

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 30

Subject: Adolescent Strategy 2026/29

Date of meeting: 16 July 2026

Report of: Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Youth

Contact Officer: Corporate Director Families Children & Wellbeing

Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 There has previously been a Complex Adolescent Strategy 2023-26 in place. The council has now been selected as one of the pilot areas for Young Futures Hubs and Youth Transformation. This has led to a need for a Local Youth Strategy, to support the National Youth Strategy. In addition, the Family First social care transformation has included the move of youth related services to merge with the existing Adolescent Service. This provides an opportunity for a more joined up offer for adolescents, from prevention to the more complex intensive support.
- 1.2 These events have led to the development of the 3-year Adolescent Strategy, which outlines end to end provision from the universal offer to the complex intensive work.
- 1.3 The Strategy is a partnership owned strategy and links to the Council Plan:
 - **Outcome 2: A fair and inclusive city** A city where people feel safe and welcome
 - **Outcome 3: A healthy city that helps people to thrive** A better future for children and young people. Developing our prevention and family support offer
 - **Outcome 4: A responsive and learning council with well -run services**

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet approves the city's Adolescent Strategy 2026/29 and supports the activity detailed therein.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1. This Strategy outlines how services will be delivered for adolescents. This will include universal, preventative, targeted and intensive complex work. It is a partnership strategy, with governance arrangements through the Brighton & Hove Adolescent Partnership Board.

- 3.2. The vision is that every child and young person in the city will be supported to achieve their full potential, feel emotionally and physically well, and live safely within their families and communities. They will grow up free from exploitation and discrimination, able to live crime-free lives, and have meaningful opportunities to be heard and make a positive contribution to the society around them
- 3.3. The strategy contributes to the Council Plan, in particular in relation to making the city a health place where children can thrive; and a city where people feel safe.
- 3.4. The Strategy aligns to the council's ambition to be a learning organisation, embedding the learning framework to support delivery. Be connected - working closely with partners within the council and in the community, embedding our Community Cohesion roadmap. Be innovative and creative through the test and learn opportunities and healthy and psychologically safe. The Youth Justice Plan 2026-2029 sits below the Adolescent Strategy.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 The Adolescent Strategy brings together the Young Futures Developments, The Youth Justice arrangements and the other relevant adolescent developments. This provides a joined-up approach to the support and services provided for Adolescents and their families in the City.
- 4.2 An alternative would be to continue to have a Complex Adolescent Strategy and to develop a separate Youth Strategy. This is not recommended as it does not reflect the joined up approach and offer we are aiming for.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1. There was a Local Youth Transformation Youth Services Review in November 2025. It found the following:

Youth participation is a rights-based approach that ensures young people influence decisions affecting their lives and communities and is essential to meaningful youth provision design.

Overview of Findings

- 5.2. Brighton & Hove has a developing but increasingly clear understanding of the needs of its young people, supported by multi-agency data from Family Hubs, Youth Justice Services, public health, and the voluntary sector. Analysis highlights significant geographical inequalities, particularly in East Brighton, Whitehawk, Moulsecoomb & Bevendean, and parts of Hangleton & Knoll. Mental-health need continues to rise, especially among young women and LGBTQ+ young people, and access to early help varies by neighbourhood. NEET rates remain concentrated in specific postcodes despite some improvement. Young people consistently value trusted adults, safe spaces, creative outlets, social connection, and practical support with financial literacy and life skills. Collaboration with Voluntary, Community,

and Faith Sector (VCFS) partners to deliver a comprehensive and diverse youth offer.

- 5.3. Brighton & Hove has a highly experienced and diverse voluntary sector, offering a strong portfolio of youth services across the city. The Youth Collective brings together a network of local organisations committed to collaboration, shared learning, and amplifying youth voice. This partnership model is supported by Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) and underpinned by a culture of trust and co-production, with joint approaches to quality, safeguarding and funding. The sector includes award-winning provision, such as Youth Investment Fund (YIF) projects, high-quality detached and outreach work, and access to state-of-the-art facilities like Brighton Youth Centre (BYC). A wide range of youth voice structures – including the Children in Care Council, Care Leaver’s Forum, ensure meaningful participation and representation.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The Adolescent Strategy is a partnership strategy, and the partnership receives funding from a number of sources including the City Council, Public Health, the Police, OPCC (Office Police Crime Commissioner). There are also seconded workers from Probation, Health and Police.

There has also been recent investment in this area, including:

- Youth Transformation £0.500m (revenue) + £0.124m (Capital)
- Young Futures Hub £0.300m
- Violence Reduction Partnership £0.085m
- Turnaround £0.054m
- Remand Partnership £0.057m
- Reboot £0.026m
- National Referral Mechanism £0.030m
- 3 Yr Drug Strategy £0.390m

Name of finance officer consulted: David Ellis Date consulted: (03/07/26)

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 The local Youth Strategy is required in the context of the National Youth Strategy published by the government in December 2025, which drew on the experiences of over 14,000 young people. The strategy’s primary focus is on youth policy, provision and support at a local, regional and national level across England for 10 to 21 year olds (up to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities). The national strategy provides that decisions and delivery must be made as close to communities as possible so that policies respond directly to young people’s needs in their area. Young Futures Hubs are designed locally, with every area creating its own strategy based on the needs of young people in their community envisaged to provide access to youth workers and other professionals, supporting wellbeing ,career development and preventing harm.

- 7.2 The local strategy will assist the Council in delivering a range of statutory duties to the city's young people, including the promotion of wellbeing.

Name of lawyer consulted: Natasha Watson Date consulted :(19/06/26):

8. Risk implications

- 8.1 The success of the arrangement relies on strong partnership working. Therefore, change of policy or issues within partner agencies can potentially create a risk. This is mitigated by strong governance arrangements and partnership agreements.
- 8.2 There is a lot of interest at government department level on the progress of the Youth Futures Hub. They are very interested in the integrated arrangements we have in Brighton and Hove. It is therefore important to have an adequate strategic approach to avoid reputational damage.
- 8.3 The mitigation for this is the strong governance arrangements through the Adolescent Partnership Board. This is jointly chaired the Corporate Director Families Children & Wellbeing and the Director of Youth Work, Trust for Developing Communities.

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 There is a Children's Family Help & Protection Anti Racist Action Plan in place, which the Adolescent Service is part of. The plan has three workstreams - staff support; practice with children and families; the voices of families, children and carers. Staff are becoming more confident about talking about race and significantly more examples of good practice is being seen in quality assurance audits. This is a journey and there is still more work to do.
- 9.2 The Young Futures Hub developments and existing Youth commissioning have specific grants to address equality issues, including Amaze, Allsorts and Impact Initiative. In addition, all providers are required to address this throughout all service provision.
- 9.2 Joint training between the Police and the Adolescent Service has supported the difficult conversations required to challenge and address examples of racism and to encourage better joined up work in this area. Performance data is regularly scrutinised by the Brighton and Hove Adolescent Partnership Board. There is disproportionality within the cohort of mixed heritage boys coming to the attention of youth justice professionals and this is an area of focus for the partnership.
- 9.3 The vision is that every child and young person in the city will be supported to achieve their full potential, feel emotionally and physically well, and live safely within their families and communities. They will grow up free from exploitation and discrimination, able to live crime-free lives, and have meaningful opportunities to be heard and make a positive contribution to the society around them. With one of the aims to ensure all support and services are inclusive, LGBTQ+ affirming and anti-racist.

10. Sustainability implications

10.1 No implications

11. Other Implications

Crime & disorder implications:

11.1 The annual Youth Justice Plan sits below this strategy. It outlines how the youth justice services are delivered in Brighton and Hove City Council. It focuses on preventing youth offending, reducing offending, and ensuring positive outcomes through the partnership arrangements. It is a statutory duty of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Public health implications:

11.2 Having suitable arrangements in place to meet the needs of adolescents, to divert children away from crime and anti-social behaviour and prevent reoffending, to support them with education and training opportunities and their emotional and mental health will likely have a positive impact on their wellbeing. A reduction in youth crime and anti-social behaviour will have a positive impact on community wellbeing.

12. Conclusion

12.1 The Adolescent Strategy 2026-29 has been developed and agreed by the Brighton & Hove Adolescent Partnership Board. Young people's voices have also been used to support the development of this strategy.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Adolescent Strategy 2026/29
2. Brighton & Hove Youth Justice Plan 2026-2029
3. Local Youth Transformation & Young Futures Hub Implementation Plan

