young voices

INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISION-MAKING

Event processes and proceedings
Thursday, 15th November 2018

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GMIT
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA NA GAILLIMHE-MAIGH EO
GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

CYPSC
COISTÍ NA SEIRBHÍSÍ DO LEANAÍ & DO DHAOINE ÓGA
Maigh Eo

South West Mayo
DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LTD
Comhlacht Forbartha
Iardheisceart Mhaigh Eo Teo

WESTERN REGION
drug & alcohol task force
Meitheal Drugaí an Iarthair

foróige

Tóchar
Valley
Rural
Community
Network

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Young Voices – A quick view

Background

Why?	Two separate, youth-led projects supported by Foróige and the Tochar Valley Rural Community Network respectively, both identified a need to investigate young people's participation.
What?	To create a space where adults and young people could meet and discuss how to include young people in decision-making.
Who?	A total of 44 young people aged 15 -17 A total of 3 young people aged 18 -24 A total of 30 adults, representing 21 different organisations A total of 23 GMIT facilitators
Where?	GMIT- Mayo Campus
When?	Thursday, 15th November 2018

Themes, main points and recommendations from the discussions on the day

Themes	Main points	Recommendations
Youth-Friendly Approaches	• The need to be respectful, honest, open and build trust is central in the creation of welcoming youth spaces. • Communications using simple language accessible to all. • Creativity required to engage young people, not just the repeat of adult methods.	• Liaise with Foróige to distribute the '8 key messages' for all services and organisations. • Raise awareness of Tusla Child and Youth Participation Toolkit (2016) • Develop and distribute a statement regarding the importance of child and youth participation in County Mayo. • Create more deliberation spaces for young people in County Mayo.
Training and capacity building	• Adults' willingness to acknowledge the importance of youth participation • Adults acknowledge that some lack the 'how to' or 'know how' for including young people and that this is a barrier preventing youth participation.	• Explore the potential of facilitation skills training for both adult and youth community members. • Explore the potential of young people shadowing adults in community/organisational settings. E.g. Mentoring programme. • Highlight the importance of social media as a youth engagement platform.
Social Media	• Facebook is for 'old people' • Young people perceived information technologies would enable them to access information about organisations and receive invites to events.	• Use existing social media platforms to enhance information sharing between organisations and young people • Create specific online engagement platforms that support young people's deliberation and decision making. E.g. via Transition year • Explore the provision of social media training across all sectors, primarily focused on youth engagement
Transport	• Lack of transport a significant issue for all community members in rural areas • Transport determines if a young person can or cannot participate.	• Engage Local Link regarding transport for young people • Explore online social media platforms as a space for young people to participate in decision-making.

Facilitator notes

Themes	Main points	Recommendations
School	• Deliberations in schools so all young people can put forward ideas. • Distribute information via Transition Year coordinators. • Adults find it difficult to share power with young people.	• Explore the potential to develop an in-school project. • Create specific online engagement platforms that support young people's deliberation and decision making. E.g. via Transition year (as previously stated)
Community	• Work on specific youth-led community projects. • Fresh ideas are needed. • Use existing buildings to accommodate youth activities. • Feel as young people that we keep repeating ourselves and nothing changes. • To examine the cultural value of young people in communities	• Complements the recommendation in the previous table to consider the possibilities of shadowing and mentoring. • The youth perception despite offering opinions and ideas things do not change. A method of recognising young people is to ensure feedback is given in relation to their inputs and decisions/action taken. • Cultural values – explore the possibility of a research project
Information	• Supply more face-to-face information. • Young people won't pick up weird leaflets. • Use on line polls for youth issues.	• Complements the recommendations in the previous section called social media.
Youth Activities	• Involve GMIT in youth activities. It is important to have something to do. • Limited youth services in Achill. • Space not that important as long as there are friends and pizza.	• Initiate a conversation with GMIT regarding youth activities. • Explore the possibility of providing support to establish youth activities in Achill.
Politics	• Young people should get to meet local councillors and representatives	• On the day a representative of the County Council did attend. For future events name tags should also include the person's role/organisation. • Highlight the role of the Public Participation Network with young people in relation to information and putting forward ideas.

1. Young Voices

Introduction

In County Mayo, two specific youth-led research projects conducted by Foróige and the Tochar Valley Rural Community Network informed the development of the Young Voices event held in the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology – Mayo Campus on Thursday, 15th November 2018. The backdrop to the event is a changing Irish policy context, which has placed a new emphasis on children and young people's participation in decision-making. In 2015, the country's first '*National strategy for child and young people's participation in decision-making'* (DCYA, 2015) was published. Recent practical resources such as the '*Tusla Child and Youth Participation Toolkit'* (Tusla, 2016) have been developed to support Tusla services and funded services to include children and young people in decision making.

The previously mentioned youth-led research projects, both illuminate improvements regarding young people's participation in matters affecting their lives have occurred; but more work is needed to embed young people's participation in decision-making within services and organisations. The Foróige research provides eight key messages to create spaces where young people feel welcomed, safe and comfortable enough to participate (Foróige, 2017). The second, Tochar Valley Rural Community Network (TVRCN) produced a video, Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT). The video content challenges negative stereotypes of young people, identifies potential barriers preventing youth participation and the need to deliberate the inclusion of young people in decision-making at a community level.

Based upon the above mentioned youth-led studies the following interested parties, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT), the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Taskforce (WRADTF), Foróige, Tochar Valley Rural Community Network, South West Mayo Community Development Company and the Children and Young Persons' Services Committee (CYPSC) agreed to promote an event. Essentially the event needed to enable adults, together with young people, to explore how to promote the inclusion of young people in decision-making within organisations and community groups. The remainder of this publication presents the proceedings of the Young Voices event, in the following subsections;

- The background
- Organisation of the event
- What happened on the day?
- Event outcomes
- Discussion and what next?

2. Background and Purpose

Dr Sheila McArdle, (GMIT) and Mr Pat Conway, (MWRADT) are both members of different sub-groups of the County Mayo CYPSC. In July 2018, both Sheila and Pat, unknown to each other, arrived at the Kettering Foundation in Dayton, Ohio, USA to participate in Deliberative Democracy (Mathews, 2014) workshops.   This involved a seven-day series of experiential learning sessions to explore deliberative democracy as an approach and process that can be applied in everyday settings. Briefly, deliberative democracy identifies issues, asks provocative questions, identifies problems and proposes potential solutions to the need. Then it is possible to agree actions and consider the potential consequence(s) of each action taken. Subsequently on the return to Ireland from Kettering, as practitioners, both were aware of the Foróige and TVRCN youth-led research which motivated the action to create a deliberative space focusing upon the inclusion of young people in decision-making.

Initially informal conversations within the CYPSC structures identified local school councils, youth organisations and some services are proactive in promoting the participation of young people. None the less, it was also suggested that some voluntary organisations, non-statutory and statutory services might benefit from more supports and inputs to promote the inclusion of young people in decision-making. This informed the decision to offer a pilot event, the creation of a deliberative space to promote the authentic participation of everyone concerned to consider the inclusion of young people in decision-making. Overall the pilot event had a three-fold purpose to achieve the following desired outcomes:

1. To create a deliberative space that had not previously existed;
2. To ascertain if the deliberative space would identify potential actions to promote the inclusion of young people in decision-making into the future;
3. To share the knowledge generated through the event with participants and other interested parties.

3.   Organisation of the event

3.1   Introduction

This section details who organised the event and the planning decisions that led to delivery of the event. In GMIT, 4th Year students from both the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Outdoor Education and the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Applied Social Care selected to study an elective module, named Youth Work. The module included content on deliberative democracy as an approach to work with young people in different settings. The students were set the task to design, organise, deliver and evaluate the event as part of their course work. The members of the class represented a cross section of different ages (many under 24 years of age), ethnic backgrounds and interests.

3.2   GMIT Student facilitators

The GMIT student facilitators' names are shown in Table One: GMIT Student facilitators by programme. The group agreed to the method of drawing names out of a hat to form specific working teams. This enabled the students to breakdown the organising of the event into manageable pieces and bring the event to fruition. This process led to the formation of four teams: 1) Media and marketing; 2) Health and safety; 3) Administration and 4) Meet and greet.

Table One: GMIT Student facilitators by programme

BA in Outdoor Education and Leisure	BA in Applied Social Care
• Rihards Fricbergs	• Cathy Browne
• Danielle Holmes	• Alan Cafferkey
• Jack Kelly	• Marie Dolan
• Pauline McSorley	• Oliver Itoe
• Lee Nolan	• Aimee Maloney
• Hanna Oerter	• Tara McHale
• Eoin Shivnen	• Una Moran
• Tracey Smith	• Micheala Murphy
• Andrew Sneyd	• Briony Quinn
• Martin Sparks	• Michelle Ryan
• Johanna Thome	• Ellen Walsh
• Zoe Wilson	

Photograph one: GMIT student facilitators with Lecturer, Dr. Sheila McArdle

(Martin Sparks absent from photograph) © Conor McKeown

3.3 Preparation and planning

Through the youth work module theoretical and practice models were explored. Drawing upon the current policy document to inform the event, the *National strategy for child and young people's participation in decision-making* (DCYA, 2015) provides Lundy's model to assist with the design of the event. (Please see Figure 1. Lundy's Model of Participation on the next page). The working teams set about ensuring each component of the model was included in the overall design. The actual practical implementation of each of the four components is explained in detail in the proceeding section.

The student facilitators were cognisant that the event title should emphasise young people's voices and hence the name 'Young Voices' was agreed. A GMIT Student Aimee Maloney, as a member of the media group, attended a CYPSC participation group meeting in October 2018. At this meeting

two Foróige youth researchers, Emmanuel Safo-Ankoma and Claire McHale, made a presentation regarding the youth participation project. The presentation emphasised the eight key messages. Aimee fed these key messages back to the organising teams to assist the ongoing planning of the event incorporating space, voice, audience and influence.
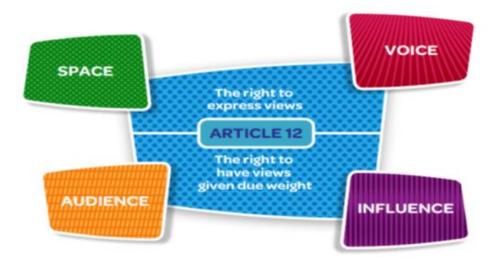
Figure 1: Lundy's Model of Participation

This model provides a way of conceptualising Article 12 of the UNCRC which is intended to focus educational decision-makers on the distinct, albeit interrelated, elements of the provision. The four elements have a rational chronological order:

- **SPACE:** Children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their view
- **VOICE:** Children must be facilitated to express their view
- **AUDIENCE:** The view must be listened to.
- **INFLUENCE:** The view must be acted upon, as appropriate.

(DYCA, 2015, p. 21)

Space – safe, inclusive and expression of views

- The need for a media campaign was identified early within the process to promote the event. Communications were circulated through CYPSC and Public Participation Network (PPN), Facebook and Twitter. A student, Andrew Syend, completed two radio interviews, with Mid-West Radio and Community Radio Castlebar (CRCfm). Telephone calls were made to services and organisations to maximise engagement with the event.
- GMIT student, Pauline McSorley completed outreach to participating schools prior to the event. There was a three-fold purpose to the outreach 1) to inform the second level students what the event was about; 2) to commence the welcome process and 3) to ensure the young people were familiar with at least one person prior to coming to GMIT.
- Members of the meet and greet team were allocated to welcome all participants at the door and escort them to the registration table.
- GMIT students invited participants to avail of tea/coffee/squash.
- At each deliberative table snacks were provided for participants.
- The physical space was arranged to facilitate a large group space and smaller deliberative spaces.

- Entertainment on the day was provided by a DJ, who played music in the background at different intervals throughout the event.
- The lunchtime space facilitated participants to chat among themselves.

Voice – facilitated to express views

- The event was opened by a young person.
- All information regarding safety messages, welcomes and links between sessions provided by GMIT student facilitators.
- Ice-breakers at the beginning of the small group discussion were used to introduce young people and adults to each other.
- The facilitated deliberations were designed to maximise inputs from both young people and adults.
- Multi-methods applied in the deliberative spaces, verbal, written points, note-taking to capture as many points of view as possible.
- Group membership was selected to create a mix of school representatives and statutory and non-statutory service representatives.

Audience – the views must be listened to

- Prior to the event to GMIT students received training from Dr Sheila McArdle and Pat Conway as facilitators in the process of deliberative democracy.
- GMIT student facilitators worked with smaller deliberative groups of ten people, comprising of six young people and four adults.
- After the small group deliberations, a timed Round Robin where participants could move from one space to the next was facilitated. This enabled each participant to gain an insight into what each of the groups had discussed and decided upon.
- At the end of event, a plenary offered a synopsis of the main findings that had emerged from the deliberations. These were presented by student Jack Kelly who closed the event.
- A professional photographer was appointed to evidence interactions of the event.

Influence – views must be acted upon

- The deliberative frameworks used for the facilitation were designed to capture the views of both young people and adults.
- The frameworks provided a method of recording the views and collating information.
- In addition to the frameworks, the media group conducted video interviews with young people and adults to obtain their views of the event.
- Facilitators worked in pairs, as one facilitated a framework the other observed and took notes identifying potential actions and other information.
- The collation of the material to identify clear actions.
- The outcomes of the event to be disseminated post-event.

Prior to the event, the GMIT student facilitators calculated that a maximum of 100 people could be facilitated at the event. The potential breakdown of 100 included 55 young people aged 15 – 17 approximately and 10 young people aged 18 -23 years of age approximately. The remainder of 35 were to comprise of adults from services and community groups. This would facilitate a greater physical presence of young people compared to adults at the event. Therefore, pre-registration was particularly important for this event.

Mr Pat Conway had already established a positive working relationship with a number of schools in Mayo through his professional role of Regional Drugs and Alcohol Worker. He was able to secure the participation of Transition Year students from two schools for the event: 1) one urban – Davitt College, Castlebar and 2) one rural Coláiste Pobail, Acla. GMIT students conducted outreach sessions to the schools prior to the event.

Photograph two: Some of the participants drawn from Davitt College, Castlebar and Coliáiste Pobail, Acla with GMIT student facilitators

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3.4   Conclusion

As a pilot event it is feasible to suggest that the uptake by schools, young people and services was positive. Acknowledging the event could have facilitated slightly more people than actually attended. It is suspected in the future it would be possible to secure a full complement of young people. Nonetheless, the core value of hearing the voices of young people was achieved and applying Lundy's Model in practice ensured the development of deliberative spaces.

4.   What happened on the day?

4.1   Introduction
An overview of what occurred on the day is provided commencing with the meet and greet to the plenary session and the informal lunch. Each element was designed to create a space where young people felt comfortable and safe enough to participate in the deliberation.

4.2   Who came to the event?
The attendees were as follows:
- Young people aged 15-17 (44)
- Young people aged 18-24 (3)
- Adults from organisations or on work placement (30)
- GMIT facilitators (23)

In total, 44 young people from secondary schools registered for the event. In addition, 3 other young people under 24 years of age representing young people of GMIT participated in the event. A total of 30 adults representing a range of statutory and non-statutory organisations participated in the event. The event was facilitated by 23 GMIT students. In total, the event engaged 98 individuals in a deliberative process.

4.2   Creating a youth friendly space
Meeting and greeting - Young Voices participants were greeted at the reception and brought to the registration table situated outside of the hall. At registration each person received a name badge, an event pack and the number of the group to which they were allocated. This resulted in the formation of eight groups on the day. Each group comprised of a mix of young people from each of the schools and representatives of services and/or community groups.

Wifi access – the code to access the GMIT wifi as a guest was posted on the notice board at the registration table.

Refreshments – Once inside the hall some of the GMIT student facilitators greeted participants, offered refreshments, tea, coffee, squash and biscuits.   Additional snacks and fruit were set out on tables in the small deliberation areas.

The event opening - The event was opened by a young person, Mathew Walsh, a member of the Foróige participation project. Mathew related the importance of youth participation in decision-making from a young person's perspective.   Secondly the video produced by TVRCN, due to a technical malfunction, could not be shown at the beginning of the event. Instead, the video was shown at the beginning of the plenary session and was followed by a synopsis of the key points of the event.

Small group deliberative spaces – in total eight separate deliberative groups were created with two GMIT student facilitators assigned to work with each group. Prior to considering the deliberative framework grids the facilitators conducted an ice-breaking game, which introduced each of the new group members to each other in a fun way.

In each of the eight deliberative spaces, three large-scale grids were displayed on space dividing screens. The statements within Grid one were supplied by Foróige. The statements within Grid two were extracted from the Tochar Valley Community Rural Network video. The third grid contained

provocative statements as 'devil's advocate' of possible adult views pertaining to child and youth participation.

The facilitators worked with participants to work through their views and opinions, involving different techniques to accommodate potential different learning styles within the group. Four of the groups commenced with Grid one and the remaining groups commenced with Grid three. This approach was designed to ensure that data was generated in relation to all three grids within the timescale of the event (Please photographs three, four and five).

In turn, one facilitator guided the participants to consider one grid, to consider potential immediate actions, follow-up actions and recorded these points on the mounted grids. At the same time the second facilitator also took notes of the discussions and other topics mentioned by participants. The small group deliberations were concluded by the groups selecting a member to remain at the table with one of the facilitators in preparation for the round robin space.

Photograph three: Small deliberative spaces

Photograph three: Small deliberative spaces

The round robin deliberative space -Subsequent to the small group deliberations, a round robin involved members of each table moving from their table to the next. At the signal of a bell, they moved again until all of the tables had been visited. During this process those chosen to remain at the table provided feedback of their main points to the groups that visited them. As a space this involved sharing of information, but also enabled the groups to identify similarities and difference between their and other small group deliberations.

Video recordings -At the planning stage it was decided to use video to evidence the experiences of participants in relation to the event. It was intended to provide secure links to the video via a sharing platform. However, due to the changing nature of Data Protection, it was decided post-event not to circulate the video and the footage has been deleted.

Plenary session -All participants returned to the large group area.   GMIT student Jack Kelly provided synopsis of the key points of the deliberations, invited comments from the participants and closed the event. An invitation to an informal lunch in the Nursing Foyer of the building was extended to all participants.

Informal lunch – this occurred in the Nursing Foyer, a space that offered standing space, comfortable seating and a chance for all involved to chat with each other, make connections and relax after the morning's deliberations.

4.4   Conclusion

The design of the event incorporated a variety of measures and techniques to create an environment in which both adults and young people felt they could participate. Firstly, the event was designed and facilitated by GMIT students, many of whom were under 24 years of age. The personal greetings at the reception, at the refreshments area and facilitators applying verbal and written methods to enable participants to engage as they chose and different types of deliberative spaces were successful in engaging all participants. The opening of the event by a young people from the outset provided recognition of the central value of the event, young people voices, to listen to the voices and agree actions to bring about change.

5. Event outcomes

5.1 Introduction

This section presents the overall outcomes of the event. The template for each deliberative framework is populated by the main findings from each group. This provides insights into what young people and adults value and their concerns and actions in relation to the inclusion of young people in decision-making. Please see Deliberative Framework Grid 1, 2 and 3 on pages x, y and z respectively.

5.2 Deliberative framework outcomes

The Deliberative frameworks are self-explanatory with Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3 presented in order on the proceeding pages.

5.3 Facilitator notes

This section presents comments recorded by facilitators during the small group deliberations. These are arranged under the sub-headings of 1) School; 2) Community, 3) Information Sharing; 4) Youth Groups; and 5) Politics

5.3.1 School
- Young people committees in school that can deliver ideas to the school councils and teachers.
- Distribute information via Transition Year Co-ordinators.
- Adults find it difficult to share power with young people.

5.3.2 Community
- Work on specific community projects that are youth-led.
- Fresh ideas are needed.
- Use existing buildings to accommodate youth activities.
- Feel that as young people we keep repeating ourselves and nothing changes.

- Need to examine the cultural value young people bring to communities.

5.3.3 Information
- Supply of more face-to-face information.
- Young people won't pick up weird leaflets.
- Use on-line polls with young people.
- Spaces to discuss things with friends.
- Local councillors and representatives need to have youth-only sessions

5.3.4 Youth Groups
- Involve GMIT in youth activities.
- Activities - having something to do is important.
- Limited youth services in Achill.
- Space not that important as long as there are friends, pizza and Wi-Fi.

5.4 Conclusion
The presented comments provide evidence that the event was effective in creating spaces where both young people and adults came together to deliberate opinions, views and actions. These comments will be linked to the deliberative frameworks during the discussion section.

Deliberative framework Option 1: Young Voices - Including young people in decision-making

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) through Article 12 sets out that children and young people have a right to be heard in matters that affect their lives. This option considers some of the youth research findings supported by the Tochar Valley Rural Community Network. This option has a focus regarding heightening awareness about available options to participate and to create an environment that promotes participation of young people in decision-making.

Concerns/wishes	Actions – Consider each of the concerns in turn and respond to the questions what can I do about it? What can we do about it?	Potential trade-offs/consequences
As a young person I don't feel welcomed when I do attend a community meeting.	1. Adults should invite young people to meetings and a welcoming environment, e.g. tea/coffee, snacks created. 2. Adults need to consciously listen to young people and recognise they are all different. 3. It is important for young people to feel they are not being judged. 4. Suggestion boxes as part of community/youth events. 5. The perception is services are targeting older people and young children. There is a need to promote that services are also available for young people. 6. Transport is a significant issue that restricts young people from participating.	1. The possibility exists that when efforts are made to include young people they do not attend. This results in wastage of existing resources 2. Adults may not know how to listen to or work with young people 3. In some cases young people may feel they are being judged, but sometime judgments are made in relation to services and resource allocation. 4. It is unclear who would take responsibility for suggestion boxes and what would be done with the suggestions. This may lead to young people providing views, but no real channel to feed the information into decision making structures 5. A specific drive to promote youth services and availability will require a collaborative approach. 6. Transport services may not be able to provide routes at suitable times or reach all areas. This may lead to the inclusion of some young people, but the exclusion of others.
As a young person I am unsure of what services are available in my community.	1. Develop youth services in rural areas such as youth café or specific social spaces. 2. Give talks in schools about services such as the Volunteer Centre to create more links with schools and youth services. 3. Make announcements on appropriate social media. NB Not Facebook but Instagram 4. Poster campaigns regarding services available.	1. The development of rural service may require other support such as transport to enable young people to access the service. 2. Services such as Volunteer Centre may already link with schools and youth service. More inputs from such services may detract from other areas within their remit. 3. Social media campaigns require significant planning and must comply with new Data Protection laws. 4. Design, printing and display costs at a central point would require a lead organisation to co-ordinate.
As a young person I think I have a lot to offer, but don't know where to go to give my contributions.	1. Create more platforms like Young Voices 2. Gather a small number of people to kick-start new initiatives 3. Link with existing youth service like Foróige and No Name Club to promote knowledge of services. 4. More youth employment/training opportunities.	1. More youth platforms do not guarantee that services or organisations will take young people's views on board. 2. This measure relies on the good will of youth services working beyond their remit. 3. Requires strengthening of networks. 4. Requires a champion to take on the need for youth employment.

Deliberative framework Option 2: Young Voices - Including young people in decision-making

Foróige in conjunction with TUSLA is promoting youth participation, working with young people to define key messages, review literature and advise services on youth targeted information.
The group have devised eight key messages for all services and organisations.   For this deliberative event, three key themes have been included for deliberation.

Concerns/wishes	Actions – Consider each of the concerns in turn and respond to the questions what can I do about it? What can we do about it?	Potential trade-offs/consequences
Services and community settings should have empathy for young people's feelings	1. Young people to promote services – peer to peer. 2. Young people's views should be taken on board. 3. Social Media to engage young people in rural areas.	1. Young people potentially could be scapegoated if more young people do not engage in decision-making. 2. Genuine efforts by young people are undervalued by adults 3. Social media skills required to deliver information may be lacking.
Young people like to participate in comfortable settings	1. Young people should not be outnumbered by adults at meetings. 2. Develop youth-friendly spaces in public areas. 3. Trust and respect between adults and young people. 4. Appreciate that all young people are not the same. 5. Develop new services to work with young people e.g. form partnerships with GMIT and other services to offer rock-climbing or other activities	1. For some organisations getting both adults and young people may be difficult. 2. At planning stage young people need to be included in the decision-making. 3. None 4. Non-judgemental practice requires training lack of resources may be a hindrance 5. Needs a lead agency to promote to form the partnerships
Information should be provided on-line and via social media.	1. It is important that information is jargon free when circulated on social media. 2. Use the same social media packages as young people i.e. Instagram. 3. Provide clear and concise information regarding expectations of participation. 4. Provide acknowledgement of the importance of everyone's presence. 5. Co-develop with young people a youth day. 6. Provide training and support to community groups who have little experience of working with young people.	1. Jargon free – literature to be reviewed by youth panels. The panels may be over used by services and organisation. 2. Lack of consultation regarding the type of packages young people use will lead to the provision of adult training in incompatible packages. 3. Possibility of tokenism or manipulation may occur to favour agenda of adults 4. None 5. Existing services may be feel to over-stretched to take on such an event. 6. A challenge to provide training that is accessible.

Deliberative framework Option 3: Young Voices - Including young people in decision-making

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) through Article 12 sets out that children and young people have a right to be heard in matters that affect their lives.   Adults hold various roles such as employment, community and family. This section focuses upon adult concerns regarding young people's participation in decision-making.

Concerns/wishes	Actions – Consider each of the concerns in turn and respond to the questions what can I do about it? What can we do about it together?	Potential trade-offs/consequences
We don't have time to include children and young people in decision-making. The daily work demands are excessive and this seems just like another demand on our time. -	1. Organisations need to prioritise young people in decision-making. 2. All community members should have a say regardless of age. 3. Allocate specific timeslots to include young people directly where possible or through a survey. 4. Children/young people see things differently than adults and can make things simpler. 5. National legislation needs to be implemented to ensure that services do include young people in decision-making.	1. According attention to young people in decision-making without being cognisant to equality may result in the unintentional consequent of excluding other age groups 2. As above 3. Individual workers can make a difference in their own practices. However, a change in organisational culture will be required to embed child and young people to really ensure that authentic participation in decision-making. 4. It is well noted that young people who tend to participate in decision-making are from higher socio-economic groups. A conscious effort to include young people from other socio-economic groups and minorities will also provide insights into needs of a broader range of young people 5. As above point 3
In services and communities we need resources and support to enable young people's participation a reality.	1. Provide support to community groups to access government grants. 2. Organisations require training in relation to health and safety and intercultural approaches. 3. Services should be able to keep young people's ideas on file. 4. Include young people in fund-raising to generate resources to promote inclusion. 5. Need to target young people that are 16 years of age plus as they leave services/organisation.	1. The collective power of the community sector may be undermined if funding becomes a competitive endeavour among organisations. 2. Related to point one, training resources, if reliant upon funding, the training may not materialise. It may be possible to consider peer training. 3. It is important to maintain Data Protection in the storage and retention of ideas. 4. Democratic approach required to ensure young people are included in all decisions to promote ownership of the project that responds to their needs. 5. As above
The benefits of including young people in decision-making is unclear.	1. Create a Transition Year Network to enable young people to become more involved in decision-making. 2. Provision of decision-making opportunities promotes youth development. 3. Better if young people could vote. 4. Decision-making can assist to alleviate rural isolation. 5. More youth-only spaces to make decisions as some young people feel intimidate by adults. 6. As adults to recognise that we don't always know best.	1. Would require a lead organisation to arrange. 2. The need to embed to young participation in organisation requires a cultural shift. 3. Requires legislative change. 4. The benefits of young people's participation are understood. A potential consequence of recognising young people in decision-making, may lead some adults to blame young people for unsuccessful outcomes. 5. Youth-only spaces as decision making spaces require a clear line of escalating points into other decision-making forums. 6. As above point 4.

6. Discussion and what next?

6.1 Introduction

This section considers if the Young Voices event achieved the stated three purposes of the event. To recap the desired outcomes were 1) To create a deliberative space that had not previously existed; 2) To ascertain if the deliberative space would identify potential actions to promote the inclusion of young people in decision-making into the future, and 3) To share the knowledge generated through the event with participants and other interested parties.

6.2 To create a deliberative space that had not previously existed

It is apparent from the preceding sections that a deliberative space was created. Current policy and resources such as the *National strategy for child and young people participation in decision-making* (DCYA, 2015) and the *Tusla Child and Youth Participation Toolkit* (TUSLA, 2016) acknowledge the benefits of youth participation in decision-making. These publications emphasise the effectiveness of youth decision-making in identifying needs and designing responses. Furthermore, the same publications also acknowledge that implementation and sustaining meaningful youth participation strategies across voluntary and non-voluntary and statutory organisations is a challenge. It is clear for the photographs five, six, seven and eight that both adults and young people engaged in the deliberations at the event.

The Young Voices event created a variety of deliberative space where young people and adults representing services and communities could come together to consider the inclusion of young people in decision making. Therefore, one of the first steps in developing youth participation strategies is to identify the barriers that may affect young people's ability to participation. Then find ways to counteract the identified barriers.

6.3 To ascertain if the deliberative space would identify potential actions to promote the inclusion of young people in decision making into the future

Based upon the populated deliberative framework four broad themes emerged from the day. These are: 1) Child and Youth Friendly Approaches; 2) Training and capacity building; 3) Social media and 4) Transport.

6.3.1 Youth Friendly Approaches

The following are a list of points surmised from the findings to consider the enhancement of youth participation in decision-making.

- Participatory values detailed within the Tusla Child and Youth Participation Toolkit (2016) include openness, honesty, respect and trust. It is evident from the deliberation that similar points were identified by participants of the event as requirements to create youth-friendly space. By creating welcoming environments that are open and respectful to the voice of the young person is seen to encourage engagement by all in participatory processes.

- Communication using simple language that is accessible to all. The facilitators of Young Voices were aware that participants could be drawn from various ethnic backgrounds, cultures, age, people with disabilities, gender, religions and sexual orientation. Participants did indicate the need for jargon-free information, simple language and non-judgemental approaches. However, requests in relation to ethnicity, cultures, people with disabilities and other previously mentioned categories were not mention specifically during the deliberations. The needs of minorities may warrant further discussion. Creativity is required to use methods to engage young people, rather than repeating processes used with adult-only groups. From the deliberation the idea of suggestion boxes that support the participation of young people who may not feel comfortable in voicing or writing their opinions was suggested. This is a method that can be introduced at different events. In the wider context, it may not be effective

approach; unless an organisation takes responsibility for maintaining the suggestion boxes, collating the information and escalating to other decision-making for arenas.

Recommendations:
- Liaise with Foróige regarding the distribution of the '8 key messages' for all services and organisations that promotes Youth Participation.
- Raise awareness of the Túsla Child and Youth Participation Toolkit (TUSLA 2018) and other resources.
- Develop and distribute a statement regarding the importance of child and youth participation in County Mayo.
- Create more deliberative spaces for and with young people in Co Mayo

6.3.2   Training and Capacity Building

Adults play a pivotal role in creating spaces and encouraging young people to voice their opinions, views and insights. From the deliberative frameworks, there appears to be a willingness and acknowledgment of young people's role in decision making.   Some of the adult representatives on the day shown in photograph nine. Some of the adult representatives of organisations advocate for the participation of young people in decision-making. However, the 'how to' or lack of 'know how' can act as a barrier to achieving authentic participation of young people in decision-making. A clearly identified need is for practical training for adults across all sectors, in relation to youth participation and how to develop more youth-friendly spaces.   This should include social media training and, where appropriate, group facilitation skills.

Recommendation:
- Explore the potential of facilitation skills training for both adult and youth community members
- Explore the potential of a young people shadowing adults in community and organisational settings. It may be possible to adapt other mentoring programmes for this purpose.
- Highlight the importance of social media as a youth engagement platform.

Photograph nine: Some of the adult representatives of organisations advocate

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6.3.3   Social media

This theme highlights the importance of Social Media as an engagement tool with and for young people. The event identified Instagram as the most popular social media platform for young people. The use of Facebook was associated with 'old people' and not a way of engaging young people. From the deliberations it becomes clear that young people perceived that information technology would enable them to access ideas and opportunities; to organise dates and times for events; enable access to information on services and organisations and invite young people events. Therefore, if adults are serious about including young people, they need to become familiar with the use of appropriate software packages and social media platforms.

Recommendations:
* Use existing social media platforms to enhance information sharing between organisation and young people,
* Create specific online engagement platforms that support young people's participation in deliberation and decision-making. E.g. Transition year network or deliberative software,
* Explore and develop social media training across all sectors primarily focused on youth engagement.

6.3.4   Transport

Transport is a significant issue for many young people and adults, especially in rural areas. The lack of transport, suitable bus routes, accessibility and cost of transport are barriers to participation. Essentially transport can determine if a young person can or cannot participate in an organisation, community groups or accessing existing services.

Recommendation:
* Engage local community transport providers Local Link regarding transport for young people.
* Explore potential of online social media platforms acting as a space for children and young people to participate, therefore reducing barriers around transport.

6.3.5   Other

As presented in Section 5.3 Facilitator notes, deliberations highlighted other factors that warrant further attention. It is evident under the sub-headings of school, community, information and youth groups the points are self-explanatory. Nonetheless two points from the community section need to be considered. These points are:

* Feel as young people we keep repeating ourselves and nothing changes.
* Need to examine the cultural value young people bring to communities.

From a youth perspective it is evident a sense of frustration is displayed. From a young person's perspective, the belief that despite voicing their opinions, they are not being heard as nothing changes. It is important to provide recognition and feedback to young people of how their views are incorporated into decision-making and inform adult practice. This illuminates that adults do value their opinions and views.

6.3.6   Information
* Supply of more face-to-face information.
* Young people won't pick up weird leaflets.
* Use on-line polls with young people.
* Spaces to discuss things with friends.
* Local councillors and representatives need to have youth only sessions.

6.3.7   Youth Groups

- Involve GMIT in youth activities.
- Activities - having something to do is important.
- Limited youth services in Achill.
- Space not that important as long as there are friends, pizza and Wi-Fi.

6.4 To share the knowledge generated through the event with participants and other interested parties

Commencing the distribution of the generated knowledge to event participants, provides a method of direct feedback. This immediately recognises the contribution of the participants to the event outcomes. The further distribution to other organisations and services widens the audience and the influence of the event. The distribution will include:

- The CYPSC committee and network,
- Youth services within the county,
- The HSE and Tusla,
- Community organisations,
- Schools,
- Juvenile Justice,
- The Kettering Institute.

6.5   Conclusion

The youth-led research which informed the Young Voices' design enabled the space for intergenerational deliberation to occur. The event participants provided significant insights into the topic of including young peoples in decision-making. Four themes emerged from the deliberation. These were 1) youth-friendly spaces; 2) training and capacity building; 3) social media and 4) transport. The key message to emerge is both adults and young people recognise the importance of young people's right to participate in decision-making. Secondly, from both adult and youth perspectives, it is unclear of how this will be achieved. Through the CYPSC structure and the formation of collaboration, the intention is to continue to work towards the embedding of young people's voices in matters that affect their lives.

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