



**Doncaster
Council**

Youth Strategy

**Encouraging Potential Inspiring Change
2023 – 2028**

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1. Forward

In 2022, we launched our new Children and Young People's Plan, which was produced by young people for young people. This plan builds on our ambition to be the most Child Friendly Borough in the country setting out how we will make this ambition a reality and now make Doncaster the most Child Friendly city.

Therefore, we are refreshing our Youth Strategy, setting our children and young people at the centre of our plans and asking them to support developing and realising our ambitions.

All young people deserve to lead safe and fulfilling lives from childhood through to adulthood. We also know that for a range of reasons many children and young people find the world we live in difficult to navigate. Therefore, we have a responsibility to provide everyone with the opportunities, guidance, experiences and tools to enable them to grow personally, socially and academically.

It is important that we continuously listen to their views and experiences and harness their creativity. We want to be ambitious and deliver what children and young people want.

Youth Work and Youth Services are one of the best ways in encouraging young people's potential and inspiring change by providing high quality support and opportunities. This refreshed Youth Strategy sets out our vision, ambitions and how we will achieve them. We are strongly committed to improving outcomes for young people and our communities across Doncaster.

We also know that everyone has a role to play in making a positive impact on young people's lives. We are all role models and can support young people to reach their potential. That is why this Youth Strategy is not just about what the Council will do but what is our shared responsibility, and we are committed to working with all our partners whether it's our statutory services such as schools or the police or our communities and the people living in them.

As the Portfolio Lead for Education, Skills & Young People, I am dedicated to making sure that youth work is strengthened and empowered to support young people's ambitions and advocate for their rights.

Cllr Lani-Mae Ball

Portfolio Lead for Education, Skills & Young People

2. Strategic Context and Background

National Drivers

Doncaster and other Local authorities across England and Wales have a statutory duty under Section 507B, Education Act 1996 to 'secure, so far as is reasonably practicable sufficient provision of educational and recreational leisure-time activities for young people, and to make sure young people have a say in the local offer'. This is often referred to as the '**Youth Service Duty**'. This includes youth work and other provisions that:

- Connects young people with their communities
- Offers young people opportunities in safe environments to take part in a wide range of activities
- Supports the personal, social, and economic development of young people
- Improves young people's physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing
- Raises young people's aspirations, builds their resilience, and informs their decision-making

Recommendations outlined in the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs¹, which published its Youth Work Inquiry findings highlighted the need to provide a positive commitment to our young people by encouraging the whole of society to invest in them, ensuring that they are fully included in decision-making and democratic processes.

In May 2022, the Government announced that hundreds of youth groups across the country could benefit from the Youth Investment Fund, in relation to youth provision. Doncaster was one of many towns across England that met the eligibility criteria to apply for the funding.

Funding

Since 2010 and the steady reduction in national funding, Local Authorities across the country have made significant cuts to youth budgets. A report from the YMCA in 2021 found that across England and Wales in 2018/2019, there was around £429million spent on youth services compared to a spend of £1.4billion in 2010, this is a decline of 70%. This report also found that some LA's had ceased all funding on youth services.

Whilst Doncaster has also seen a reduction in funding for youth services, it has continued to have youth as a priority and in March 2020, an additional £100k was allocated to support the delivery of youth provision. In addition, in summer 2022, £250k was allocated to fund a universal summer programme, to sit alongside the Holiday Activity and Food Programme. Both programmes were really well attended with lots of positive feedback from those taking part. The current economic situation makes funding a comprehensive youth provision extremely difficult, which is why the Youth Investment Fund opportunity would allow us to accelerate this strategy. If we were unsuccessful, then there would need to be a review of what is possible.

Local Policy

The Doncaster Borough Strategy, Delivering Together sets out our mission for thriving people, places, and planet. It is our plan to improve the quality of life for residents, communities, and businesses and to leave it a better city for future generations. This sets of the 'Great 8' priorities that will drive this work.

¹ APPG on Youth Affairs, National Youth Agency, Youth Work Inquiry 2019, London



In summer 2022, we launched our new Children and Young People’s Plan, which was produced by young people for young people. This plan builds on our ambition to be the most Child Friendly Borough in the country setting out how we will make this ambition a reality. It again sets out 8 priorities:

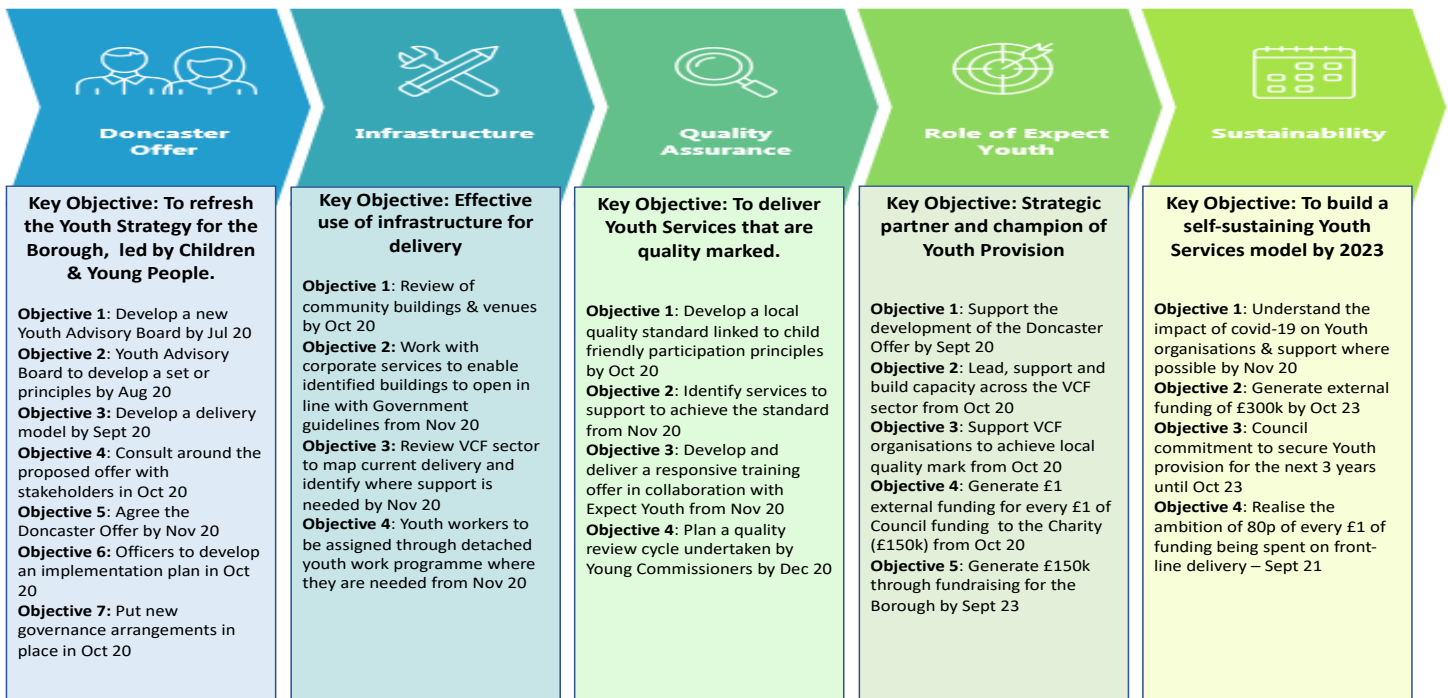
- Connecting Young People of Doncaster
- Building an Inclusive Doncaster
- Creating a Happy and Healthy Doncaster
- Providing Opportunities for Participation and Engagement
- Ensuring a Community Focused Doncaster
- Promoting a Strong Education and Skills System
- Ensuring Doncaster is a High-Quality Place to Live
- Delivering High Quality Services.

As well as the two key plans above this Youth Strategy renews our commitment to children and young people with a local and whole city approach, contributes, and supports a number of other key areas of work such as **Doncaster Education and Skills 2030**, **The Youth Justice Plan**, **The Culture Strategy** and **The Mental Health in Schools Strategy**. Due to the delivery model it is also crucial it aligns to all the refreshed **Locality Plans**.

Doncaster Offer 2020

The Doncaster Offer is the current Youth Strategy and was refreshed in late 2020 consists of five areas of focus with several projects delivered with a range of activities.

This was co-produced with young people to ensure it reflected the views of children and young people not only in its creation but also in how it was delivered. Young People emphasised the needs for this to be governed by young people and this saw the creation of the Youth Advisory Board, which now sets within several governance structures. This is a key legacy from the Doncaster Offer and an area that will be further strengthened to deliver a Youth Strategy over the next five years.



Progress

Over the last two years, work has progressed on all five areas:

- Doncaster Offer – all objectives achieved
- Infrastructure – all objectives achieved
- Quality Assurance – all objectives achieved
- Role of EXPECT Youth – partially achieved
- Sustainability – partially achieved

The pandemic has slowed progress in achieving some of the objectives, in particular sustainability. There is now a need to review progress in a post COVID landscape and within the context of other strategic priorities and ensure they are delivered under this new strategy.

The current offer delivers under four key areas; the details of these are set out below. This is not a replacement for the Early Help windscreen but specifically created to demonstrate the four key areas as it relates to Youth Offer.

Universal

The current Universal Offer includes youth work delivery at My Place Bentley & Tom Hill supported by 1 Full-Time, two part time Youth Workers, and three Part-Time Assistant Youth Engagement Workers providing access to five open evening sessions a week. In the last year, this has also included a comprehensive summer holiday programme funded by one of monies of £250k to support an array of activities across Doncaster.

A range of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations are also responsible for delivering a range of universal youth activity across local areas. There are also a vast range of uniform groups such as Scouts, Brownies, and Cadets, alongside sports and dance clubs.

2022 saw the expansion of the universal holiday activity programme, the Doncaster Staycation providing a wide range of positive holiday activities open to all but targeting provision in the 15 most deprived wards. These complements. The Holiday and Food Programme, which is funded by the Department for Education and provides healthy food and enriching activities for primary and secondary school aged children who are eligible for benefits related free school meals, SEND as well as other vulnerable groups. Both holiday programmes are based on an incubator-commissioning model ensuring that VCF organisations are used to provide the majority of the activity and those larger groups or partners must ensure their delivery is supported by smaller grass roots organisations. This model has supported over a 100 smaller VCF organisations to access funding.

The voice of children and young people is also a key element of our universal youth offer. The Doncaster Youth Council is an elected forum group of young people from all parts of the borough who are between the ages of 11 and 18. They work to give local youth a stronger voice and make sure their opinions are taken into account. They participate in a variety of initiatives to better the lives of young people in Doncaster and have a say in some of the major choices that are made in the borough. In addition, the Youth Advisory Board, which is a group of young people from a selection of forums such as the Youth Council and Young Advisors and was established to have oversight of the Youth Strategy in 2020 and continued to monitor its progress.

The Youth Council and Young Advisors have also delivered several key campaigns, often tackling some of the big issues facing young people and some of the harder hitting topics. For example, the Red Flags film which was produced to raise awareness about domestic abuse in young people's relationship sin particular controlling and cohesive behaviour. Or Lives Up, Knives Down, which tackled knife crime.

Early Intervention

Through an Early Intervention approach, EPIC is tasked to deliver the '*Team around the School*' preventative offer working in Schools across the borough and initially prioritising hotspot areas, with high levels of anti-social behaviour. This team of four Full-Time Youth Support workers will be delivering programmes across the week and into Schools Holidays. This programme is Home Office funded until September 2023.

One to one support is offered to young people through an early intervention approach. This could be through school referrals or service referrals through to the youth team.

Prevention

EPIC working with a range of partners delivers a Preventative focused youth work offer at the EPIC Hub based in the Frenchgate Centre currently across 4 days including Saturday and Sunday with a team of four Part-Time Youth Support Staff.

Targeted

EPIC delivers Street Based interventions, targeting hotspot areas across Doncaster. Four Full-Time Youth Workers provide the work across three days per week. There are also targeted Forum groups, for example Children in Care Youth Council which is not just a "talking shop"; it is ***an opportunity for young people to develop ideas and projects that will improve the lives of children and young people in care and care leavers.*** Ensuring the lived experiences of children in care or leaving care are shaping how services are delivered. There are also forums and support groups for our LGBTQ young people and children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities.

3. Theory of Change

Young people's worlds today are complex: full of ever-changing opportunities and challenges. We work with young people and the organisations and people that support them, to ensure their needs are met through high-quality youth work and evolving needs analysis and constant evaluation. We help transform the lives of young people through the power of youth work.



This is our Theory of Change. A simple stepped approach to ensure there is a skilled workforce that delivers high quality youth services, which in turn provide better outcomes for young people. It aims to stretch our ambitions and commitment to young people and concentrate our resources. Through this, we also build our case for partnership working and share best practices, fostering identity and strength across the entire workforce.

4. Young People's Voice

The voice of Doncaster young people is at the heart of everything we do; we are committed to listening to their views and ensuring we work in partnership to co-design our services. We already have a range of data and intelligence both at a national and local level that have already informed this strategy, however we are committed to having an ongoing dialogue with children and young people to ensure their views and experiences continue to shape our service delivery. Nationally the '*Youth Review: Summary findings and government response*' published in February 2022² highlighted clearly what young people enjoyed, this included having something fun to do after school and in the holidays, alongside learning new skills and having a place to be myself.

The initial findings from the 2022 Youth Crime Perception Survey Young People in Doncaster, has also highlighted that young people would be interested in taking part in a range of activities including dance, football, and gaming. Make Your Mark is a national ballot which targets all young people in England aged between 11 – 18 years. Its aim is to identify the issues most important to young people nationally and locally and find shared ways to tackle them. In 2022 over **8,000** young people in Doncaster voted, which is a turnout rate over 29%. They voted the following as the top three issues:

Health and Wellbeing, Jobs, Money, Homes, and Opportunities and Education and Learning

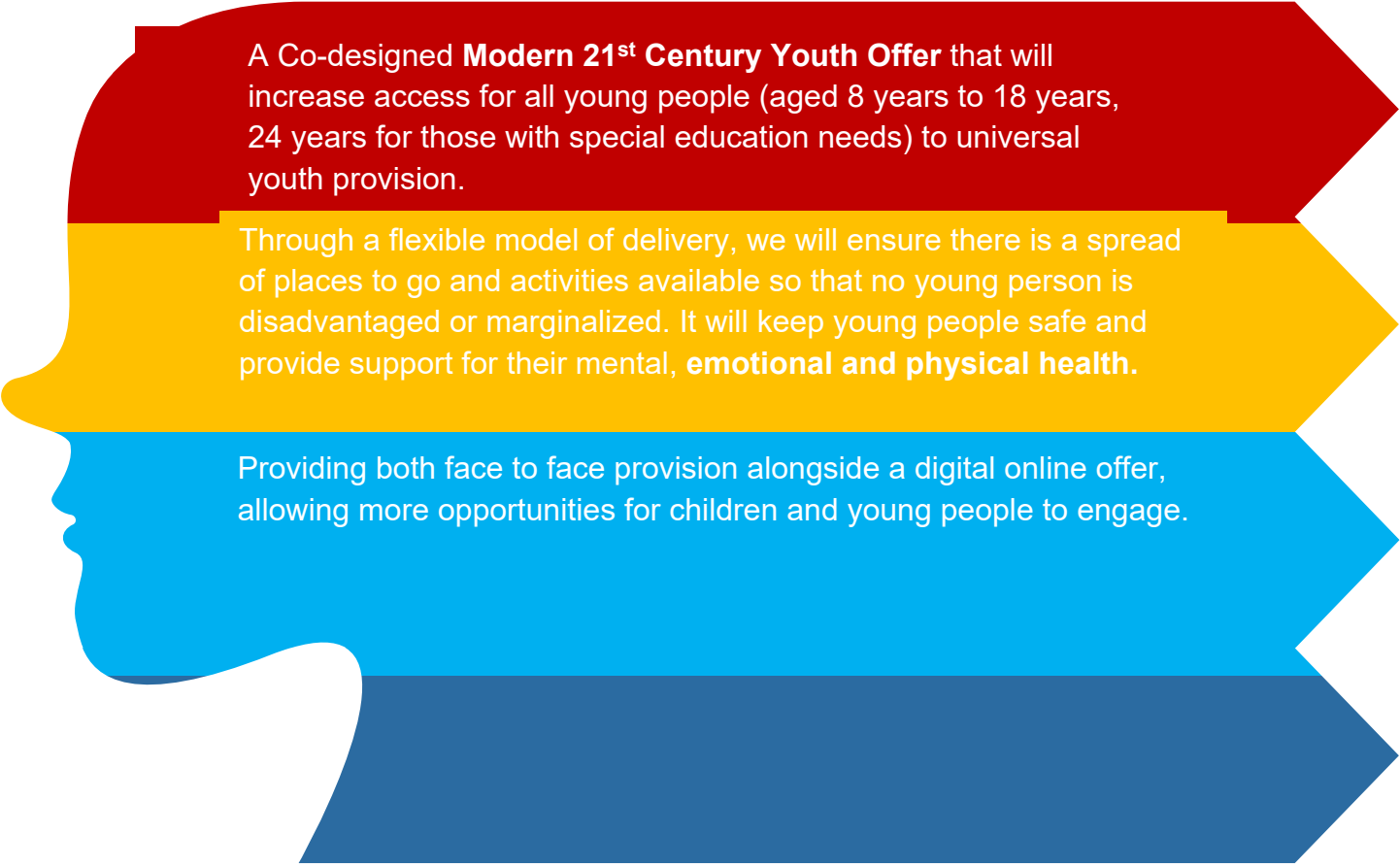
As health and wellbeing continues to be a priority for young people across the city, whether this is in relation to their physical or emotional health or in terms of sexual health and relationships. Therefore, this will be a key part of the Youth Strategy delivery ensuring young people receive the education and support needed. Across Doncaster, our Locality Plans developed in 2022 have mirrored and amplified similar areas of interests, needs, and wants from young people. The need for more youth provision in all local areas was identified as a priority in all

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response>

four plans; this was based on both young people and wider resident views. Therefore, our Youth Strategy will be flexible in its approach, ensuring we can deploy resources where they are needed.

In addition to a strategy that responds to the views of children and young people and the needs of a local area, this strategy will also respond to the diversity and richness of our children and young people, understanding that needs can be shaped by a range of factors including gender, race, disability, and socio-economic circumstances. We will not only respond to our duty to provide positive and diversionary activities but enriching opportunities for young people to be involved in.

5. Our Vision



A Co-designed **Modern 21st Century Youth Offer** that will increase access for all young people (aged 8 years to 18 years, 24 years for those with special education needs) to universal youth provision.

Through a flexible model of delivery, we will ensure there is a spread of places to go and activities available so that no young person is disadvantaged or marginalized. It will keep young people safe and provide support for their mental, **emotional and physical health**.

Providing both face to face provision alongside a digital online offer, allowing more opportunities for children and young people to engage.

6. Our Eight Ambitions: Achieving Our Vision

Under our vision to create a **Modern 21st Century Youth Offer**, we have **eight** ambitions, which form the foundations for the delivery of our strategy. These are essential in helping young people develop the confidence and resilience to improve their life chances, transition to adulthood, and engage meaningfully with their communities and wider society.

1

Expand Universal provision - We will provide a more accessible and inclusive youth offer by utilising digital youth work alongside a local community in person offer.

2

Capacity Building – We will accelerate the growth of the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector through regular stakeholder engagement, initial set up along with continued workforce development and support with identifying funding streams.

3

Locality Based Delivery – We will establish an area-based Youth Work Model with trained Youth Support Workers based in communities delivering a high-quality youth work curriculum.

4

Safe Spaces – We will ensure we have more safe spaces for all young people to access.

5

Youth Work Curriculum – We will co-design with young people a youth work curriculum which will complement learning in school and raise the aspirations of young people in Doncaster. Including implementing the findings of the Youth Work in Schools Review (published Spring 2023)

6

Targeted and Street-based Youth Work Teams – We will provide access to support and services for young people within communities, in the spaces and places where they live and meet.

7

Sustainable Funding – We will identify and seek funding opportunities from local and national sources including the Youth Investment Fund.

8

High-Quality Workforce – We will recruit, support, and train a youth service workforce to deliver 21st Century Youth Work offer. Our focus will be to develop and implement a comprehensive learning and development package for staff working with young people in a youth-based setting. For example we will be able to support the wider workforce to gain a range of qualifications including Level 2 in Youth Work through to Degree Level and Apprenticeships.

7. Conditions for success towards achieving our 'Eight' ambitions.



To deliver our stated ambitions for all young people across Doncaster the following requirement will need to be prioritised.

- i. **Youth Hubs** that are modern safe and future-proof for the next generation of young people. We will submit a Youth Investment Fund proposal to design and build six Youth Hubs to the Departments of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).
- ii. To work with our Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations to offer a comprehensive and supportive **Training Pathway for those working with young people** to enhance and extend the local voluntary youth work offer.
- iii. To introduce the National Youth Agency progressive **Youth Work Curriculum** to all youth work, deliver across the borough supported by access to high-quality training.
- iv. To develop a **Virtual and Digital Youth Work** offer that enables young people to connect with youth support services digitally.
- v. To ensure there is a **high quality workforce** which is provided with training and development opportunities. This will include quality assuring youth providers, making sure they are safe and delivering high quality services and activities for children and young people.

8. Partnerships

We can only achieve our ambitions successfully through working collectively. Working together with Voluntary Community Faith Sector (VCFS) and youth work organisations, we will monitor and evaluate the provision of youth work in locality plans. This will help ensure that all young people, in every part Doncaster have access to high quality and effective youth work practice.

Our partnership with schools will be strengthened as both a deliverer and convenor of youth provision but also in the identification of young people who may need additional or targeted support and in signposting young people to the range of youth provision across the area. This partnership will be crucial in the on-going development of the Youth Work Curriculum and its support of the more academic curriculum offered through schools.

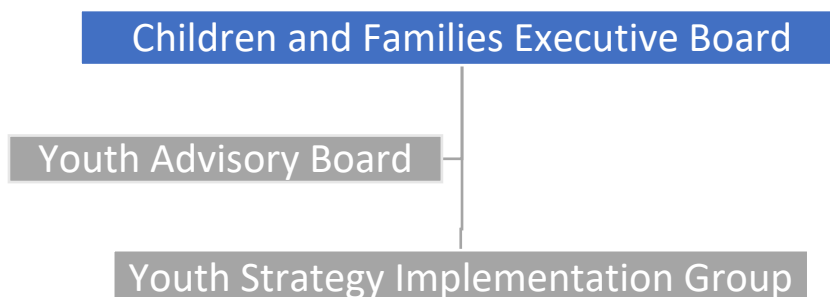
Using the principles, values, and behaviours of the Team Doncaster approach, the Council has strong internal and external partnerships across a number of service areas, including Communities, Leisure, Culture, Libraries, Health, Education and Crime Prevention. These partnerships ensure we are maximising our potential and enhancing the offer for young people.

Through the partnerships we can ensure that funding, resources, and services are delivered and coordinated in the most effective way for young people.

9. Delivery and Governance

The successful delivery of this strategy will require a collective effort by several different stakeholders and a **comprehensive co-produced delivery plan**, detailing the data, metrics and how we will measure success. It will measure not only our delivery against key data but will also gather the views and experiences of young people to ensure it is delivery is having a positive impact on their lives.

Young People will be the key stakeholders in holding the partnership to account for what and how we deliver against the Youth Strategy and therefore the Youth Advisory Board will oversee the monitoring of the strategy and the delivery plan and will report to the Children and Families Executive Board.



The Youth Advisory Board consist of a representative group of young people in terms of demographics and lived experience. They will also be responsible for engaging and consulting wider groups of young people to gain their views on the strategy, and how we deliver against it.

The formal progress reporting on the implementation of the strategy will be assessed and measured through quarterly performance reporting. Detailed reports will also be monitored and evaluated at other relevant Executive, Scrutiny, Directorate, and Partnership Board meetings.

The delivery of the Youth Strategy and how we oversee the delivery is interconnected with many other areas of work therefore although we have our own governance arrangements we understand how it sits within the wider partnership priorities and boards.

<p>CFEB As per the Terms of Reference, CFEB is responsible for the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CYP Plan & associated priority lead meetings - Workforce Development - Joint Commissioning - Data & Performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFEB sits within wider Team Doncaster governance and provides partnership oversight to the system • In particular, this focuses on the priorities and commitments within the CYP alongside other work streams related to workforce development, data & performance monitoring, and making best use of the voice and engagement of children and young people
<p>Education & Skills Board The following strategies are linked to the Education & Skills Board or will be in the future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education & Skills 2030 - Learning Provision Strategy - SEND Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The education and skills board has oversight of the partnerships approach for improving all aspects of our education from early years through to adulthood • It also incorporates our approach to ensuring sufficiency and providing support to those with additional needs
<p>DSCP The priorities, as set out in the governance and delivery plan of DSCP are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Help - MASH - Exploitation - Neglect - Mental Health - Performance & Data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSCP has responsibility related to practice, quality, data and workforce development but there are also specific work streams and priorities within that • DSCP is home to our work improving the MASH and enhancing our approach to a host of key issues within Doncaster such as Early Help, Neglect, Exploitation, and Mental Health. • Each of these strands has a strategy or action plan that is reported on through the DSCP governance
<p>Other Programmes Further programmes of work are captured in the following ways;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Localities Programme - Culture Strategy - Domestic Abuse Strategy - Youth Justice Plan - Adolescents Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Localities Leadership Group oversees the Localities Programme • The Domestic Abuse strategy sits within SSDP governance and tackles this key issue • The Youth Justice Plan outlines our approach to supporting engaged with the criminal justice system and reports within SSDP governance • The culture strategy builds the cultural offer in Doncaster for the benefit of all and is overseen by the culture partnership • The Adolescents strategy requires fresh governance

10. Links to Local and National Policies (QR codes to be added)

Doncaster Delivering Together

<https://dmbcwebstolive01.blob.core.windows.net/media/Tenant2/Documents/DDT%20Prospectus%20-%20Single%20Pages.pdf>

Doncaster Children's and Young People Plan

<https://dmbcwebstolive01.blob.core.windows.net/media/Default/ChildrenYoungPeopleFamilies/Documents/CYPP-2022-LR2.pdf>

Doncaster Locality Plans

South

<https://dmbcwebstolive01.blob.core.windows.net/media/YourLifeDoncaster/documents/South%20Locality%20Plan%20FINAL%20AUGUST%202022.pdf>

North

<https://dmbcwebstolive01.blob.core.windows.net/media/YourLifeDoncaster/documents/North%20Locality%20Plan%20FINAL%20AUGUST%202022.pdf>

Central

<https://dmbcwebstolive01.blob.core.windows.net/media/YourLifeDoncaster/documents/Central%20Locality%20Plan%20FINAL%20AUGUST%202022.pdf>

East

<https://dmbcwebstolive01.blob.core.windows.net/media/YourLifeDoncaster/documents/East%20Locality%20Plan%20FINAL%20AUGUST%202022.pdf>

Doncaster Community Safety Strategy

<https://dmbcwebstolive01.blob.core.windows.net/media/Default/CrimeAntiSocialBehaviourNuisance/Documents/Community%20Safety%20Strategy%20-%202022-25%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

Doncaster Youth Offending Service Plan

<https://doncaster.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s36399/i6%20Youth%20Justice%20Plan%202022-23%20DRAFT%20v6.pdf>

Youth Review: Summary findings and government response

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response>

Ten Year Vision for Youth Work 2020-2030 <https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/assets.nya2.joltrouter.net/wp-content/uploads/20210419131200/Ten-Year-Vision-for-Youth-Work-1-1.pdf>

APPG on Youth Affairs, National Youth Agency, Youth Work Inquiry 2019, London.
<https://nya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/APPG-Youth-Work-Inquiry-Final-Report-April-2019-ONLINE.pdf>

Education Act, Section 507B, 1996.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

UNICEF, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, January 2020.

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

Get Doncaster Moving Strategy

<https://getdoncastermoving.org/uploads/get-doncaster-moving-strategy-document.pdf?v=1662728340>