

## STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 18 March 2024

**Title:** Youth Services

**Contact Officer:** Deputy Town Clerk

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### Background

This report is to provide Members of the Committee with an update on Youth Services funded by the Town Council and how to progress previous resolutions on engagement during the spring and summer.

### Current Situation

#### Bright Futures Oxfordshire

Officers met with the Project Lead of the Service on 29 February and were advised all paperwork, policies and processes were in place to commence under the working name of 'The Station'. Youth Workers were being sought and the operation would start in the following weeks.

Officers heard plans for youth engagement during the summer, Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 7-9pm, and for attendance at the Annual Town Meeting and Skate Park opening, both during March.

Contact details and further information were provided by officers to representatives who are expected at the meeting to update Members further under public participation.

#### Youth Services Forum

This forum, consisting of local stakeholders, was created by this Committee/the Council last year following the cessation of Got2B CIC. The information gathered helped form the basis for the detached youth service funded by the town council and helped gather information on summer activities for young people.

At the meeting on 18 September, the Committee agreed promotion of summer activities should be continued by the Council (minute no. SC489 refers).

Officers recommend holding a further meeting of this Forum after the Easter School Holidays to introduce Bright Futures, ascertain the current outlook and function as a conduit for summer services as in 2023, to be published at the beginning of July.

#### Youth Services Budget 2024/25

Members should note the budget for the new fiscal year is set as £40,000.

£30,000 of this amount is earmarked for the expected continuation of the Bright Futures Service. In 2023/24, the Council provided funds from this budget to APCAM for summer health and wellbeing

sessions in the Corn Exchange, to Nature Now for forest school training and to Home Start Oxford as continued financial support.

If the Committee would like to open this as a grant scheme (as in previous years), it is requested that a decision is made now to allow time for it to be prepared for later in the summer. If not, guidance on how Members would like this to be expended are requested.

## **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

## **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The Council must balance the needs for youth service in Witney against the agreed budgets it has set for the new fiscal year.

## **Social Value**

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Benefits provided by the above items are:

- There is a sustainable social value attributed to the services provided by Bright Futures Oxfordshire.
- There are benefits to Witney's community - young, disadvantaged and vulnerable people by offered by the Bright Futures Service and by compiling a list of accessible activities during the summer.

## **Financial implications**

- The remaining budget for Youth Services in 2024/25

## **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. The update regarding Bright Futures (The Station) detached Youth Services and,
2. Whether to facilitate a further Youth Forum meeting of stakeholders after the Easter holidays and,
3. How to expend the remaining Youth Services funds for 2024/25, this could be by deferring a decision until 15 July Committee meeting.