



# EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
<b>DATE:</b>	Thursday, 9 November 2023

<b>PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:</b>	Children, Young People and Education
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	Y

**SUBJECT: EB Youth Commissions**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1.1 YOUTH COMMISSIONS

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council currently commission Blackburn Youth Zone (BYZ) and Blackburn Rovers Community Trust (BRCT) to deliver a town centre and a neighbourhood youth offer respectively. The total value of the commission is **£320K**, made up of **£170k** contributing to BYZ revenue budget and **£150k** to BRCT, which is matched funded by the organisation from their existing Premier League Kicks funding.

Both commissions are now up for renewal coming to an end following extensions.

### 1.2 DEVELOPMENT 1 - STRATEGIC YOUTH ALLIANCE & YOUNG PEOPLES FOUNDATION

The Council's Young People's Services (YPS) has led the formation of a local youth alliance of 11 local organisations (including BYZ and BRCT) since 2019. The Strategic Youth Alliance (SYA) has been successful in securing funding, developing strategic plans and raising standards of youth work in the borough. The Network took the decision to become a charity infrastructure organisation from April 2023. The Young People's Foundation (YPF), named locally as 'Young BwD', will develop strategic plans, secure funding to match plan ambitions and develop expression of interest (EOI) and project management functions to use the strength of the SYA partnership to deliver high quality local provision. *(More details in Background 3.3 below)*

### 1.3 DEVELOPMENT 2 - YOUTH INVESTMENT FUND

The Council, via YPS, has secured £4.583 million for the Local Authority - and over £8 million in new Youth Infrastructure across the borough alongside partners. The £4.583 million YIF funding will be split as follows with the balance earmarked for Project Management and Contract Support:

Darwen Youth Centre will receive £3.343 Million  
Audley & QP Centre will receive £1.038 Million

The totals above are predominantly capital investment but also include revenue allocations to support 1 year's provision that will need governance around the delivery model and frontline activities. In addition BYZ Fusebox has secured significant funding to develop an employability and wellbeing hub and Newground Together has secured funding to build a new youth hub in the heart of the Shadsworth community.

#### 1.4 COMMISSIONING OPTIONS

Considering the available budget and the two developments listed above; a number of options have been explored, which considered the value of the commissions, performance of current commissioned partners, demographics and evidenced need and whether the funding could be increased, reduced or commissioned differently.

Various delivery models have been produced and deliberated that evidence value for money and greatest impact from the commissions regarding providing opportunities, support and services to local young people based on current and future needs and demands.

#### 1.5 COMMISSIONING RECOMMENDATION

After deliberating the commissioning options, approval is now being sought to reduce the available commissioning budget to £240k – producing an £80k saving per annum for the council.

The model being presented for approval is to develop a series of youth hubs across the following 5 areas with budget allocations as below:

<b>Blackburn Town Centre</b>	<b>£60k</b>	Each commissioned partner to match Council funds with equal delivery in kind. i.e. Successful Darwen Commissioned partner would contribute an additional value of £60k delivery from their existing resources.
<b>Darwen</b>	<b>£60k</b>	
<b>Blackburn West</b>	<b>£40k</b>	
<b>Blackburn East</b>	<b>£40k</b>	
<b>Blackburn North</b>	<b>£40k</b>	

Both Commissions to be procured on contractual terms of 2 years + 1 year post review. Evaluation criteria will be developed by commissioning officers and agreed with the Head of Legal and Procurement and in consultation with the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education.

Timescales to deliver the procurement may mean that officers seek a short extension of existing arrangements, subject to agreement of existing partners. Approval for this will be sought at the time in line with the Council's Contract Procurement Procedure Rules.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

2.1 Considers information included in the report

2.2 Accepts recommendation as laid out in 1.5 above:

- Reduce total budget by £80k per year to support council budget pressures
- Accepts decision to remodel and tender available budgets on youth hub model

2.3 Continues to support Town Centre and Neighbourhood Based Youth Work (with particular focus on Youth Investment Fund (YIF) based projects)

2.4 Continues to support the development of Young BwD

### **3. BACKGROUND**

#### **3.1 BYZ & BRCT PERFORMANCE**

The Councils' Young Peoples Services management leads have honest, robust and long-standing relationships with senior officers of both current commissioned partners.

Targets across both commissions have been reviewed over the contractual period and in BYZ's case now include their Darwen Youth Zone development.

Both BYZ and BRCT have areas of strengths and areas for development, and these are reviewed as part of the commission performance monitoring and reporting meetings.

#### **3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF BWD YOUNG PEOPLE'S FOUNDATION**

The Strategic Youth Alliance (SYA) was an alliance of 11 local youth delivery organisations – led by the Council's Young Peoples Services (YPS):

The SYA has been in existence since 2019 and has sourced and developed additional youth work funded projects to the value of approx. £600k with more than £1 million in indirect funding for youth work delivery (e.g. HAF). This is on top of organisations own funding and delivery.

The SYA has developed a strategy and terms of reference but it became apparent to all members that there was not the capacity to develop it in its current format.

A decision was taken to develop an organisation with the capacity to develop & drive a local strategy and to source the required funding, allocate and commission services via EOI processes and project manage delivery and reporting.

Various models were considered and after due consideration a model known as Young People's Foundation [Home page YPF Trust](#) was chosen and has subsequently been named as **Young BwD**. A YPF is a standalone charity that is backed by a national foundation trust. National strategy and link to Young BwD website below:

[YPF trust strategy Final Sept22 2022-09-29-195908 tplz.pdf \(yfp-website.org\)](#)

<https://www.youngbwdfoundation.org>

If Young BwD is to meet its strategic ambitions, it is expected to source and manage its own funding streams but also to act as commissioner/project manager for existing funding streams – including from the Local Authority.

#### **3.3 COMMISSIONING OPTIONS**

In considering options for re commissioning town centre and neighbourhood based youth work the following were explored:

- Range of local providers. As stated in 3.2 above, the borough has an alliance of 11 youth work organisations all of whom deliver a range of universal and specialist provision and often have mature community and neighbourhood buy-in

- Demographics and evidenced need. Using Public health data it was ascertained that Darwen and 3 Blackburn neighbourhoods had an approximate level of parity in regards to youth populations and demographic indicators
- YIF developments have strengthened the Blackburn and Darwen Town Centre bases and that there had also been new developments in Neighbourhoods too – notably Audley and Queens Park and Shadsworth
- Current/future commission agreements use a 100% match funding criteria (as was the case with the BRCT NYO) that will improve Council value for money and will ensure that the council captures work attributable to the agreed budget and not the entire budget of commissioned partner organisations

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

- Reduction in commissioning budget may effect opportunities for children and young people (C&YP) locally
- Changes in commissioning decisions may affect BYZ and BRCT negatively
- Potential risks to confidence and cohesion of BwD YPF 'Young BwD'

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1 BWDBC LED CONSULTATIONS ACROSS THE LOCAL YOUTH SECTOR**

Young BwD will become a key local partner in developing mutual strategies for C&YP and given the scope of its organisational membership a key asset in regards to policy development and implementation

##### **5.2 DECISIONS AROUND YOUTH SECTOR COMMISSIONING**

Decisions on budget, commissioning vehicle and management can have wider policy implications on BwDBC and public health strategies

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

##### **6.1 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 2 X YOUTH SECTOR COMMISSIONS**

Youth Commissioning budget currently stands at £320k per annum so there are implications for the two current commissioned partners, but a saving of £80k for the Council.

New proposed commissioning contract of **2 years + 1 year** (post review) will equate to a financial commitment of **£240k per year** x 3 years = **£720k Total Financial Commitment** (maximum subject to satisfactory 2 year review)

##### **6.2 CHANGES TO COMMISSIONING STRATEGY**

Changes from current commissioning strategy - leading to review and wider commissioning could lead to financial pressures with the two current providers but not the council

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1 PROCUREMENT**

Recommendation will ensure the Council remains fully compliant with Council Contract Procurement Procedure Rules and procurement legislation.

## 7.2 CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Both contract terms end on **March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024**.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

### 8.1 BUDGET

Current BwD commitment of £320k. Any reduction may effect delivery of frontline delivery of local services and effect confidence in the sector.

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

**Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.**

Option 1  Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2  In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3  In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

### 10.1 SYA & Young BwD

SYA member organisations were fully consulted and recorded prior to decision to develop Young BwD

### 10.2 Youth Investment Fund

Young People were consulted widely in regards to the Council's YIF application which was evidenced in the final YIF submission

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Imran Akuji, Jon McCaughey</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	04/10/23
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	