

	<b>Cabinet</b> 13 October 2025
	<b>Report from the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Community Development</b>
	<b>Lead Member - Cabinet for Children, Young People &amp; Schools (Councillor Gwen Grahl)</b>
<b>Youth Facilities Capital Investment Programme</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Janasugani Vetharuban, Graduate Trainee 020 8937 1959 Email: <a href="mailto:Janasugani.Vetharuban@brent.gov.uk">Janasugani.Vetharuban@brent.gov.uk</a>  Neil Martin, Head of Capital Delivery 020 8937 4203 <a href="mailto:Neil.Martin@brent.gov.uk">Neil.Martin@brent.gov.uk</a>  Serita Kwofie, Head of Early Help 020 8937 1747 Email: <a href="mailto:serita.kwofie@brent.gov.uk">serita.kwofie@brent.gov.uk</a>

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with a summary of the approach to establishing a programme of capital investment in youth facilities across the borough, in partnership with youth sector providers.
- 1.2 The report recommends the approval of funding five projects using the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL). The five projects that were shortlisted by a youth panel, offer enhanced youth facilities across the borough and are in or serve the boroughs growth areas and areas of deprivation.

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the youth facilities capital investment programme as set out in this report.
- 2.2 Approves the projects for the organisations as set out in paragraph 3.2.8 and use of £4m of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy to fund the programme as detailed in table 2, paragraph 5.1.

### **3.0 Detail**

#### **3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword**

- 3.1.1 This report details an exciting proposal to deliver a substantial investment of Strategic Infrastructure Levy to five deeply impactful youth organisations in Brent.
- 3.1.2 Our youth sector in Brent does crucial work with young people, delivering recreation, sport and activities that help young people thrive. This has been a competitive bidding process, in which young people have been given a voice in choosing how the funding is awarded.
- 3.1.3 In congratulating everyone involved in this initiative I look forward to seeing how this investment will make a difference to young people in communities across Brent.
- 3.1.4 The programme has identified funding for local organisations to enhance youth facilities in line with a consistent approach to support the local voluntary and community sector.
- 3.1.5 This programme aims to fund structural changes and improvements to premises used by youth organisations to enable better access and an increase in facilities and activities for young people across the borough.
- 3.1.6 This programme will provide much-needed improved facilities that support both the immediate needs of young people and the long-term goals of community development. By fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment among young people, the project will encourage local leadership and active participation in the borough's ongoing regeneration. This in turn may also help young people's overall outcomes to improve.
- 3.1.7 This directly aligns with the refreshed Brent Youth Strategy 2025-2028, approved by Cabinet in March 2025. The aim of the strategy is "to empower every young person in Brent with the skills, opportunities and support needed to lead healthy, fulfilling lives and to become engaged, responsible, and inspired members of society." This initiative will support in meeting the need, well-articulated by the local voluntary youth sector in the borough, to have suitable spaces where youth organisations can deliver vital youth and community provision.
- 3.1.8 The programme aligns with the Brent Borough Plan 2023 – 2027 outcomes:

**1) The Best Start in Life:**

The identified works will contribute to providing an improved environment that will enable young people to enjoy and achieve in and outside of formal education.

**2) Thriving Communities:**

The identified works will contribute to building services around our residents and their needs by providing a good quality development environment. This programme also aligns with the Council's values as it encourages proactive collaboration with Brent communities and leading inclusive projects.

## **3.2 Background**

- 3.2.1 In January 2021 Cabinet approved the creation of an Onside Youth Zone in Brent with a significant capital contribution, subject to a number of conditions, the most significant being obtaining a suitable site. Unfortunately, this project could not proceed as proposed due to challenges in finding a suitable site option.
- 3.2.2 Officers therefore sought an alternative method to deliver youth facility enhancements with the committed capital. As the Council does not operate its own youth facilities, it undertook engagement with established, local youth facility providers with the intention of enhancing existing facilities to seek to increase youth participation and a greater choice/range of youth provision.
- 3.2.3 An initial expression of interest period was run to identify potential providers where capital investment could seek to increase youth participation. From this expression of interest, 11 projects from across Brent were shortlisted.
- 3.2.4 These 11 potential projects had feasibility studies undertaken, involving input and feedback from the youth facility provider. Examples of the proposed enhancement works included multi-use games areas, teaching kitchens, extension of existing facilities and amenities, and reconfiguration of currently unusable areas for multi-purpose youth provision.
- 3.2.5 A detailed scoring criteria was developed by officers that included points such as the length of existing lease on the building, location, current condition and anticipated higher levels of participation from disadvantaged and hard to reach young people.
- 3.2.6 Organisations then presented to a Youth Panel during a selection event. The Youth Panel was formed consisting of young people from Brent Youth Parliament, Youth Justice Service, Brent Care Journeys 2.0 and the voluntary and community sector, ranging from 14 to 20 years old. Members of the panel lived in different areas across the borough. Ten organisations ultimately attended the Civic Centre to present their projects to the Youth Panel at a *Youth Facilities Capital Investment Programme Selection Event*.

3.2.7 The Youth Panel were provided with materials in advance that included a summary of each organisation's values, aims and their project overview, which was summarised from the feasibility reports. This formed the basis of the scoring criteria, along with location, accessibility of the project and the expected benefit to the local community. Once all presentations were complete, a moderation session was held around the table with the Youth Panel to discuss their preferred projects and scoring rationale.

3.2.8 Following this session, the group recommended that five projects should be considered for the programme. These recommendations were further assessed by officers for suitability against the relevant criteria and are now being recommended for Cabinet approval:

- **Cricklewood Boxing Club, The Boxing Gym (Dollis Hill Ward)** - The current facility, situated in a four-story building located on the edge of a large residential district with nearby schools and community services, has outgrown its capacity. As a result, the club is currently forced to turn people away due to lack of space. This expansion proposal seeks to ensure the club can continue to serve the local community effectively. By upgrading essential facilities such as the kitchen, to provide space for teaching healthy eating, increasing bathroom and changing facilities to provide a more comfortable, hygienic, and accessible environment for young people, improving the connectivity at first floor level between the boxing ring and the gym space, and providing additional usable space where garages are currently located.
- **Jason Roberts Foundation, Gym and Sports Hall flooring (Stonebridge Ward)** – This project aims to upgrade the foundation's facility in Stonebridge to better serve its diverse and growing community of young people. By providing a safe, weather-proof and accessible environment, the foundation will be better equipped to serve its mission: creating inclusive spaces that foster healthy relationships, build life skills, and support the personal growth of young people. The Youth Panel were impressed by the organisation hosting additional activities to those usually provided, with one young person stating, *“it was unique” ... “more than just football, sports that I have never seen before in London – American Football.”* One of the female members of the group stated *“girls-only football was great”* and it *“felt like the project is safe”*. The feedback included positive comments about a *“good sense of community”*, with *“good outreach and good positive opportunities for growing children and young people”*. While The Pavilion venue where Jason Roberts Foundation deliver many of their activities is adjacent to SCIL growth areas, it was unanimously agreed by the Youth Panel that the organisation had a wide reach to young people who reside in neighbouring growth areas and would therefore be SCIL eligible. Jason Roberts Foundation were able to support this with their own data which was provided on request.
- **The OK Club, Sports Hall refurbishment (Kilburn Ward)** – The proposed project will involve a full redesign and refurbishment of key areas within the building to create more inclusive and sustainable spaces. There was,

positive feedback from the Youth Panel about the longevity and inclusivity of the organisation and activities – *“they own the building which is good”* and *“it is open to all”* and supports *“a decent amount of kids.”* This in turn means the club will be able to better achieve its goals of meeting the growing needs of young people, improving access and enhancing the safety and well-being of young people in the area.

- **Roundwood School and Community Centre with Sport at the Heart (Roundwood Ward)** - The building is spread over three levels, offering a media suite, performance area, outdoor multi-use games area, IT suite, dance studio, art room, café, and flexible meeting spaces. While the existing facilities serve as an essential resource for young people, this project will focus on maximizing the space and improving its functionality to inspire creativity, promote physical activity, and support the well-being of students and staff alike. Members of the Youth Panel wrote in their comments that this project had a *“clear vision”* and *“would have a big impact.”* They felt that this was in *“an area that is needed, well known, and the impact is already big, and this would increase it.”* The organisation, venue and project were described as *“youth centred”, “very accessible”* and *“all ages, safe area”*. The young people understood the aims clearly, appreciated the style of presentation, and identified that *“they [Beckmead and Sport at the Heart] want to help continue providing activities and hobbies for all children and young people including [those with] SEND.”* They were also impressed by the *“offer of a diverse range of activities for all age groups, all needs and all different groups on the weekends, with SEND specific activities.”*
- **Young Brent Foundation, The Anchor Youth Hub (Roundwood Ward)** – support the continuing establishment of the new facility, whose tender was awarded in June 2024, with capital investment. The facility will provide young people with access to a wide range of recreational, educational, and wellness opportunities, fostering a safe and supportive environment for personal growth and development. The Youth Panel fed back that *“the organisation is well known in the borough and are aware of the context of the area.”* There was positive regard towards the organisation, with one young person stating that *“They seemed genuine – they showed that they know the situations with different areas and showed evidence of someone with lived experience changing.”* There was also an appreciation for how they demonstrated that *“they know how to keep young people from trouble.”* The project and venue were described as *“accessible”* and *“seems like an organised project”* with *“good risk assessment”* and it was identified that *“there are no gyms in the area so this project fills that.”*

3.2.9 The objectives of this programme are to fund structural changes and improvements to premises used by youth organisations to enable better access to facilities and activities for young people. It will also demonstrate to communities the benefits that new development can bring, through the provision of key infrastructure projects, place-making and local improvements.

3.2.10 This programme aligns with the Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) which includes various infrastructure strategies. It is currently being designed

to provide the strategic evidence base and framework that will underpin capital investment across Brent in sport, leisure, and community infrastructure which in turn will ensure that decisions are driven by need, demand, and identified outcomes. This youth facilities enhancement programme is integrated into this process to strengthen strategic alignment, reduce duplication, maximise the Council's investment and help unlock additional funding opportunities.

### **Alternative options**

- 3.2.11 Officers considered two other options. Firstly, officers reviewed a smaller programme with fewer projects. Although this would have reduced capital expenditure, it was felt that the location and potential scale of the programme should be maximised to meet the aims of the Brent Youth Strategy. A second option of not delivering the programme was discounted as capital investment had been made available as part of the OYZ Cabinet decision in 2021 and this would not have met the increasing demand for youth facility spaces and the aims of the Youth Strategy.

### **Timescales**

- 3.2.12 Officers are proposing the following indicative timeline for the programme. It should be noted that the below is for the entire programme and officers will seek to deliver some of the projects / enhancements more quickly where possible.

<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>Estimated Date</b>
Cabinet Approval	Oct - 2025
Consultant Procurement	Nov 2025 – Dec 2025
Design and Surveys	Jan 2026 – Oct 2026
Planning	Oct 2026 – Jan 2027
Contractor Procurement	Jan 2027 – March 2027
Works	April 2027 – March 2028

*Table 1 – Youth facilities enhancement programme milestone plan*

- 3.2.13 Some of the youth providers do not own their buildings, therefore it is necessary to gain approval from the relevant landlords before progression of the projects.
- 3.2.14 Since the projects involve community organisations, it will be necessary to ensure that each project is supported by robust Community Use Agreements (as a condition of funding, planning etc.) to safeguard access and maximise social value.

### **Use of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) Funding**

- 3.2.15 The purpose of SCIL is to help the Council to deliver the infrastructure needed to support development within the Borough. The application of Strategic CIL can be used to demonstrate to communities the benefits that new development

can bring, through the provision of key infrastructure projects, place-making and local improvements. This proposal aims to fund structural changes and improvements to premises used by youth organisations to enable better access and an increase in facilities and activities for young people in the London Borough of Brent

3.2.16 In the Council's Local Plan Policy BS11: Social Infrastructure and Community Facilities identifies that high levels of social and economic disadvantage remain in Brent and that the diverse population of the borough requires a wider range of cultural and community facilities. In terms of health, it states that 38% of children aged 10-11 are classified as overweight or obese and 33% of the population are inactive, which is amongst the highest in England. The Council's Indoor Sports and Leisure Needs Assessment identified that provision is significantly below community needs. Providing recreational space constitutes an essential element in creating a sustainable, positive community. It will assist in supporting young people to meet the aims of the Brent Youth Strategy 2025-8 – to take part, enjoy themselves, feel good and stay safe.

3.2.17 These projects are located in and/or serve growth areas such as Staples Corner, South Kilburn and Church End. There is significant growth in these areas as well as being some of the most deprived areas in the borough so it is vital the Council invests in facilities and improvements to meet population needs.

#### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

4.1 Officers have engaged with youth organisations across the borough to seek their input on proposals as well as involved the shortlisted projects in the feasibility reports to understand their proposals in more detail.

4.2 Officers also involved Brent's young people in the process via the panel process that considered presentations and recommended which projects to take forward. Officers will continue to engage with young people as the projects progress through the design and construction phases.

4.3 The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools as well as relevant ward members will be updated on progress of the schemes and milestones such as planning determination, construction start dates and any significant achievements including topping out and practical completion.

#### **5.0 Financial Considerations**

5.1 The project budget is based on the feasibility reports that incorporate the youth organisations expression of interest applications. Due to the early nature of these discussions and the current design stage, officers are proposing a programme contingency of 20%:

Project Name	Cost (£)
Cricklewood Boxing Club - The Boxing Gym	826k
Jason Roberts Foundation – Gym and Sports Hall flooring	1.06m
Roundwood School and Community Centre x Sport at the Heart	390k
The OK Club – Sports Hall refurbishment	550k
Young Brent Foundation – The Anchor Youth Hub	500k
Programme Contingency	700k
<b>Total</b>	<b>4m</b>

*Table 2 – Cost of each youth facility enhancement project*

- 5.2 Because these organisations are relatively small, they have limited capacity to undertake major capital projects. Therefore, the intention is Brent project manages the works on their behalf. This creates a risk that Brent is liable for overspends or changes in project specifications. Agreements with these organisations need to be clear that Brent's maximum budgets are fixed and they will need to cover any shortfalls or changes in project specifications.
- 5.3 Organisations can also apply for alternative funding sources to supplement the Council's contribution. Should organisations successfully apply for additional capital funds officers will seek to investigate these and any other funding streams to potentially reduce the SCIL request for this programme. It is however recommended to proceed with SCIL funding for the whole programme to ensure it proceeds in line with the projected timescale.
- 5.4 As at the end of August 2025, Brent had £156.9m SCIL with £80m committed and £72.9m allocated to pipeline schemes. Therefore, there is £4m SCIL available for this programme and the Council's Infrastructure Officer Working Group has approved this as an appropriate use of the SCIL funding.
- 5.5 Officers are working with Brent's VAT advisers to structure the arrangement in the most tax advantageous way, recovering the tax if possible. If the tax is not recoverable, the projects will need to be value engineered to ensure they remain within the overall budget.
- 5.6 Finance have carried out financial assessments of the recipient organisations in a similar way to those for prospective suppliers to understand the risks of Brent funding schemes at centres at risk of not being able to deliver the services as agreed. Where risks are identified officers will put in place appropriate mitigations to ensure the facility continues to operate should any of the organisations fail.

## **6.0 Legal Considerations**

- 6.1 Pursuant to section 507b of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Education and Inspections Act 2006) the Council is to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient educational and recreational activities which are for the improvement of young people's well-being, personal and social development, and sufficient facilities for such activities for young people aged 13 – 19, (or up to 25 for young people with additional needs). In addition, the Education and Skills Act 2008 requires the Council to make available to young persons and relevant young adults for whom it is responsible such services as it considers



appropriate to encourage, enable or assist the effective participation of those persons in education or training.

- 6.2 The proposed use of the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy for funding of the improvement works of the youth facilities, the Youth Provision Programme is subject to the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. The Subsidy Control Act 2022 which replaced State Aid controls is designed to ensure the proper functioning of the UK's internal market and ensure that the UK continues to satisfy its international commitments to its trading partners in respect of subsidies.
- 6.3 Under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, public authorities are allowed to award subsidies if it could demonstrate that the purpose respects each of the seven Subsidy Control Principles set out at Schedule 1 of the Act ('the Principles'). The Principles are that the subsidy award must be for a Common interest; it is proportionate and necessary; it is designed to change economic behaviour of beneficiary; the costs would be funded anyway; it is the least distortive means of achieving policy objective; it is for competition and investment within the United Kingdom; and beneficial effects outweigh negative effects. Based on the information provided in the body of this report, the subsidy is not subject to notification to the Competition and Markets Authority under Section 52 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 but is subject to the transparency obligations under Section 6 (which places a duty upon public authorities to post information on to the Transparency Database within three months of making an award/modifying a subsidy or adopting a subsidy scheme). Subject to the above, the funding may be awarded for improvement works at the youth facilities under the Act as measure are consistent with each of the seven Subsidy Control Principles set out at Schedule 1 of the Act.
- 6.4 It is expected that the Director, Property and Assets will agree the procurement and award of contracts for this programme that fall within the definition of Very Low Value, Low Value Contracts and Medium Value Contracts under Brent's Standing Orders. Under Part 3 of the Constitution paragraph 9.5, approval to procure and award Very Low Value Contracts, Low Value Contracts and Medium Value Contracts is delegated to the relevant Corporate Director, and Directors have similar powers under paragraph 9.7 of Part 3 of the Constitution to approve the procurement and award of such contracts falling within their area of responsibility. The Director of Property and Assets therefore has the authority to approve the procurement and award of contracts in respect of the projects.
- 6.5 Some of the proposed projects are in buildings the council does not own. Therefore, legal agreements to conduct works on these properties will need to be in place with the respective landlords.

## **7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 7.1 In March 2025, Cabinet approved the Youth strategy 2025-28. This report addresses Equity, Diversity and Inclusion considerations under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure fair access and inclusivity for all children and young people in Brent.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 The Climate Change Strategy commits the Council to include the need to set standards that support the Council's Zero Carbon ambitions. These will be factored into schemes designs where possible including but not limited to use of solar PV and enhancements to building fabric insulation levels.

## **9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

- 9.1 Some of the proposed projects are in buildings the Council does not own. Therefore, legal agreements to conduct works on these properties will need to be in place with the respective landlords.
- 9.2 There is no impact on Council staff as the consultancy services and works contracts will be delivered by external organisations on the Council's behalf.

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

- 10.1 Young people, local residents and community groups will be kept up to date on progress of the projects through a communication plan drafted and agreed with the youth facility provider.

### **Related documents for reference:**

[Brent Youth Strategy 2025-2028](#) Cabinet report 10 March 2025

#### **Report sign off:**

**Nigel Chapman**

Corporate Director Children, Young People and  
Community Development