

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 15 March 2021	Meeting Name: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education
Report title:		Commissioned Youth and Play Service extension 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education approve the extension of grant funding to currently commissioned youth and play voluntary and community organisations for a period of 12 months from 1 April 2021 to March 31 2022, as shown in Appendix 1.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Youth and Play commissioning plan (approved in April 2017) in Appendix 2 set out the priorities for the commissioning of youth and play grants for 2017-2019. The plan was developed in accordance with the Activities for Children and Young People Strategy (ACYPS) 2017-2020. The ACYPS was developed following extensive consultation with children, young people and their families in 2016. It established a clear framework for outcomes to be considered in commissioning the voluntary and community sector to deliver youth and play activities.
3. The strategy identified five priority outcomes to be delivered:
 - Outcome 1: Happy “Children and young people have fun and feel happy”
 - Outcome 2: Healthy “Children and young people live healthy lives”
 - Outcome 3: Active “Children and young people participate and are active citizens”
 - Outcome 4: Safe “Children and young people feel safe and secure”
 - Outcome 5: Prepared “Children and young people have the life skills to succeed”
4. The commissioning plan aligned with the Council Plan and the Fairer Future promises to create a fairer future for all in Southwark.

5. It followed the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy “Common Purpose Common Cause”. This is a partnership strategy by the council, CCG and Voluntary & Community Sector. Its aims are to:
 - Ensure better partnership working to improve outcomes for residents
 - Improve commissioning and grant-giving to focus on outcomes and be more collaborative, and community-led
 - Support better resilience in communities that are connected and more resourceful
6. The Youth and Play commissioning plan reinforced Southwark’s commitment to utilising the expertise of voluntary and community organisations to deliver high quality youth and play activities to dovetail with the ACYPS and the council’s direct delivery arrangements.
7. The criteria utilised to determine if grants would be awarded were:
 - Activities clearly demonstrated that they met the strategic outcomes and commitments in the Activities for Children and Young People Strategy (ACYPS)
 - They provided for children and young people from ages 5 to 19, ranging from play, universal youth provision to targeted youth work.
 - Activities were delivered in youth settings or adventure playgrounds, tailored to meet specific outcomes in the ACYPS.
 - Services would complement and not duplicate those of other organisations in the same geographical or service area.
 - Could demonstrate that children and young people had a voice and influenced the types of activity that takes place
 - Activities are monitored and measured to achieve the agreed outcomes
8. 33 organisations applied for funding; 21 were successful. The value of individual grants ranged from £7,500 to £43,000 for the period October 2017 to March 2019.
9. In order to ensure continuity of service for children and young people and ensure the delivery of the ACYPS in its final year the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Equalities and Communities approved a 12 month extension of funding for the then commissioned voluntary and community organisations. The value of the programme was £500,000.
10. Following on from the recommendations made at the Serious Youth Violence Panel in 2019, it was agreed that a review and redesign of the youth service and associated youth and play grants programme was required. It was also an opportune moment to do this as the ACYPS was coming to an end in March 2020.
11. It was agreed that a set of recommendations and action plan would be developed to drive the transformation of services, ensuring that they are

fit for purpose and enable the council to deliver its vision and aspirations for young people living in Southwark.

12. This review began late in 2019 and was concluded in July 2020. The findings and recommendations from the review were considered by the council's cabinet in December 2020.
13. Due to the timescale of the review and to ensure continued, uninterrupted provision, it was agreed in January 2020 to extend the grants for the year 2020-21.
14. In January 2020 the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Community Safety approved a 12 month extension of funding for the then commissioned voluntary and community organisations. The value of the programme was £500,000. Please see Appendix 3 for further information on the awards granted.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

15. A grants programme from October 2017 to March 2019 with two extensions to March 2021 was completed against a specification designed to deliver against the Activities for Children and Young People Strategy objectives. The specification was designed with considerable input from the voluntary sector.
16. 21 organisations across the borough that provide a range of activities from universal to targeted services were granted funding. The activities range from:
 - Universal youth centre provision
 - Sports and physical activity
 - Adventure play
 - Creative arts and crafts
 - Detached and outreach work, incl pop up activities
 - Summer and residential programmes
 - Volunteering programmes
 - LGBTQ provision
 - Radio, music and media training
 - Issues based work
 - Life skills, advice, guidance and training
17. The broad range of activities and geographical spread expands the reach of council supported youth activities well beyond those that are run directly by the council.
18. Since 2017 two organisations have withdrawn from the programme and the funding was reallocated proportionally to the remaining organisations.
19. In order to ensure continuity of service for children and young people and ensure the delivery of the Activities for Children and Young People Strategy while a strategic review of youth services was completed, two

extensions of the grants have been made bringing the current funding scheme to March 2021.

20. A monitoring framework including quarterly monitoring and annual reporting was developed as part of the commissioning process. See Appendix 4 for a summary of performance.

YOUTH SERVICES REVIEW 2019-20

21. In July 2019 the Cabinet considered the findings of the Serious Youth Violence Panel and agreed to implement the recommendations made by the panel.
22. The key recommendation for the Youth Service was that Southwark was to work with young people to redesign its youth provision to ensure that it is fit for purpose and helps give young people the best chance to thrive in life.
23. In response to this it was agreed in Autumn 2019 that a review and redesign of the youth service and associated youth and play grants programme was required to ensure that available resources are meeting the needs of young people. The service needs to become more targeted, impactful and relevant.
24. The review began late in 2019 and, due to the impact of the pandemic, took place over an extended period up to July 2020.
25. The scope of the review involved extensive consultation, with the involvement of young people, families, carers, providers of services for children and council staff.
26. The review included the following elements:
 - Mapping of the range of services that are provided currently across the borough and any potential gaps in provision (and quality) or geography with feedback from young people on the extent to which these services meet their needs and aspirations;
 - The services and support that young people are looking for and their views on how these should be delivered, and by whom;
 - The relationship between play and youth provision and whether the current approach is still fit for purpose;
 - Analysis of the current usage of the Council's youth services, its fitness for purpose, and tests for duplication and join-up;
 - The priorities for the provision of services for young people;
 - A value for money assessment to test whether budgets are used to best effect and efficiency;
 - The sustainability of activities of value that have been initiated by young people and the community through funding streams such as Positive Futures;

- Whether information about services for young people is readily available in a way that young people can access
27. The findings and recommendations of the review were considered by the council's Cabinet on December 8th 2020. It agreed the following:
- That the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education will launch a new Officer and Member joint working group. The group will bring together officers from Leisure and Children's Services to oversee the establishment of a Sure Start for Teenagers.
 - That officers should work with young people through a co-production approach to identify the need and opportunity for a new state of the art facility from which to deliver services and will bring proposals back to Cabinet in 2021. A youth led review of facilities and public spaces on Brandon Estate is taking place in January 2021; the findings from this will support the implementation of this recommendation.
 - The bringing together of the Youth and Play grants scheme with the Positive Future Fund, re-named 'Positive Future for Young People Fund', providing a fund of £600,000 in 2021-22 for activities for young people. 10% of this fund will be overseen directly by young people.
 - That a Youth parliament is established as the youth leadership forum to steer the future direction of the council's youth offer consisting of a diverse and representative group of young people.
 - That officers create a commissioning working group with young people including representatives from the current Youth Council, Young Advisers, Youth Offending Service, Young Carers, youth club attendees and others to develop the specification for the new commissioning of activities programme. Officers will return to Cabinet in March 2021 with the detailed commissioning plan.
 - To the development of a digital information hub to provide comprehensive, up to date and accessible information about activities and services for young people and their families.
 - The launch of the new "Positive Futures for young people" service in the spring 2021.
28. Key to the new model of delivery is the commitment to ensuring that services are developed in full consultation with young people and that they have an active part in decision-making. In order to implement this officers are developing a new commissioning plan designed to ensure that services commissioned are those that young people need and want.

29. The timetable for the development of the new commissioning plan is:

Action	Dates
Commissioning framework drafted	16 th April
Cabinet	15th June
Commissioning plan published	15th June
Advertisement of the programme	1 st – 30 th September
Closing date for receipt of completed applications	30 th September
Assessment of applications	1 st – 15 th October
Cabinet member approves grant awards by IDM	November - December
Formal Notification to groups of IDM decision	2 nd December
Start date for newly commissioned organisations	1 st April 2022

30. In order to facilitate this process while ensuring continuity of provision for young people it is recommended that the current grants be extended for 12 months from April 1st 2021 to March 31st 2022.

31. It is widely recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic is having an enormous impact on young people. This impact includes educational attainment, social interactions and friendships, physical and mental health and wellbeing, the development of key life skills, amongst many others. During this time it is vital, more than ever, that young people have access to fulfilling activities to support them to live happy, secure and enriched lives. The extension will ensure continuity of provision for young people and will enable the proper development of a new commissioning plan for 2021-22 which will align with the new strategic priorities approved by Cabinet in December 2020. The 12 month extension will also provide much needed certainty for youth providers who are operating in the pandemic.

Contract management and monitoring

32. New targets will be agreed with all funded organisations for delivery from 1 April 2021 to March 31st 2022.

33. The reach and take-up of all commissioned provision will be monitored closely over the 12 months to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved.

Community impact statement

34. All young people should have access to a productive, safe and fulfilling future. However young people now face an unprecedented level of risks, vulnerabilities and what can be complex, sometimes disheartening challenges growing up in the modern world. Youth work, play, and engagement in constructive activities are crucial tools to assist young people in their transition to adulthood. These programmes of activity support them to be safe, knowledgeable, valued members of their communities, and to fulfil their potential in life.

35. Activities will be delivered across 19 voluntary sector sites in the borough, providing comprehensive and diverse activities for children and young people to attend, within or close to the communities in which they live.
36. The proposals set out in this report, and the process employed in the ongoing commissioning of organisations and the provision of grants have no negative impact on any groups or protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
37. All the organisations supported under this grant programme are required to provide monitoring information that demonstrates their commitment to inclusion. In particular, all organisations will be required to provide information on the ethnicity and gender of their participants and staff and demonstrate that they comply with Equalities legislation.

Financial implications

38. The grant funding available to commission youth and play provision from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 is £500,000 in cost code EX531.
39. The actual expenditure against the grant allocations will be monitored and reported on as part of the parks and leisure revenue monitoring process.
40. Staffing and any other costs connected with this recommendation to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Governance

41. This report seeks approval of the award of further grant funding to various voluntary and community organisations providing youth activities and play services, for a period of 12 months from 1 April 2021.
42. The decision to approve the report recommendations is one which is expressly reserved to the Cabinet Member under Part 3D of the council Constitution. The proposed grant awards are consistent with the council's statutory duties and powers (notably the Public Sector Equality Duty imposed by the Equality Act 2010, as reflected within the Community Impact Statement) and with corporate policy, in particular, the Fairer Future Promises.
43. Officers consider that these particular services should continue to be regulated by way of conditions of grant funding rather than by more formal commercial contractual conditions. However, in the light of previous experience all future service provision will be carefully monitored by officers and will also be regulated by appropriate legal agreements which will incorporate specific targeted outcome focused requirements and will allow the council to withhold or "claw back" funding if necessary in the event that the required services and service delivery outcomes are not achieved.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (EL20/082)

44. This report requests the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education to approve the extension of grant funding to currently commissioned youth and play service voluntary and community organisations for a period of 12 months from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, as shown in Appendix 1.
45. The strategic director of finance and governance notes that the proposed grant funding can be contained within the overall Youth Service's business unit revenue budget allocation.
46. Staffing and any other costs connected with this recommendation to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Activities for children and young people – A strategy for 2017 - 2020	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2TZ	Tina Thorley 07599546729
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=5376&Ver=4		
Youth Service Review Cabinet Report December 2020	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2TZ	Tina Thorley 07599546729
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=6664&Ver=4		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Youth and Play Grant Awardees 2021
Appendix 2	Youth and Play commissioning plan
Appendix 3	Youth and Play grant extension 2020 - 21
Appendix 4	Performance Monitoring Report 2020021

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education	
Lead Officer	Tina Thorley, Youth Operations & Commissioning Manager	
Report Author	Tina Thorley, Youth Operations & Commissioning Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	22 February 2021	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		11 March 2021