future developments.
- 4 We will strive to include and listen to all young people – not just those who are articulate, well behaved and easy to work with.
- 5 We will be aware of what young people's expectations and aspirations are and ensure that these are fundamental to the design and delivery of services for them.
- 6 We will develop mechanisms to incorporate the views of young people in service review and development.
- 7 We will acknowledge and explain the reasons behind a decision, especially where it has not been possible to take on the views of a person or group of people.

1.4 Participation

Definition

This Strategy utilises the following definition of participation, created by a young person and set out in the National Standards of Participation:

Participation is a young person's

"... right to be involved in making decisions, planning, and reviewing an action that might affect me. Having a voice, having a choice."

Participation is not the same as consultation.

"Consultation is asking children about things, participation is involving children in things." (Roger Morgan, *The Children's Rights Director of the Commission for Social Care Inspection*).

Models for Participation

Participation is a process (not an event) through which young people have a say in decisions that affect them and through which they have the opportunity to be involved in planning and decision-making at all levels.

Participation ensures that young people are able to express their views and ideas and that these are noted, listened to, and acted upon.

The process also involves keeping young people informed about the impact of their views on decision-making and planning.

The Treseder model of participation is used as the basis for this report. This model is described more fully in Appendix 2.

Benefits of participation

The benefits of participation are widespread, not only impacting on the individual child or young person but on organisations, services and the community.

Research carried out in Pembrokeshire in 2006/7 found that:

- *Organisations* reported that participation of young people provided them with valuable information from service users to develop more effective and appropriate policies, shaping and improving service delivery, longer term planning, and successful matching of programme planning and provision to service user needs.
- *Young people* reported that participation led to greater feelings of empowerment and increases in self confidence, self esteem, and feelings of engagement and ownership.

It has also been found that *communities* have benefited from the participation of young people in decision-making. Young people have become more actively involved in their communities; relationships between older and younger community members have improved; anti-social behaviour has reduced and the aspirations of community members have risen.

For an executive summary of research conducted into participation in Pembrokeshire (Phase 1) contact lee.hind@pavs.org.uk

Section 2

2.1 Context

The focus on participation in Pembrokeshire is timely. The launch of the National Participation Standards for Wales by the Children and Young People's Participation Consortium for Wales took place in January 2007. The development and the quantity of research literature available about participation of young people indicates that this is a fast moving and topical area, and there is a lot to be learnt in Pembrokeshire from others both within Wales and the wider United Kingdom. There are a number of Participation Networks that have been established to support individuals and organisations involved in participation of young people in decision making.

The development of participation locally will sit within the nationally agreed Participation Standards. It will also take on board the findings of the research from the first phase of the Particip8 Project. This research was carried out locally in 2006-7, and depicted a snapshot of current participative activity in Pembrokeshire.

The research, which is discussed in greater detail in Appendix 3, confirmed that there is a great deal of work to be done around

- raising the profile of the participation agenda
- educating organisations that work with young people of the importance of participation
- helping organisations to introduce participation as an integral part of their work.

Making participation meaningful represents a significant challenge. Pembrokeshire Young People's Partnership needs to increase the level of participation ***both within services which are exclusively for young people and those more general services which are provided for the wider community.***

Inspections

The Welsh Assembly Government has asked Estyn to report on specific elements of young people's participation as an integral part of its inspection remit work since 2005-06. The Assembly is working with Estyn to ensure that inspection of participation activity becomes a mainstreamed aspect of the inspection process across all statutory and voluntary agencies providing services which impact on young people's lives. (*Government Guidance on Local Participation Strategies 0-25, Welsh Assembly Government, December 2006*)

See Appendix 3 for a fuller description of the key documents informing the development of participation in Pembrokeshire

2.2 Existing structures informing and supporting the implementation of this strategy nationally and locally

Support for promoting participation is available from officers both nationally and locally, and includes:

- **The Children and Young People’s Participation Consortium for Wales and the Participation Unit based at Save the Children (Wales)**
- **School Councils**
- **The role of the Consultation Coordinator, Children and Young People**
- **The role of the Children and Youth Planning Facilitator**
- **The Involving Young People in Decision Making Group (ICYPIDM Group)**
- **Gennex**
- **The Youth Information Service**
- **The role of other staff within partner agencies such as the Social Care and Housing Customer Liaison Officer**

NOTE:

The Participation Unit has produced a resource pack to support the implementation of the National Standards of Participation and help to facilitate self-assessment. This pack can be obtained by emailing participationunit@savethechildren.org.uk or by telephoning Anna Skeels on 02920 396838. The pack includes practical guidance on implementing the Standards, as well as a list of national and local level contacts and support networks in Wales.

See Appendix 4 for a fuller description of the existing structures informing and supporting the implementation of this Strategy nationally and locally.

Section 3

3.1 Position statement: current levels of participation

The following table shows the current levels of participation of young people in decision-making in Pembrokeshire set against the National Standards launched in January 2007. The results are based upon the evaluative audit carried out in Pembrokeshire in 2006/7.

The recommendations are shown on page 14 of this Strategy.

National Standards	Where we are now
<p>1 Information</p> <p>We will:</p> <p><i>Ensure everyone has enough information to get properly involved</i></p> <p><i>Let you know what difference you being involved will make</i></p> <p><i>Inform you about who is going to listen and make changes</i></p>	<p>Some organisations in Pembrokeshire are currently planning to review information and paperwork with a view to making it young-person friendly.</p> <p>Young people are sometimes unclear what difference being involved will make.</p> <p>Organisations and young people have identified feedback as an area of concern.</p> <p>Consultation does not always result in the identification of specific changes and risks being seen as tokenism.</p>
<p>2 It's your choice</p> <p>We will:</p> <p><i>Give you enough information and time to decide if this is something that you want to do</i></p>	<p>Activities and level of participation are not always agreed with the young people themselves, or known by young people in advance of their participation. Young people within Gennex, however, have noted that this does work well within their organisation.</p>

<p>3 No discrimination</p> <p>We will:</p> <p><i>Challenge any discrimination</i></p> <p><i>Get in touch with children and young people in lots of different situations</i></p> <p><i>Get you involved in things you want to do</i></p>	<p>Concerns were raised in the engagement of wider groups of young people. Some concerns were raised as to whether the young people involved in participative activities were actually representative of the wider community.</p>
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<p>4 Respect</p> <p>We will:</p> <p><i>Listen to your ideas, views and experience</i></p> <p><i>Take you seriously and treat you fairly</i></p> <p><i>Work with you to do something about the things you tell us are important</i></p> <p><i>Work with you to help change things for the better</i></p> <p><i>Value and respect what you have to offer</i></p>	<p>The research demonstrated some very good examples of young people feeling listened to and respected, when they had made presentations to cabinet members, for example. However, young people did not always feel that they had sufficient say in which areas they were asked to participate in. Sometimes they felt they were being consulted 'for the sake of it'; that their views remained in reports but were not respected and that nothing was actually done.</p> <p>Where the views of young people have been over ruled, eg in school councils, they become disillusioned and critical of the process.</p>
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<p>5 You will get something out of it</p> <p>We will:</p> <p><i>Work in safe, fun and enjoyable ways</i></p> <p><i>Make the most of what you know</i></p> <p><i>Do positive things that build your confidence</i></p> <p><i>Meet in friendly places that are easy for all young people to use</i></p>	<p>The evidence from the research that young people were "getting something out of" their involvement in participation was generally very positive, with evidence that participation has led to increased confidence and self-esteem. A positive correlation was found between these positive results and the fulfilment of the previous standard, i.e. where they felt their views and contributions were being genuinely valued and respected.</p>
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<p>6 Feedback</p> <p>We will:</p> <p><i>Keep you up to date with what is happening</i></p> <p><i>Give feedback as soon as possible and in ways that are easy to understand for everyone</i></p>	<p>This is an area of weakness identified by organisations. The research suggested that whilst some organisations are doing this well, there would be great benefit in investing in further training in this area to enable all organisations to develop the models of good practice in giving feedback associated with more successful outcomes for participative projects.</p>
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<p>7 Improving the way we work</p> <p>We will:</p> <p><i>Look at the way we work with you and how to improve it</i></p> <p><i>Ask you what has gone well and what needs to change</i></p> <p><i>Make sure your views make a difference to the way we make plans and decisions</i></p>	<p>A number of organisations participating in the research indicated it had provided them with an opportunity to reflect on limitations in their involvement of young people, and given them ideas for improving this. Many were also interested to know the outcome of the research or receive a copy of the report, some expressing an interest in sharing and learning more about the issues. The process of reflection is often something there is little time for, but which should be done both within the organisation and also with young people too, asking them “how are we doing?”</p>
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3.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in relation to the future development of participation in Pembrokeshire, in line with the National Standards and locally identified need:

1 Information

Organisations should review the quality and clarity of information to identify the possibilities for participation – in conjunction with young people wherever possible.

Organisations should disseminate information in a variety of ways, eg on-line (including the Zone website), via letters, phone calls, texts, postcards, adverts and radio slots – before and after participative activities and involving young people where possible.

Organisations should demonstrate actual benefits to young people of being involved by demonstrating the difference that they are making by taking part. This in itself will also encourage other young people to become involved.

The role of the Young People's Partnership should be made clearer to young people, and mechanisms for involving young people strengthened.

Organisations should communicate realistic expectations and be clear about the model of participation that is appropriate. The 'who' that is going to listen and make *identifiable* changes should be clarified at the outset of the participative process.

2 It's your choice

The area, model/level (see Treseder) and timescale of participation should be discussed with young people where possible, depending on the type of organisation and its previous experience of involving young people, so that the form and content of participative activities is not determined unilaterally and young people are presented with clear and meaningful choices.

Young people should be given appropriate advanced notice of participative activities.

Staff should understand the responsibility that they have to the participation model.

3 No discrimination

Organisations should involve young people across the voluntary and statutory sectors and, for some harder to reach groups in particular, involvement needs to take place ***right in their communities*** with appropriate, fun, and innovative activities.

Decision-making processes should not necessarily mirror hierarchical 'adult' decision-making models.

Organisations should seek the views of a larger representative body of young people, including an increased effort to solicit the views of young people under-utilising existing services, eg gay/bi/transsexual, black and ethnic minorities, travellers, disabled, disaffected, homeless young people.

Young people should be able to make contributions at all levels, eg local youth forums.

Anti-discriminatory training should be available for young people and professionals.

4 Respect

Time should be built into participative activities to develop relationships; where possible participative events need to be part of a programme of activities, and not one-off events.

There needs to be a culture of participation, through training, reflection and the stimulation of public debate.

Young people need to have a greater say, as far as possible, in setting the agenda. Young people should be included in a range of decisions, including, where appropriate, recruitment of staff.

Young people's views will be taken along with those of adults in making decisions, and when it is not possible to take on the views of young people, this should be acknowledged and an explanation of the reasons given.

The input of young people must be acknowledged and appreciated.

5 You will get something out of it

Participative events should be organised with an acknowledgement that the social aspects of activities are important for young people. This should inform all aspects of the organisation, such as the activities undertaken, geographic location and physical environment, transport and refreshments.

The main incentive for involving young people should focus on the opportunity for them to witness real change as a result of their involvement. However, other incentives for involving young people should be considered, including financial.

6 Feedback

All organisations should identify methods of feedback in the planning of participative activities. Methods of feedback to be prompt, flexible and reflect the communication needs and abilities of the young people involved, eg on-line (including the Zone), individual letters, texting.

Feedback should be available to other organisations and other people not directly involved in the participative activity, where appropriate.

7 Improving how we work

Following any changes or developments, organisations should be open to ongoing satisfaction surveys from young people, to show commitment to continued participation and ongoing service improvement.

Organisations should be proactive in encouraging communication between themselves and relevant partners.

Organisations should demonstrate their commitment to participation by signing up to self-assessment and the forthcoming quality assurance schemes where possible.

Section 4

4.1 The way forward

For this Strategy to be implemented successfully, it is important that the **ethos** of participation be embraced and developed across organisations in Pembrokeshire. This will include those organisations offering services directly to young people, as well as more generic services. Young people themselves need to be **empowered** to know that they have a right to be active participants, and to be aware of ways in which they can take part.

The role of the Children's and Young People's Partnership is to ensure a co-ordinated and strategic approach which prevents a piecemeal approach to achieving the objectives. The recommendations in this Strategy should inform Partnership a decision about how promotion and training is co-ordinated and also how funding is allocated to supporting the formal structures. This should then be set out within an action plan which will help to facilitate the clear implementation of this Participation Strategy. This in turn will become part of the Single Children and Young People's Plan for 2008-11.

All developments need to be mirrored for children under 10 years while having an understanding of their different needs and structures to support them.

The development of a consultation/participation/advocacy framework or matrix has been proposed (see YPP plan 2007-8) and so all developments should link strongly with commissioning of advocacy services.

Training

Training within organisations is crucial to help to facilitate participation. Training relating to the following areas is needed to ensure and enable participation to happen:

- Communicating the benefits of participation to young people
- Creating an environment to facilitate participation
- Participative techniques working with young people
- Presenting feedback for young people on their participation.

How this training programme will be delivered needs to be agreed by the Partnership.

Quality Assurance

The development of quality assurance mechanisms for taking forward the participation agenda will focus initially on self-assessment, using the implementation pack produced by the Participation Unit. Kite-marking systems will be considered following the proposed forthcoming pilot kite-marking projects which the national Participation Unit is currently investigating.

Appendix 1

Statement of intent to support and promote participation in Pembrokeshire

1 We will work together in a co-ordinated and coherent way. Many organisations are keen to contribute to the participation agenda and are developing, or would like to develop, policies and structures to contribute to this goal. The need to ensure that participation is a process and not an event is accepted. Therefore it is vital that these bodies work together in a co-ordinated and coherent way to achieve a county-wide partnership approach that respects and values the contribution of young people and helps them play a part in shaping the world in which they live.

2 We will raise the profile of participation and promote the involvement of young people across Pembrokeshire. The Young People's Partnership has a key responsibility for driving forward the participation agenda and will provide the structure through which all partners link and raise the profile of participation. Agencies and sectors will actively participate in the Involving Young People in Decision-Making steering group (ICYPIDMG) and promote its agenda. They will also promote the involvement of young people both in their own organisations and in any county-wide initiatives.

3 We will build on existing structures, working with young people to plan future developments. Young people's participation will be supported and encouraged in existing forums such as school councils. It is acknowledged that the extent to which young people can actively participate will vary in different organisations and in different situations. Where organisations may not have the capacity to undertake the work required they could be encouraged to link in with other organisations where possible. Partners will work with young people to identify the extent to which they are currently involved; the areas that involvement could be developed and enhanced; and what resources, including training, will be needed to improve participation.

4 We will strive to include and listen to all young people – not just those who are articulate, well behaved and easy to work with. We will include young people of all ages, backgrounds, race, cultural identity, abilities and understanding. It is acknowledged that this can present challenges but will be ultimately more effective and is essential if we are to genuinely include all young people. All aspects of participation, including the establishment of any new mechanisms for involving young people, will take account of this in their development.

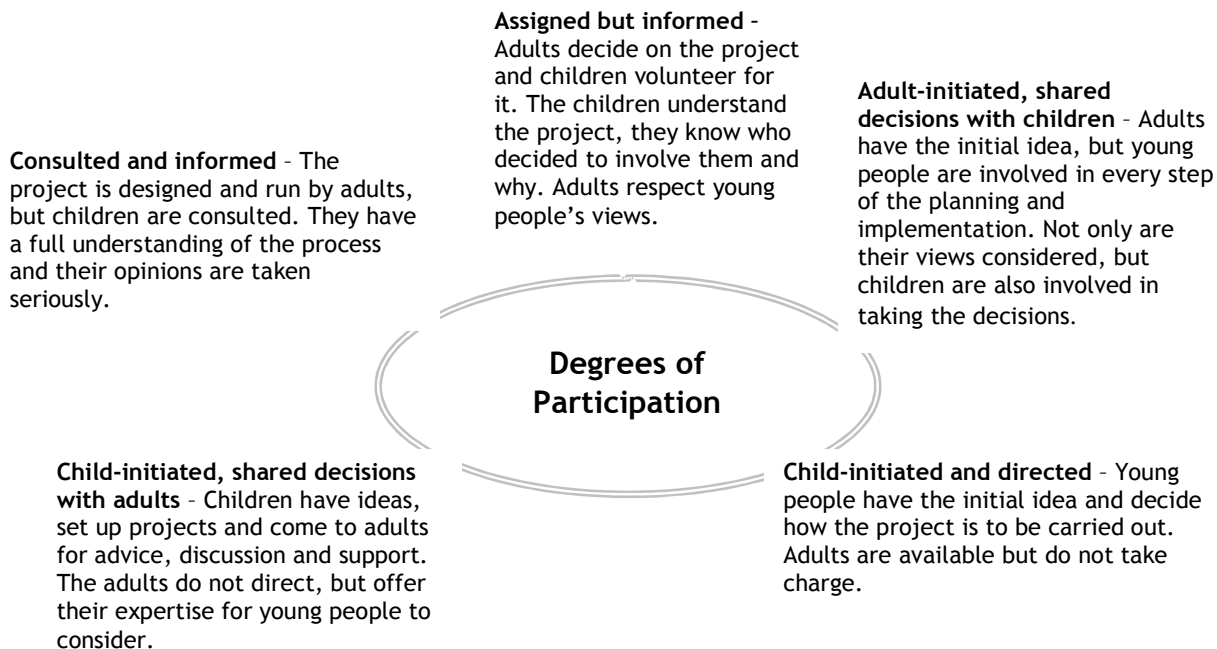
5 We will be aware of what young people's expectations and aspirations are and ensure that these are fundamental to the design and delivery of services for them. A range of projects and organisations are making progress in this area, and this work is now becoming more joined up. This is being addressed through a range of initiatives across all sectors, for example through the work of Gennex and also through the post of the Consultation Coordinator for Children and Young People and the consultation portal. The co-ordination of work of such

organisations and posts will help to minimise any potential 'consultation fatigue' amongst young people. Where outcomes cannot change as a result of participation, it is unethical to undertake participative activities. Young people should always be made aware of the outcomes of any participation and how it has influenced decision-making.

6 We will develop mechanisms to incorporate the views of young people's views in service review and development. Evaluation of services for young people should routinely include young person led evaluation. All agencies accessing funding through the Young People's Partnership (including Cymorth and LA grants) will demonstrate that they have consulted with young people.

Appendix 2

Treseder's Model of Participation



This figure shows a model developed by Phil Treseder (1997) from Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation, which was used as a starting point in the research into the current levels of participation in Pembrokeshire and will be adopted as the basis for this Strategy. This model shows how the level and nature of participation varies. The universal application model of participation principles allows for application across all young people's service settings. What will work with one organisation such as a young people's group that is familiar with involvement and has a history of young people's rights and participation, may not be appropriate for another agency that has more tightly prescribed statutory duties and a different organisational culture. ***This does not mean that participation and involvement is not possible, just that the level and nature of the involvement may be different.***

Appendix 3

The following documents inform this Strategy:

Pembrokeshire YPP Strategic Plan 2006-08

A mapping exercise took place in 2005-06 as part of the Young People's Partnership Annual report process, detailing how young people have been involved in *developing services* within organisations mapped to entitlement delivery. Although limited in nature, it is nevertheless useful information to consider in terms of contributing to base line data of the levels and nature of participation in the county.

A continuing priority for 2004-2008 stated in the strategic plan is to *"Increase opportunities and support for young people to contribute to, and have their voices heard in relation to activities planned and decisions taken (including kite-marking of provision by local young people)"*. It is acknowledged in the plan that the development of a 'consultation' strategy to support the work of partnerships is a complex task and is ongoing. Consideration needs to be given as to how this strategy develops and the involvement between and emphasis upon organisations which are consultation-focused, participation-focused, and child/youth focused.

The Ten Entitlements

Support for young people in Wales is structured around an **entitlement** for all young people to a range of services in the language of their choice, designed to promote their attainment and development as individuals. Entitlement number E10 specifically states that young people have the *"...right to be consulted, to participate in decision-making, and to be heard on all matters which concern them or have an impact on their lives"*. The ethos of this policy is focused upon *guiding and encouraging* young people to take up their entitlement, not on *policing* their participation.

National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales

Following the development and subsequent publication of this framework from the Welsh Assembly Government, organisations such as Local Health Boards, NHS Trusts, and Local Authorities among others, are required to fulfil a set of key actions detailed. The first standard in this framework relates to the Participation of Children, Young People, and Families. There is value in considering how such organisations have developed and implemented policies and strategies to achieve this particular standard.

Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Children Act 2004

Appendix 4

Existing structures informing and supporting the implementation of this strategy nationally and locally

Children and Young People's Participation Consortium for Wales and the Participation Unit

The Participation Consortium is a multi-agency strategic body working at a national level to develop capacity and practice in terms of the participation of children and young people (0-25 years) in decision-making in Wales. The consortium receives funding from the Welsh Assembly Government, and steers the work of the unit which acts as a focal point in support of the strategic development of participation.

Key development priorities that the Participation Consortium and Participation Unit are working on include participation standards and kite-marking, impact assessment, organisational support and cultural change, and supporting child and young person-led initiatives/organisations.

School Councils

Pupils are the most important stakeholders in schools. Under new rules from 1st November 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government passed legislation requiring every primary, secondary, and special school to have in place a school council meeting. It is the policy of the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure that the experiences and views of young people are heard by decision makers in all public services, including schools. The Assembly is committed to equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to be active citizens and by encouraging and assisting schools to develop school councils. School councils should encourage citizenship both through the development of individuals nominated to represent their peers, and within all young people through their involvement in selecting and interacting with their representatives. There is now a statutory requirement for school governor groups to have student associates.

The role of the Consultation Coordinator, Children and Young People

The post of Consultation Coordinator, Children and Young People exists to support all organisations which form the Partnership. For example, the post includes the following roles: to develop consultative mechanisms which ensure all children and young people can have a voice on issues that affect their lives; to work with service providers and other partners to utilise existing mechanisms for listening to and consulting with children and young people; to assist in the development of structures to enable children and young people's view to reach decision makers; to encourage children and young people to take part in the decision-making process; to encourage service providers and other partners to listen to the views of children and young people; to work with colleagues and partner organisations to ensure a consistent and professional approach is adopted and good practice is shared with consulting with children and young people; to develop mechanisms to ensure information and decisions are fed back to children and young people throughout the County; to ensure that information is made available to service providers and other organisations, and to monitor and evaluate the outcomes

The Consultation Coordinator is also responsible for the running of the consultation portal on www.pembrokeshireyouthzone.co.uk which is now up and running. The portal provides information on consultations that have already been undertaken, and sets out their aims/objectives/methods. The aim of the portal is to provide a more coordinated approach to consultation and avoid duplication. The portal has copies of example questionnaires/final reports, or contact information as to where this info can be accessed.

The Consultation Coordinator Children and Young People can be contacted via County Hall.

The role of the Children and Youth Planning Facilitator

The Children and Youth Planning Facilitator's post was created in July 2003 with a basic remit to develop a coordinated approach to the voluntary sector participating in strategic planning partnerships based around children and young people. Within this broad aim the role has encompassed the development of the Voluntary Sector Groups working with the Children and Young People Network to encourage communication between voluntary sector groups, the development of an information sharing system that disseminates information from a wide range of cross sector sources directly to the 'front line' of groups working with children and young people and the securing of representation on a huge variety of strategic and operational planning groups, working on projects covering the whole 0-25 age range.

The Children and Youth Planning Facilitator expands the work on a month by month basis as new groups are created and new opportunities arise for the sector to get involved. For more information or to get involved in the network, contact the post holder at ypf@pavs.org.uk

The Involving Children and Young People in Decision Making Group (ICYPIDM Group)

The Including Children and Young People in Decision Making group is a multi agency subgroup of both the Children's Partnership and the Young People's Partnership and oversees all work relating to the involvement of young people in the running of their organisations and in the wide range of consultation and participation activities undertaken by the Partnerships themselves.

In the past the group has looked at the use of a Charter for the involvement of young people and it now monitors the work undertaken as part of the Particip8 project. The group also takes reports from Gennex, 14-19 and other officers of the YPP. The group meets quarterly and details of meetings can be obtained from the PAVS offices.

Gennex

Gennex is a hosted project within PAVS, being supported to develop into an independent, not-for-profit organisation. It is funded by Cymorth through Pembrokeshire County Council. Gennex exists to provide young people with a voice; to provide opportunities for them to become more involved in their community. It holds youth forums throughout the county so that young people can discuss community issues that affect their lives and also works in partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council to arrange thematic forums (Young Carers, Looked

After Children, Travellers, Young Voices for Choices). Gennex is working towards reaching out to other disadvantaged groups (eg young offenders, young homeless).

Tier 1 of the Youth Assembly (aged 14-25) operates through Gennex in Pembrokeshire, and is working towards specialist reference groups which will roughly mirror the PCC Cabinet. Tier 2 of the Youth Assembly is developing consistency and sharing best practice between the forums on a pan-Pembrokeshire basis. Gennex has links with the Funky Dragon (The Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales) and the Children's Commissioner.

The Youth Information Service

This has a strategic role to inform young people of their rights including having their voices heard through the 10 Entitlements. It supports young people to access young people friendly information.