

Children, Culture and Communities Scrutiny Committee 5 March 2024

**Report of the Corporate Director of Children and Education, and the
Director of Customer and Communities**

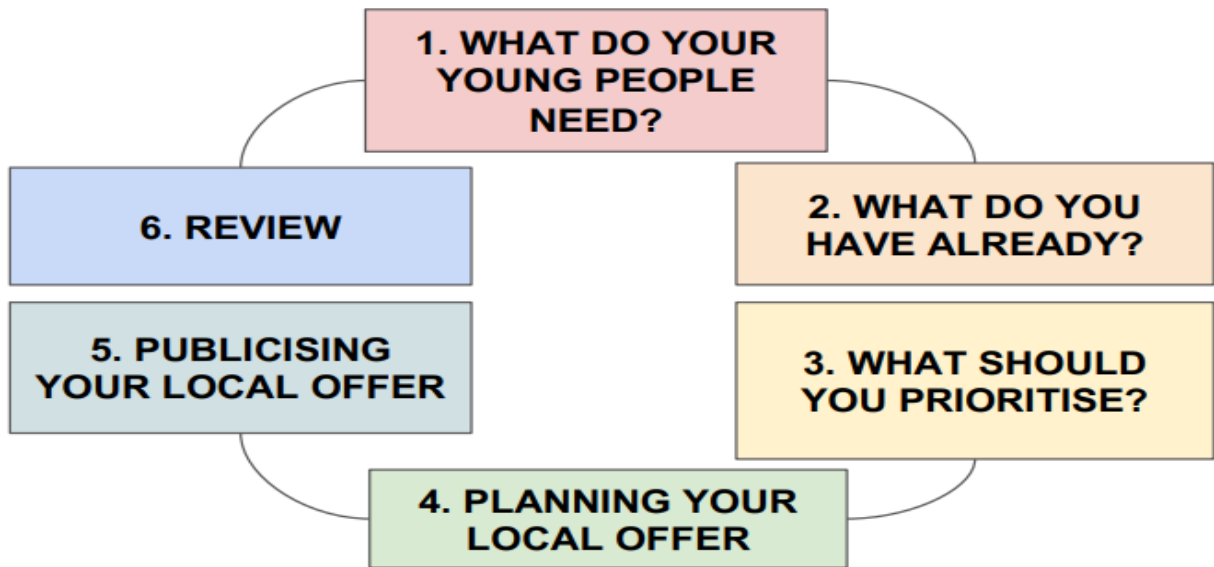
Youth Strategy Update

Summary

1. This report provides an update on plans to develop a Youth strategy for the city. The purpose of the strategy is to develop a new local landscape of how the council and providers of youth services work in partnership. The report also provides a short summary of some key activity taking place in relation to youth provision in the city and resources available.

Background

2. The local authority has a responsibility under section 507b of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Education and Inspections Act 2006) to secure, so far as reasonably practical, sufficient educational and recreational activities which are for the improvement of young people's wellbeing, personal and social development, and sufficient facilities for young people aged 13 – 19 (or up to 25 for young people with additional needs).
3. The guidance on the statutory responsibility had not been updated nationally since 2012. However, in September 2023 the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) published updated statutory guidance for local authorities under section 507b of the Education Act 2006. The graphic below summarises the key elements of the statutory guidance.



4. The revised statutory guidance, requires local authorities to, so far as ‘reasonably practicable’, secure access for young people to a ‘sufficient’ quantity of youth services, namely:
 - a. A sufficient quantity of educational leisure time activities which are for the improvement of wellbeing and sufficient facilities for such activities.
 - b. A sufficient quantity of recreational leisure time activities which are for the improvement of wellbeing and sufficient facilities for such activities.
5. Both types of activities, and related facilities, must be for the improvement of young people’s wellbeing. Wellbeing, as defined in the act relates to:
 - a. Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.
 - b. Protection from harm and neglect.
 - c. Education, training and recreation.
 - d. The contribution made by young people to society.
 - e. Social and economic wellbeing.
6. To do so, the statutory guidance suggests that the educational leisure-time activities must include sufficient activities which are for the improvement of young people’s personal and social development.

These are the types of activities traditionally provided through youth work, which for instance:

- a. Connect young people with their communities, enabling them to develop a strong sense of belonging and contribute to society.
 - b. Champion to have a voice in decisions which affect their lives.
 - c. Take place in local and fit for purpose environments in which they can socialise safely with their peers, spend time with people from different backgrounds and develop trusting relationships with adults.
 - d. Offer opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities through which young people build skills for life and work and the capabilities they need to make a successful transition to adulthood.
 - e. Raise young people's aspirations in education, training or employment encouraging them to reach their potential.
 - f. Help disadvantaged and vulnerable young people, as well as young people at risk of not reaching their full potential, informing their decisions and thereby reducing risky, anti-social behaviours.
7. The YMCA has highlighted the national challenge faced by local authorities in ensuring sufficient youth provision. Research undertaken by the YMCA shows that nationally the level of spending on youth services by English local authorities in 2022/23 is 73% lower than in 2010/11. York is not immune to these challenges and like other area are looking to find new ways of working to help meet the needs of young people.

Developing a new youth strategy

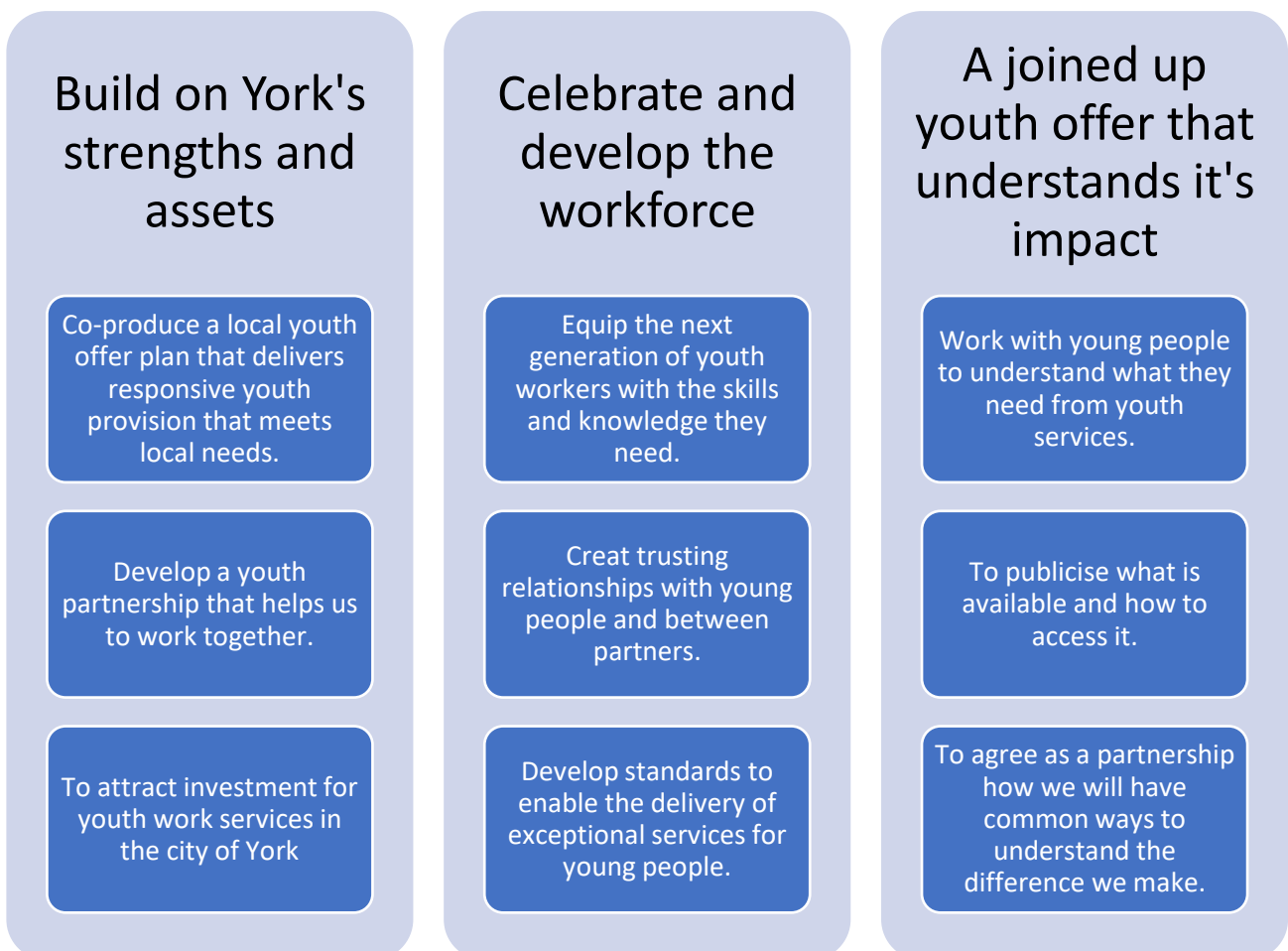
8. In June and July 2023, the lead for the Regional Youth Work Unit facilitated two sessions of the current youth network in York to explore what is working well in the city and what could be developed further. The current youth network is a broad and informal network of partners working across the city. Members of the current youth network consist of:

Accessible Arts and Media	Gateway Church	St. Nicks
Adoption UK	Haxby Memorial Hall	The Island
All Saints Church Huntington	Healthy Me	The Retreat
Bellfarm Social Hall	Ignite Sports	Total Sports
Bereaved Children Support	Inspired Youth Yorkshire	'The Place' at Westfield
Big Futures	JRHT (Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust)	YCFCF (York City Football Club Foundation)
Bright Sparks	KYRA	York Inspirational Kids
Choose2 Youth	Methodist Youth	York Knights
Clements Hall	Mini Athletics	York MIND
Clifton Green Primary School	New Visuality	York Mumbler
Dandelion Arts	Noise Academy	York Railway Institute
Door 84	North Yorkshire Youth	York St. John's University
Endorphins	Oaken Grove	York Theatre Royal
First Step Sports	Poppleton Ousebank Primary	University of York
Football Fun Factory	SNAPPY	Young Carers (Carers Centre)
Friends of Rowntree Park	SPEEDKIX/Sivik Active	
Funfishers Out-of-School-Club	St. Michael le Belfry Church	

9. These 'system mapping' sessions were linked to the developments of the Raise York Family Hub Network.
10. In November 2023 a youth network event was hosted by York St John University. At the session council officers played back priority groupings for the new strategy based on the system mapping sessions. These

were well received by the network and there is appetite to develop new ways of working together.

11. The graphic below has been developed using feedback and learning from the sessions described above. At its heart the new strategy will reshape the relationship of the local authority with partners working across the city delivering youth services. As a key partner the council requires the strategy provides the means through which to secure sufficient youth provision. The youth strategy will be the way the council delivers on statutory guidance on services to improve young people's wellbeing.
12. The diagram below summarises the key priorities for a youth strategy from the perspective of the council. We are confident partners recognise these priorities as well given the joint work that has already been undertaken. This will need further work and development with partners to make sure all partners agree with the shared approach.



A Local Youth Partnership – An alternative model

13. Different options for how best to deliver the developing strategy have been reviewed. This has led us to look at developing an alternative model of how youth sector partners work together. This would be the creation of a more formalised 'Local Youth Partnership'.
14. There are some emergent partnerships and networks locally that could grow into a Local Youth Partnership for York. Local Youth Partnerships are developing in a number of areas across the country. How they work in each area is unique to the local context and partners. and have the following definition. The definition below has been developed by the Young People's Foundation Trust to help explain what these partnership are and how they work. The Young People's Foundation has received funding from the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) to support the development of youth partnerships across the country.
 - a. Local Youth Partnerships (LYPs) are cross-sectoral partnerships that are established and led at the local level with the goal of convening, supporting, and sustaining youth work delivery in a specific area. LYPs can be initiated by various local organisations, including charities, voluntary organisations, local authorities, and housing associations, among others. Regardless of who initiates the partnership, it is essential to ensure that the diversity of stakeholders and agencies in the local area are represented in the partnership.
 - b. LYPs may take various forms, ranging from informal collaborations to formal partnerships or legally constituted organisations. By collaborating under a shared vision informed by local insight, needs, and ambitions, LYPs improve outcomes for children and young people by expanding and shaping local provision, securing new resources, providing training and capacity, and creating spaces for leaders, youth workers, and groups and organisations to come together.
 - c. An 'effective' LYP is one that takes collaborative action to improve outcomes for children and young people by enabling access to high-quality provision locally.
15. The Local Youth Partnership (LYP) approach has been tested in other areas and is showing promise in promoting independence, equity, and income generation across the network. By fostering neutrality and

providing a platform for all partners, the LYP approach supports those who are most marginalised and in need of support. Additionally, the LYP approach enables investment and distribution of funds in a transparent way, promoting income generation for the partnership and its members.

16. While formalising the partnership through an independent, constituted organisation is ideal, progress towards this should not be rushed, and must reflect local buy-in, capacity, and resources. A Local Youth Partnership seeks to maintain local decision-making based on need, while providing appropriate guidance on options for formalising the partnership. Learning from pilots in other areas the added value of investment in the partnership for its members and alignment with local needs and priorities is important to address from the outset.
17. Another piece of important learning from the pilots of Local Youth Partnerships is that on their own they are not the single answer – they will not fix the broad range of challenges around youth work. They may, however, create some of the conditions for collectively tackling some of the challenges and making better use of the resources and creating space for the relationships which help us to think beyond organisations and towards the sector.
18. Pilots of Local Youth Partnerships in other areas have shown they can:
 - a. Ensure need is understood and met.
 - b. Shape and support local resources.
 - c. Secure additional new resources.
 - d. Enable coordinated and consistent area-wide support for young people.
 - e. Support inclusive and representative spaces.
 - f. Increase quality of services and youth work delivery.
 - g. Build trust and collaboration between public and VCSE sectors and the individuals that lead them.
19. There is a good synergy between these positive benefits and the aspirations the council holds for the new youth strategy.
20. The council, through the Communities Team and linked to the development of Raise York (Family Hubs network), are currently

engaging youth partners locally. We have secured ongoing support from the Young People's Foundation Trust as an independent expert to help develop a Local Youth Partnership.

21. A kick-off meeting is taking place with partners on the 20 March 2024. The Young People's Foundation will support the local authority to work with youth partners to develop a Local Area Support Plan that will provide us with a roadmap to creating a Local Youth Partnership for York.

Current activity

22. Alongside the development of a new youth strategy and a Local Youth Partnership there continues to be a range of different activity taking place across the city.

Activities funded through ward arrangements and the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme

23. The council has funded a variety of youth provision through the ward grant arrangements. This helps to meet elements of the expected recreational and leisure time provision for young people, as outlined in the statutory guidance.
24. This has included ward grants to Inspire Youth for mobile youth club provision, The Island for youth worker provision, Door 84 for Youth Club and community engagement projects. York City Football Club and York City Knights for physical activity programmes during school holiday periods, New Visuality for Art Camps and intergenerational activities, Scouting organisations for equipment and activities and grants to organisations managing recreation spaces to improve the facilities on offer.
25. Recently schemes have been commissioned with local leisure facility operators to offer free to access to gym and swimming sessions for young people. One ward has commissioned and managed free open access multi-provider activity programmes during the Christmas and February half term school holiday periods.
26. This is further complemented through support for children, young people and families through the Department for Education funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. Through this programme for children and young people, activities are commissioned for the school term holiday periods and include a wide range of activities including physical activity, sports, arts and crafts, drama,

dance, cultural and wellbeing. During 2023 an impressive 19,713 places were made available through HAF, to eligible children and young people.

27. Regarding these statistics, during Easter 2023, 381 secondary age children attended, 1,453 primary age with a total number of places available for all ages being 5,640 and each person able to attend up to 8 sessions. During the summer 142 secondary and 1,239 primary age individuals attended, with a total number of places available for all ages being secondary 1,664 and primary 8,301 and each person able to attend up to 16 sessions. During Christmas, 369 secondary and 1,151 primary individuals attended, with each person able to attend up to 4 sessions.
28. The attendance patterns show that take up is much higher amongst Primary aged children; during the summer 1 in 6 participants were of secondary age. This could be because generally the weather is better and young people may wish to 'hang out' with friends rather than attend organised activities. Also, that primary aged children may be attending sessions more frequently as part of parents' strategies to balance work and childcare needs as well as finding activities to keep the children occupied during the longer holiday period. This year, particular effort was also put into connecting children and young people from asylum seeker and refugee communities, into integrated activities and ensuring adequate and appropriate provision.
29. The following quotes from HAF programme participants and parents reflect the value of the activities:
 - "It's impossible for me to study and look after them at the same time. This has been ideal: we turn up, drop the kids off, they love it, and are always happy when we pick them up".
– single parent of Mini Athletics participant
 - "I have so much fun at this camp. At first, I didn't want to wake up early, but then I was so excited to get to hang out with my friends every day and play fun games".
– participant at Healthy Me
 - "I always assumed museums were boring until we took a drawing trip to Bar Convent. It was actually really cool! After that, we had a very tasty lunch and played some fun games".
– participant at New Visuality

- “I struggle to leave the flat with my daughter and often stay indoors all day. I’m so glad I came out because my daughter had a great time, but it’s also given me confidence to get out more!”
- Mum who attended family session at Tang Hall Community Centre
- “After art camp, I gave a presentation to local councillors about food banks and healthy eating. I am looking forward to doing this again, but this time I’m able to hand out fliers that I designed during my time at camp!”
- participant at New Visuality, age 14

30. The council also supports York Youth Council (YYC) to connect with decision makers and bring the voice of local young people into strategic planning and to connect with peers on a local, regional and national basis. The Youth Council has just elected its newest member of Youth Parliament and is being supported to make the most of the opportunity to participate in the National Make Your Mark Survey. YYC members have been very proactive in securing engagement from their schools which should increase participation in this survey and contribute to priority setting for Youth Parliament and provide national, regional and local data on the priorities of young people. Many of the YYC members have run the ballots for the survey in school during assemblies and form time. The YYC is increasingly working and connecting with Youth Councils across the combined authority area.

Neighbourhood action plans and locality working

31. We are also developing neighbourhood action plans to complement ward working and the delivery of local priorities. Reflecting an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach we are working through a community asset mapping process that will map assets, connections and associations and bring citizens together around locally agreed priorities. The action planning process will include a variety of networking and engagement opportunities and review of ward priorities, that will enable us to find out what the people living in a community care enough about to work on together to change, develop and or sustain. Ward funding will be available to support the development of social action projects that respond to locally agreed priorities.
32. For example, working on the Raise York Family Hubs pilot is enabling us to explore in the West Locality how we bring stakeholders together

through a locality leadership approach to consider the needs of children young people and families.

33. The purpose of locality leadership is to build strong local partnerships that are responsible for the delivery of the Raise York network in local areas. It is a whole community approach that puts children, young people and families first. Locality leadership is truly multi-agency and makes more effective use of data to understand local priorities and to inform service design and delivery with communities. Reflecting the ABCD approach and neighbourhood action planning, locality leadership is expected to strengthen relationship building, community capacity and working together to benefit residents and communities, setting out to co-design service delivery approaches with the communities that need them.
34. An excellent example of this collaborative approach to providing support for children young people and families has been achieved through the development of 'The Place' at Westfield. This has seen the establishment of a community learning centre providing a safe space for children and young people to learn and grow and for adults to connect, access support and take part in lifelong learning or training. The Place is a venue, right in the heart of the Chapelfields estate, that provides support, fun and respite for the residents of Westfield. Delivered by the University of York, the main focus is on improving the lives of children and young people who live in the area. This is being achieved through working directly with young people and in partnership with the adults. The Place is about opening opportunities for all, helping children reach their potential by improving mental wellbeing and mental health, growing confidence and happiness and supporting the community to access support, advice and services.
35. Project aims for The Place include:
 - To provide a safe space for learning, relaxing and fun.
 - To empower young people to build strong, supportive peer groups.
 - To reduce the gap in attainment between advantaged and less advantaged children.
 - To improve school attendance at primary and secondary school.
 - To support a positive transition to primary and secondary school.
 - To reduce the gap in progression to higher education between advantaged and less advantaged children.
 - To increase progression to further education, including apprenticeships.

- To empower young people to take up and experience the exciting opportunities their city has to offer.
 - To reduce feelings of isolation among children and adults.
 - To improve mental health among children and adults.
 - To support young people and adults in accessing services, advice and support.
36. Council officers have also been working with 'Together with Young People' (TWYP) a network of organisations who work with young people across York. Linked to work funded by Lankelly Chase, TWYP have undertaken an enquiry into how the system can perpetuate disadvantage faced by young people. It is an intersectional approach to bringing young people together into action inquiry. Providers are exploring together what systems are, how they affect young people and how systems can be challenged or improved. The network has explored real life issues and young peoples lived experience of accessing help or support. Young people have been looking at their power and how their voices can influence people in positions of power. TWYP have provided a variety of youth led action, networking events and media work to engage young people in the process. The Network operates through an open collective platform and are currently exploring what future governance structures they might put in place to sustain and grow their activities. There are positive opportunities to link this potentially into a Local Youth Partnership and discussions are continuing with TWYP to explore this.

Consultation

37. Through coproduction we have worked with young people to better understand their experience of living in York. This is driving the work across the development of the Raise York offer. We have the Raise York Coproduction lead in place and are also using Corporate Parenting Advisors to gather the views and experiences of young people, which will be important in developing the partnership. We also have regular dialogue with the York Youth Council.
38. The lead of the regional Youth Work Unit has facilitated sessions with members of the youth network across the city. These sessions have mapped provision and what is working well and where there is an opportunity to improve and work differently.
39. Council Officers have also met regularly with the Together with Young People Network, who are working closely with young people to explore system change and working across a number of youth work providers.

Together with Young People have held a number of networking events bringing together people who want to find ways to improve the system that supports young people in a way that supports their learning and collaborative action for system change.

Sustaining the Local Youth Partnership and funding for youth provision

40. Reflecting priorities outlined in the council plan, the council has available £40,000 on a recurrent basis to support the delivery of youth work in the city. Building on the Local Youth Partnership model, the option exists to make this available to support the delivery of local youth work linked to the delivery of ward priorities and neighbourhood action plans and thereby complementing ward funds.
41. This would reflect a collaborative commissioning approach with the Local Youth Partnership, providing some seed funding to enable the partnership to grow and a commitment to work with the council, where we can together respond to need.
42. The funding would also act as a catalyst for the Youth Partnership to secure further external funding and a sustainable model to evolve. This has been the experience of other Partnerships across the country.
43. The exact model would need to be agreed with the Youth Partnership and Members views are sought on this collaborative commissioning approach.
44. Council Officers are continuing to work with the York Youth Network to consider the wider implications associated with the development of the Youth Strategy and development of the local youth partnership.
45. Key next steps in developing the youth strategy are:
 - a. March 2024
 - i. Work with partners and young people to further develop and agree the Youth Strategy priorities (as set out in paragraph 12 of this report).
 - ii. The Young People's Foundation will support the local authority to work with youth partners to develop a Local Area Support Plan that will provide us with a roadmap to create a Local Youth Partnership for York.

- b. April – June 2024
 - i. Finalise the Youth Strategy and York’s model for a Local Youth Partnership.
- c. July 2024 onwards
 - i. Target date for launch of York’s Youth Strategy (2024-2027) alongside development plan for York’s Local Youth Partnership.

Council Plan

- 46. One City, for all, the City of York Council's Council Plan (2023-2027), sets a strong ambition to increase opportunities for everyone living in York to live healthy and fulfilling lives. This recognises the need for young people to feel connected to the city as valued citizens who have the right to contribute to the city and their communities and opportunities should be provided to enable this.
- 47. We have recently finalised our new Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP). This will be launched in April 2024 and sets out the overarching ambition for all children and young people in the city over the coming years and should be complemented by the Youth Strategy.
- 48. A successful Raise York Family Hub Network for York will make a significant contribution to the council’s priorities for children, young people, and families. It will also be a key mechanism for delivering the aspirations set out in the developing Children and Young People’s Plan.

Risk Management

- 49. Council Officers are working with the Regional Youth Work Unit and National Youth Trust to consider the development of a Local Youth Partnership. This will include working through best practice examples from other areas that have successfully developed a Local Youth Partnership. There are no known further risks at this stage of development.

Recommendations

50. The Children, Culture and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
- i. Note and comment on the development of the York Youth Strategy and associated Local Youth Partnership.
 - ii. To comment on the proposals for the £40,000 funding to support the delivery of youth work provision, linked to the local Youth Partnership, local ward priorities and neighbourhood action planning.

Reasons:

- To support the successful development and implementation of the York Youth Strategy.

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**Report
Approved**



Date

23 February 2024

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Abbreviations

Asset Based Community Development – ABCD

Together With Young People – TWYP

York Youth Council – YYC

Background Papers

No background papers.

Annexes

No annexes.