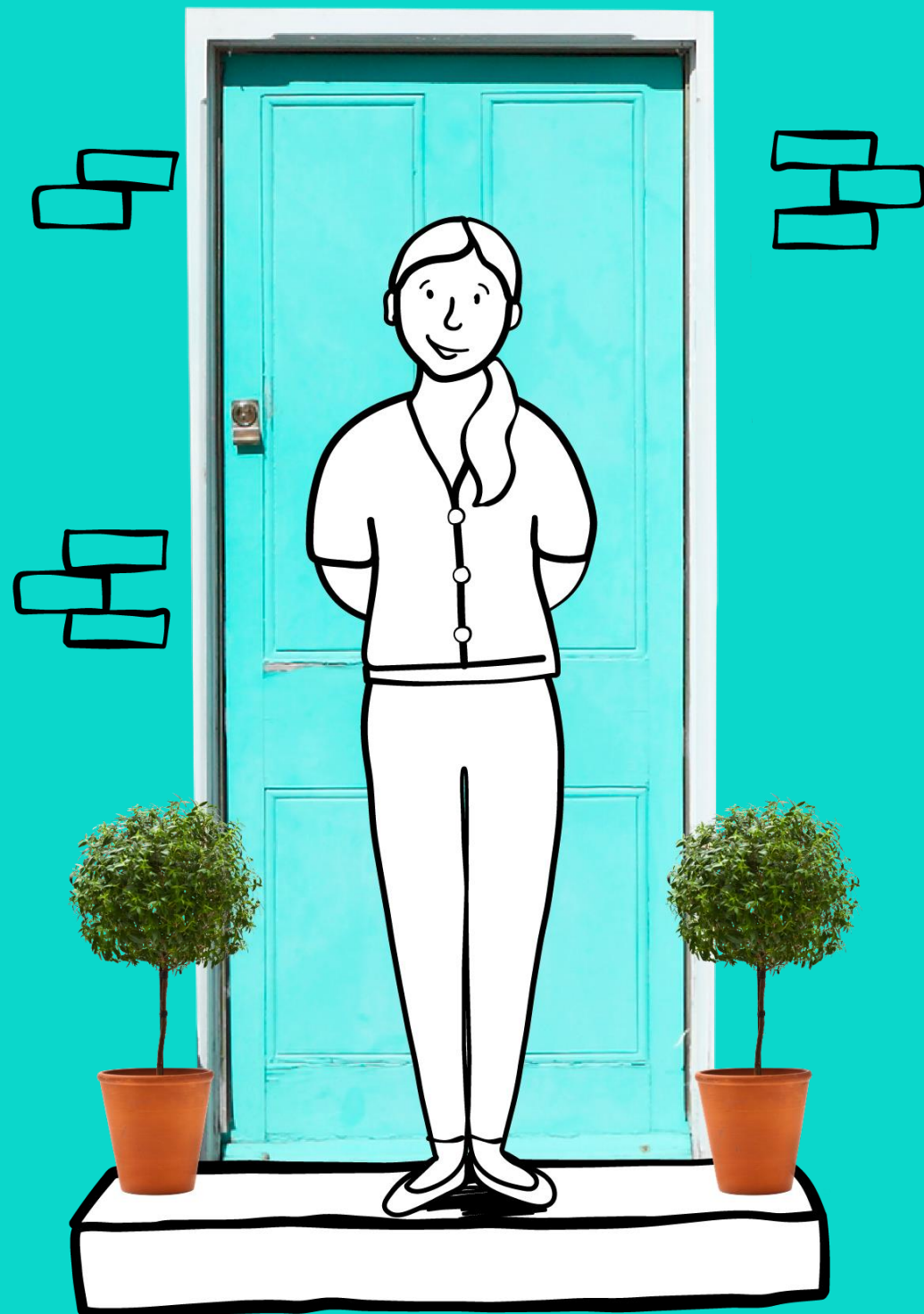


Youth, Play and Participation Service Commissioning Youth and Play 2026-29



Commissioning

Current programme for 2025-26



- The Commissioning of Youth and Play was brought back into the council in 2022
- Initially extending the existing contracts a new process was introduced for 2023-24 and 2024-25
- For 2025-26 these arrangements have been rolled over to all existing providers
- We are now planning for a new round of commissioning to start delivery of services from 1st April 2026 – the aim of this presentation is to go through the key features of the new process

2024-25 Commissioning

In the last full year providers reached 17,557 children and young people – approximately 15% of the population of 5-19 year olds

So far, we expect 2025-26 figures to be broadly similar

We have drafted a report from 2024-25 and will circulate that shortly

Commissioning

Background to 2026 process

- The previous process for 2023-24 was delayed due to being oversubscribed and underestimation of approval process – we are therefore implementing some process changes to improve this for applicants
- Funding for VCFSE is particularly challenging at present, charitable funds are under huge pressure, vastly oversubscribed and less able to fund high number of projects, many more projects formed during COVID, costs have risen.
- This process will undoubtedly face similar pressures. We are suggesting increased clarity of criteria from the outset, so we do not raise unrealistic expectations of funding new organisations.
- Aligning processes and criteria to other MCC VCFSE funding streams particularly OMVCS and Culture (which have the same timescales)



Commissioning

Our Approach for 2026-27

- Continue to invest in high quality youth work and play work opportunities as per previous grant rounds, citywide coverage with weighted investment in wards of high IMD.
- Application process – an EOI round to better advise applicants and triage.
- Focus on investments in existing Manchester based provision (not necessarily existing funded) with a track record of 3 years or more.
- Having an annual small grants programme to support new and emerging provision/ priorities.
- Preference for partnerships or at least close collaboration.
- Increasing reach without compromising quality from 15% to 20% population.



Application process

- **Open process at EOI stage starting from 6/6/25 to 27/6/25.**
- **Invited applications for either small grants (year 1) or longer term investment for 3 years.**
- **Preference for partnerships (though individual applicants are welcome and will be given assessed on merit).**
- **Preference for organisations with clear youth work / play work charitable objectives.**
- **Ward coverage mapped against IMD data and numbers of children and young people residents.**
- **Funding open access provision primarily, with targeted support for communities of interest.**
- **We want geographical spread (as far as practically possible) of inclusive, universal youth and play work.**



2026-27 Proposed changes

- 3 year funding agreement subject to budgets and achievement of annual targets, with an annual small grants process (maximum of £100k per annum out of £1.62m).
- Fund 6 months in advance on completion of monitoring returns – regular VIEWS inputting with a 6 monthly narrative report.
- Clear output and outcome targets for every provider – numbers of participants.
- Improve reporting by ward to stakeholders – annual report.
- EOI process prior to full applications.
- YP involvement in decision making – a proportion of the application % to be by young people's panel(s).
- New scoring framework to include previous performance data.





Commissioning
2026-29

**Thank you for listening –
any comments or questions?**