

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee - 6 November 2019

**Subject:** Youth and Play Services - Young Manchester

**Report of:** Director of Neighbourhoods

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### Summary

This report provides an overview on the progress of Young Manchester, an independent youth and play charity, and its contract with the Local Authority to commission the city's Youth and Play Fund Programme.

The paper presents an update on progress made since the establishment of the fund in April 2018, focusing on outcomes for children and young people and the growth and development of the city's youth and play sector.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to note and comment on the content of the report.

It is also recommended that a further report be brought back to members in November 2021, which focuses on qualitative & quantitative data, evidence of impact, outcomes and young people's feedback relating to the Youth and Play fund 2020/2022.

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### Wards Affected: All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
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No assessment has been undertaken at this stage.
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<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Through the city's varied youth offer, young people have opportunities and access to activities which contribute towards their personal, social and economic wellbeing, preparing them for adulthood, and being work ready.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Through the city's varied youth offer young people have opportunities to succeed in education and employment, that create opportunities for young people to increase aspirations, achieve and gain economic independence.

	<p>Young people have access to youth and play provision within their neighbourhoods which provides opportunities to develop their life skills they need to succeed. Including: <b>Communication, problem solving, teamwork, self-belief and self management</b></p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>Young people have opportunities which enable them to think progressively and build resilience underpinned by the principles of equality and acceptance.</p> <p>Young people have access to good quality youth and play provision within their neighbourhoods which encourages a sense of belonging, develops their identity and ensure their voices are heard</p>
<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>The youth and play fund will promote opportunities to reduce, reuse and recycle, contributing towards reducing our carbon footprint alongside working together with schools, youth groups, Manchester Youth Council and other organisations to tackle Climate Change and the impact it's having on future generations</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>Young people are listened to, valued and connected across their neighbourhoods and city.</p> <p>Young people's achievements and successes across the City are celebrated.</p> <p>Young people inform continuous improvement and are involved in service design, delivery and governance.</p> <p>Young people receive the support they need to participate, ensuring representation of the full diversity of local people, and those who may not otherwise have a voice</p>

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee - 8th January 2019 - Youth & Play Services  
Young & Play Funding Summary - 2018-2020

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1. Young Manchester is Manchester's Independent Youth and Play Trust, taking the form of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Young Manchester was established by the Local Authority and a partnership of voluntary and private sector organisations. It was officially launched in November 2017.
- 1.2. The Council has worked closely with Young Manchester to create a vision which ensures "that every child and young person in Manchester can thrive and realise their full potential through outstanding opportunities". The charity works closely with the Council, voluntary sector and other stakeholders to grow investment in Manchester's children and young people. They work to ensure that all children and young people can access everything that the city has to offer.
- 1.3. The Council contracts with Young Manchester to provide commissioned Youth and Play Services in Manchester. The current contract for delivery runs from April 2018 to March 2020 with a total value of £2.88m
- 1.4. Young Manchester's role goes beyond commissioning services. Their unique position enables them to work in partnership with the sector, providing support, guidance, training and partnership development alongside funding.  
  
*"Young Manchester is not just seen as a funder, but as a genuine partner. As lead partner, there is a belief that even when things haven't gone to plan that this information is not held back from Young Manchester and that it is seen as a learning opportunity. There is a shared belief and driver between Young Manchester and our Partnership about providing a first class service for young people."* – feedback from lead partner on the Youth and Play Fund.
- 1.5. This report provides an update on progress on the Youth and Play Fund, and the relevant wider context of Young Manchester's work.

## **2.0 Background – The Youth and Play Fund**

- 2.1. Young Manchester's Youth and Play Fund provides funding for youth and play provision across the city, covering all 32 wards. The programme is funded by the Local Authority (with a grant of £2.88m) between April 2018 and March 2020.
- 2.2. Additional funding of £2m was secured from the #iwill Fund (a national funding programme by the National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport).
- 2.3. The combined fund seeks to ensure that all children and young people across the city are able to lead happy, healthy, safe and successful lives, in line with the Our Manchester Approach and Our Children priorities.
- 2.4. The fund has made grants to 21 lead partners, with 58 organisations funded overall to provide services across the city.

### 3.0 Impact and outcomes

- 3.1. Since April 2018, Young Manchester's partners on the Youth and Play Fund have reported that they have reached over 20,000 children and young people across the city.
- 3.2. The fund has supported significant levels of youth work provision across the city. In many cases targets have been exceeded. For example:
  - In Wythenshawe the partnership delivered 984 sessions in the first year
  - Barlow Moor Community Association engaged 615 children and young people in the first year of delivery, against a two-year target of 800
  - The A6 Partnership engaged 924 children and young people, against an annual target of 600
  - The Proud Trust supported 1440 young people in the first year, against an annual target of 800
- 3.3. The fund aims to provide a varied and inclusive offer. Provision includes open access youth clubs, exciting adventure playgrounds and innovative social action programmes.

The fund supports organisations to reach out to more children and young people through arts and culture (e.g HOME, Odd Arts), sport (e.g. City in the Community, Active Communities Network) and specialist services (e.g. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, The Proud Trust).

- 3.4. Delivery partners consistently report that provision is increasing opportunities for children and young people and having positive impacts on their lives.

Young Manchester's own assessment of current provision is that it provides a range of quality opportunities. Partners are demonstrating expertise in their practice, and creativity in their delivery, at a time when there is huge demand for their services.

Manchester Metropolitan University have been supporting the evaluation of youth service delivery in Manchester. They have reflected that:

*"All the youth and play projects we visited practise excellent youth work in different ways. Each organisation has a rich history working in, and with their community and ensuring children and young people have access to spaces and projects that can support and nurture them in their everyday lives, and for the future. Their use of Young Manchester funding to support and maintain this practice has ensured that social action, skills development, and safe spaces can be prioritised."*

- 3.5. Young Manchester, in partnership with the Council seeks to support work in communities. This approach prioritises local knowledge and expertise, supporting the strengths of local organisations.

The A6 Partnership (led by M13) have reflected on why they feel their work is successful:

*“We have been successful due to our community-rootedness, and our staff who work hard at initiating and generating our own contacts through being consistently present in our communities where children and young people are; using a combination of detached youth work, outreach work and child-led / young person-led activities and projects, based in locally-accessible buildings and venues of young people’s choice.”*

- 3.6. Projects often work with small groups of children and young people in a community over a long period of time. They use youth work principles to build strong relationships and increase confidence and skills. All partners are working towards ensuring children and young people are happy, healthy, safe and successful.

Examples include:

- A project led by Barlow Moor Community Association (BMCA) saw young people identify and discuss issues in their community that were important to them before being able to implement changes with the support of their local councillors. As a result of this project young people designed a mural to celebrate local heritage which is now in public view.
- Greater Manchester Youth Network (GMYN) partnered with Projekts SkatePark and Manchester Deaf Centre to deliver a city-wide programme of activities to support young people to engage in social action and enterprise through schools. The project’s success has been down to the combination of quality youth work practice and a strong emphasis on personal development and progression. The project evaluation showed that young people felt empowered in making positive choices and decisions about future engagement.

For example, students were able to repurpose wood from the Skatepark refurbishment into products, such as clocks, keyrings and storage boxes which then went on to be sold in the skatepark shop.

- Organisations such as M13 have demonstrated huge success through projects which support youth leadership and empowerment. The Older Lads Group has seen young men aged 15-19 years from different communities beginning young leader training. M13 have highlighted the group’s commitment to each other and the wider community as something that they are particularly proud of.
- 3.7. Many organisations provide a range of support services alongside youth and play activity, and are central to their communities. This includes one-to-one and family support. In the past year partners have supported families to access food banks, supported issues with housing and supported access to employment for young people.

- 3.8. Through the Youth and Play Fund, over 7,000 children and young people have been involved in Youth Social Action. Figures on Youth Social Action are growing quarter on quarter, suggesting that more children and young people are engaging in activities in their communities, and that Youth Social Action is an increasingly important part of the youth and play offer in Manchester.
- 3.9. A focus on Youth Social Action has influenced how youth and play delivery partners, and children and young people themselves, engage with their communities. This includes:
- More children and young people taking on leadership roles e.g. as 'Junior Playworkers', directly supporting other young people to access and engage with local provision, supported by Manchester Young Lives. In April 2019 there were 95 Junior Playworkers, who all receive training, advice and support, allowing them to learn new skills, gain knowledge, build confidence and work towards an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) accreditation.
  - Young people have been involved in social action at HOME. Young people directly shape arts and culture provision for young people with additional needs, supported by HOME. HOME have reported that this work has improved their accessibility overall as an organisation
  - Over 1000 young people have been involved in social action across Wythenshawe. In-depth opportunities include young people taking on decision-making roles through local youth forums, and making local funding decisions to help shape their own communities e.g. through the 'Wythy Youth Bank' at Wythenshawe Community Housing Group
- 3.10. As part of a plan to monitor and improve quality, Young Manchester undertakes a number of activities including:
- Quality assurance and support visits occur as part of ongoing face to face engagement with partners. This regular engagement consists of meetings with Lead Partners, visiting sessions and attending events.
  - Investment in, and coordination of, training and sector support, including 1-2-1 tailored and bespoke support as required
  - Development and support of city-wide and local partnerships, including regular network activity
  - Investment in Strategic Leadership for key thematic areas – play, detached youth work, workforce development
  - Convening and administering development in key practice themes including mentoring, leadership and digital skills
- 3.11. Further development and implementation of city-wide outcomes measurement, including a new outcomes framework, is a priority for Young Manchester. Young Manchester will work in close partnership with the Local Authority to ensure that provision is of the highest standard and is consistent across the city, maximising impact and outcomes for children and young people.

- 3.12. Further work is also required to establish shared data management systems, both within local partnerships and city-wide.

#### **4.0 Feedback from children and young people**

- 4.1. Young Manchester has sought to ensure that children and young people's voices and experiences are central to the provision of youth and play services, and Young Manchester's own practice. To this end, they have developed a number of activities.
- 4.2. Young Manchester is working in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University to support young people to evaluate youth and play services in Manchester, establishing a group of 'Youth Social Action Researchers'.

Children and young people participating in qualitative research identified the top five reasons they attend provision are:

- Have fun
- Gain confidence
- Feel safe and supported
- Improve wellbeing
- Support other young people

- 4.3. The reasons children and young people give for attending also provide insights into the benefits of participation in youth projects, including for gaining confidence, feeling safe and supported, and improving wellbeing:

*"We put [improve wellbeing] first because we feel like it's important, because when we are all come to here, whatever problems we might have going on outside or if we're down on a certain day, when we come here, it's an escape where we can feel happier."* – young person attending provision 4CT/Active Communities Network

- 4.4. The identification of 'supporting other young people' as a reason for attending indicates how this form of social action is being practiced within projects as part of regular activities:

*"I want to support other young people like myself. [...] I think, to support other young people in similar situations to us, either now or in the past, and for parents and for professionals involved with them as well. Related to a broad range of mental health issues, which also falls under working on an important issue"* – Peer Ambassadors at 42<sup>nd</sup> Street

- 4.5. Young Manchester has also established a 'Young Ambassadors' programme, to ensure that young people from across the city are directly informing their practice, including future funding decisions. Young Ambassadors have supported recent funding rounds (including the recent Thrive grants programme with Manchester Health and Care Commission) and working alongside Manchester Youth Council, will support the next grant making round for Youth and Play later this year.

This activity is led by two young people employed directly by Young Manchester.

- 4.6. Further work on establishing opportunities for children and young people to have a say on services in Manchester is currently in development, including supporting the development of ward-level and city-wide voice work, and the creation of a 'digital hub' for Manchester young people.

## **5.0 Further investment in children and young people**

- 5.1. Alongside the Youth and Play Fund, Young Manchester has commissioned a number of additional funds which have increased the investment in youth and play services. These include:

- The Positive Engagement Programme (£280,000) - administered by Young Manchester on behalf of Manchester City Council and One Manchester, aims to develop positive and sustained approaches to improving opportunities for children and young people and reduce antisocial behaviour
- Holiday Playschemes (£100,000 per year) – this fund supports free open access play activities across the summer and Easter holidays.
- Outdoor Learning and Adventure (£40,000) – in partnership with the Local Authority and The Outward Bound Trust, this fund supports children and young people from Manchester to undertake outdoor learning and adventurous activities
- MHCC Thrive (£320,000) – in partnership with Manchester Heath and Care Commission, this fund seeks to strengthen the cross sector system of support for children and young people, especially those children and young people with emotional health and wellbeing mental health, learning disability and neuro-disability challenges
- Keeping Children and Young People Safe (£135,000) – in partnership with Manchester Community Safety Partnership, this fund seeks to help keep children and young people safe in Manchester by tackling violence which impacts on young people across the city, informed by a public health approach.
- The GROW Fund (£TBC) – in partnership with the Running Bee Foundation and Bird Consultancy, this fund supports children and young people to realise their passions through small grants to individuals and groups.

- 5.2. Young Manchester have also secured an additional £650,000 investment in the next Youth and Play Fund. This support is through the #iwill Fund (supporting a City of Social Action) and Curious Minds (supporting increasing connections between youth and play and arts and culture in the city).

## **6.0 Building a national platform for Manchester**

- 6.1. Through connections with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the National Lottery Community Fund and the John Lyon's Charity, Young Manchester has had opportunities to demonstrate the bold and innovative approach being taken in Manchester at a national level.
- 6.2. This has included presenting the Young Manchester model to government departments, sharing learning and best practice within the sector and supporting the establishment of a national 'Young People's Foundation Trust', of which Young Manchester is a founding member.
- 6.3. Young Manchester is also part of a UK-wide scheme to increase the diversity of trusts and foundations, led by the organisation 2027.

Community Power in Grant Making' is a paid training project that will prepare a brilliant professional from a working class background for a decision making role in the grant-giving sector.

Young Manchester has recently employed a new Grants Officer in this role, who will undertake a 12-month placement with additional support and training. This project is supported by funding from the Our Manchester VCS Investment Fund.

## **7.0 Youth and Play Fund 2020**

- 7.1. In October 2019 Young Manchester and the Council launched the next Youth and Play Fund, which will begin delivery in April 2020.
- 7.2. The new Youth and Play Fund will see continued investment from the Local Authority, renewing the city's commitment to children and young people and demonstrating the value in investing in quality services.

Alongside the Local Authority and partners, Young Manchester will ensure that children and young people aged 5-19 (up to 25 for care leavers and those with additional needs) have access to quality Youth and Play services which are local to them, as well as ensuring that services meet need where it is greatest

- 7.3. The Fund builds on previous investments and provides foundation funding to neighbourhood/place-based and city-wide Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners, as well as support to ensure effective local and city-wide coordinator, capacity building and infrastructure is in place. The fund will:
  - Provide youth and play opportunities for children and young people in every ward.
  - Support and drive quality provision for children and young people.
  - Support and drive the inclusion of all children and young people in youth and play provision.
  - Continue to strengthen partnerships and collaboration.

- Drive a City of Social Action where youth social action is embedded and transforms children and young people's lives.
- Place children and young people's voice and experience at the heart of services.

7.4. The fund will be enhanced by additional investment from the #iwill Fund and Curious Minds. Young Manchester will be seeking additional investment in this fund throughout the duration of delivery, enhancing this foundation investment from the Local Authority.