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Sir Edward Mountain MSP (Convener of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee)
Friday, 20 December 2019

Dear Edward Mountain (And the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee),

Findings of The Scottish Youth Parliament's Transport, Environment & Rural Affairs Committee Workshop on R100.

The following findings are from both the Scottish Youth Parliament's (SYP) 'What's Your Take' Survey views from young people from across Scotland as well as our Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee Meeting ran at our National Sitting on the 27th October 2019 in Dunfermline.

The #WhatsYourTake online survey was open from 27th September until 30th October, gathering 817 responses from young people aged 12-25 across Scotland, from all 32 local authorities, [our 11 national voluntary organisations](#) and various others representing a diverse range of communities of interest and lived experience (including different faiths, disabilities, care and carer experience, LGBTQI+, a range of cadets, sports and environmental clubs, Shelter and Police Scotland Youth Volunteers).

The majority of respondents are at school (86%) and aged 12-14 (48%) and 15-17 (42%). 55% of respondents are female, 45% were male, 2% identified as non-binary and 1% prefer to use their own term. 16% of respondents belong to minority ethnic groups.

We asked the following two questions:

1. List three Negative Impacts of not having access to Super-Fast Broadband.
2. List three Positive Impacts of having access to Super-Fast Broadband.

Here are the key themes we found from the first question.

First, [slow or no connection](#). For example, to access log-in and access websites, files, photos, surveys messaging, downloads, streaming, waiting, crashing, impatience, slow replies, high latency, hard to save things, harder to get things done on time, glitches, buffering. One young person who responded to the 'What's Your Take' Survey said ["Marginalised groups being disadvantaged was also raised. E.g. 'Children in care homes are still without wifi - how do we expect them to have a good quality of life when they are without something most other children take for granted?"](#)

Secondly, [being isolated, 'out of the loop' and missing out on the news](#). For example, feeling isolated / less connected / not up-to-date (e.g. with news) / missing out / social exclusion / miss important discussions / more likely to stay indoors. ["Lack of communication with other people including friends, family, colleagues. Including those](#)

who live 'far away'. Losing memories spent with them” - Respondent From the ‘What’s your Take’ Survey.

Finally, **Barriers to education, learning and study**. For example, unable to (remotely) access resources on open university, google classroom, chromebooks, assignments, research, miss out or fall behind on schoolwork. Another young person said, “**Inability to access knowledge, research and use search engines (inc. medical info).**”

The following key themes are from the second questions.

Firstly, faster, **easier and more reliable connection**. For example, smoother communication with others (**‘Can FaceTime/ Skype friends and family with good quality’**), better social media access, faster downloads and streaming, easy access to file and file sharing, ability for broadband to cope with high demand (**‘It would help in crowded places like cafes where there are many people on the network’**), no buffering.

The second theme was **saves time**. Such as, high-speed connection can save time spent on research, work, accessing information, downloads, ‘life admin (e.g. online banking, sending emails, booking holidays etc.). **‘You can do things quickly (such as send messages)’**.

Finally, **increased education opportunities and removal of barriers**. Such as, reliable ability to access online educational resources, access to resources anywhere, in real time (**‘I can watch lecture recordings at home without having to download them first’**) share work with educators and peers, study long-distance, apply to courses, especially for rural communities.

From our MSYPs workshop, there were three key thoughts identified. These were:

- The SG need to explain what they mean by ‘superfast broadband’ to the general public.
- Access to 4G needs to be improved in rural areas.
- How will they make sure that every house has superfast broadband?

If you require any more information about the Scottish Youth Parliament, the work of our Committee or about this workshop and survey, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A McDonald

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(Convener of the Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee)