
Agenda Item: Youth Services

Meeting Date: Monday, 21 September 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on Youth Services being funded by or with the involvement of the Town Council.

Current Situation

Youth Services Grant

The Council has received signed agreements from all 2026-27 grant awardees, and payments have been issued in accordance with the Council's agreed financial processes.

As a reminder, at the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 22 June, the Council agreed to retain £3,500, ringfenced for further youth-related grant applications during the current municipal year (Minute No. F327(5)).

In relation to last year's grant awards (2025-26), officers have requested reports from recipients detailing the projects undertaken. These reports will, where received in time, be presented to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee in September as part of the Council's grant monitoring process.

The Council holds a separate special grant for Home-Start Oxford and a report on what the Council's grant for 2025-26 was spent on is included as **Appendix A**.

The Committee may wish to consider whether the Council should continue to operate a Youth Services Grant Scheme and provide a special grant to Home-Start Oxford in 2027/28 and, if so, recommend budget allocations for consideration as part of the Council's budget-setting process.

The Station - Detached Youth

In accordance with Section 11 (Quality & Review) of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Bright Futures Oxon and the Town Council, a six-monthly review report has been requested but is not available at the time of writing.

The Station recently delivered its summer KICK sessions at The Leys, working in partnership with Courtside Hubs CIC, Thames Valley Police, and other local partners. In accordance with Section 4(b) of the SLA, The Station will also deliver a BREAK session at the Corn Exchange during the October half-term.

In accordance with Section 4(a) of the SLA, the grant allocation for 2027/28 should be increased in line with inflation from the current year's value of £28,400.

Mental Health Drop-in Sessions

Officers have requested an update from APCAM concerning these sessions which ran in the Corn Exchange throughout the previous year school holidays and hope to be able to report back at the next meeting, ahead of budget setting for 2027-28.

TVP Operation Just & Have A Go Day (April 2026)

Members will recall that Operation Just is the name given to a Thames Valley Police (TVP) operation aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Witney and Carterton. The Leys in Witney was identified as a particular area of concern following a number of incidents of ASB during 2025, predominantly involving young people.

A multi-agency task group was established to identify measures to prevent a recurrence during summer 2026, including targeted engagement with young people. As part of this work, TVP funding was provided for a 'Have a Go' event at The Leys in April 2026. Feedback indicated that the event had not been as successful as anticipated due to limited publicity and engagement, together with poor weather. It is therefore considered that a further standalone event is not currently required.

However, a significant reduction in ASB at The Leys was reported during summer 2026, supported by fewer reports received by both the Town Council and Courtside Hubs. TVP attribute this improvement to stronger links with Stakeholders, targeted policing and improved information sharing between included agencies.

The reduction in young person ASB indicates that Operation Just has been successful, and no further TVP funding is proposed at this time. Any incidents of ASB should continue to be reported to Thames Valley Police via 101, or 999 in an emergency. The situation will remain under review, with police resources targeted appropriately and Operation Just reactivated if required.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – the provision of free to access to services.
- b) Biodiversity – no direct implications.
- c) Crime & Disorder – the provision of youth services, particularly during the summer is aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour, along with the work provided by Thames Valley Police and others.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – no direct implications.

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 ensure it is receiving value for money in the services it commissions or any group it enters into a partnership with to mitigate against both financial and reputational risk.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

The social value of services and support (via The Station's detached youth work and Young Person Mental Health drop-in sessions) should be considered. Support contributes to young people being able to live fulfilling lives.

Financial Implications

- Funding for The Station in 2027-28 is likely to be approximately £29,250 (est. 3% increase)
- The charge for APCAM mental health drop-in sessions for the current year was £2,250.
- The budget for the Youth Services Grant in 2026-27 was £20,000 (4169/408)
- The budget for Home Start Oxford in 2026-27 was £12,000 (4173/408)

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and,

1. Note the updates concerning the Youth Services Grant awards and consider recommending a budget for it in 2027-28.
2. Note the report from Home Start Oxford and consider whether to retain this budget for 2027-28 budget-setting.
3. Note the update from The Station Detached Youth and recommend the increased inflationary amount for 2027-28 budget-setting.
4. Note the update from APCAM and consider whether to commission the mental health drop-in sessions for 2027-28 and recommend accordingly.
5. Note the updates from TVP in relation to Operation Just during the summer of 2026.