



STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 -2022

The Strategic Plan for YCT is intended to serve as a high level description of the work that will be sustained and developed by YCT.

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1) Introduction

YCT is well established and locally respected, delivering highly valued services to the children and young people and communities in Essex, Hertfordshire and north London. The core work currently delivered is centred around brief-intervention, person-centred, counselling and associated therapies to improve mental ill health.

Acknowledging the importance of early intervention YCT also aims to be a preventative support charity for children and young people. In essence this means YCT can offer a range of services aiming to improve the life chances of children, young people and their families, be it through training the Children Services workforce, resilience building, mentoring or providing more traditional counselling services.

This Strategic Plan describes how YCT will develop core services while expanding the profile of traded services offered in order to maintain a sustainable operational model for the future. While core business and heritage will be preserved, YCT will look for opportunities to trial new approaches that will build on existing work, giving more opportunity and choice to the clients it works with, expand its reach and establish new areas of work.

2) YCT's Values and Principles

YCT intends that its service should have a positive impact on the lives of its clients, enabling them to lead positive, fulfilling, aspirational and productive lives, free from mental trauma. YCT aims to build the resilience of children and young people, helping to them to achieve and maintain positive mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

YCT aims to support children and young people and their families. In its work it supports young people, helping them to be able to see the possibilities, and then appreciate their life as an opportunity rather than an existence to be endured, or where negative views become acted-out-behaviours leading to harm of themselves and others. YCT's services can help young people to build confidence and self-esteem, to cope and deal difficult circumstances and to make positive choices about their lives.

YCT believes that all young people have the right to access therapeutic services that will enable them to overcome personal difficulties and trauma. YCT is committed to seeking funding and generating income that will enable it to provide the widest range of therapeutic services possible. It will, though, only provide services where full cost recovery is achievable.

YCT's work is shaped and guided by its recognition of the comprehensive rights and freedoms set out in the 54 articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – key among these being the right of children to express themselves and be protected from all forms of violence.

3) Impact of YCT Services

YCT is committed to ensuring that all of its services have defined and measurable impacts on its clients and provide the necessary outcomes for funders. All work will be delivered on the basis that it includes significant positive benefits to users of YCT's services. All of YCT's service delivery is monitored and evaluated using recognised and accepted tools and techniques.

According to the Pro Bono Economics report produced for YCT, in the 2015/16 academic year 179 of the 240 children who could be classified as non-healthy pre-intervention had reported improvements in their mental health risk post-intervention. It is estimated that the total savings over the lifetime of the cohort studied could be some £8.3 million and by extension YCT has a potential cost-benefit ratio of £1:£20.

4) YCT's Strategic Plan for 2019 – 2022.

4.1) The Funding of YCT's Service Delivery and Core Costs

For many years YCT relied solely on grant income to fund all of its work. Recognising that reliance on such funding streams would not be sustainable in the long term the organisation moved to a mixed model of income with grant aid forming part of its income and earned income being a second part.

Apart from the fact that a squeeze on public sector budgets has meant that grant aid through public sector bodies is increasingly rare, many funders providing grant aid are looking for more targeted delivery and outcomes. Whereas YCT will continue to seek grant aid where appropriate, the Board wishes to ensure that there is only limited mission-drift and that work funded through grant applications does not lead to sporadic or 'sudden death' areas of service delivery, nor to place burdens on other areas of its finances.

The aim for the funding of YCT's services and core costs is for it **to be through a continuation of the 'mixed income' model of grant aid and earned income.** Over the next three years it is intended that **earned income becomes a significant proportion of overall income.**

YCT House, the organisation's base, is a vital resource, providing office space for the core staff team as well as rooms in which therapy can take place as well as space for larger meetings, conferences, etc. Over each of the next three years YCT will aim to **cover a significant proportion of the**

running costs through appropriate lettings of parts of its premises. As both the staff team and service delivery increase, YCT will seek opportunities **to extend its current facilities in order to ensure that core staff have appropriate working conditions** and resources, and that facilities for additional services can be accommodated.

Where there are **opportunities to increase income through the development and delivery of new areas of work YCT will seek to exploit such opportunities.** In some cases this will be through pilot projects, and in all cases such additional work will be as a result of business plans for the work having been agreed and supported by the YCT Board. YCT's CEO and Business Support Assistant will be key in the development of these new areas of work.

YCT intends to remain a 'not for profit' organisation. In addition to the existing charity status of the organisation, **additional models of Social Enterprise will be explored** in order to ensure that effective use of income is possible and that YCT's charity status is not compromised.

YCT currently offers donors opportunities to donate to YCT through a number of On-Line systems, and through advice about Wills and Legacies on its website. It is intended that **there will be a substantial increase in income received through donations, gifts and legacies.** The newly appointed Business Support Assistant will take responsibility for promoting and advertising 'giving' to YCT.

Appropriate networking and promotion can lead to valuable contacts being made within the larger companies that are based around the London Fringe, many of which are in YCT's area. **Opportunities to be in receipt of CSR funding, gifts-in-kind, pro bono support and seconded staff will be exploited.**

4.2) The Organisational Stability and Development of YCT

YCT currently has a Board of management that, between them have a wide variety of skills and backgrounds that usefully support the work of the organisation. Having undertaken a skills audit the Board will **aim to further enhance Board membership through the recruitment of additional Board Members** to both support the current delivery of work and develop and grow YCT.

In recent years the development of new roles, and appropriate restructuring, has meant that YCT now has an entirely fit-for-purpose core staff team. In order to decrease pressure on existing staff there are roles that, if sufficient funding should be available, would be valuable to the organisation. With adequate funding in place **appointments will be made to increase the in-house level of skill in IT, Social Media, Marketing and Communications** There is an expectation that, depending on an adequate increase in income, **the Business Support Assistant post will become a permanent post.**

YCT wishes to be a good employer and treat all staff and volunteers appropriately. YCT aspires to match its pay scales alongside those of the NJC scales. As long as the financial situation allows it YCT will **increase staff pay in line with NJC increases** and will **aim to provide staff with pleasant, secure working conditions and equipment.**

YCT has benefited from a range of inputs from volunteers. Further promotion will take place **to recruit further volunteers into a range of aspects of YCT's work.**

The involvement of contracted therapists ensures that the human resource devoted to service delivery can be adjusted according to the level of service delivery required. YCT aims to ensure that it complies fully with HMRC requirements with regard to self-employment vs paid employment. Ongoing work involving consultation with current therapists will continue. Having received expert advice **the Board will make a decision about the best format for the contracting of therapists**, following which therapists will be offered new contracts. Whatever format of employment is agreed, in some cases it might be appropriate to **employ therapeutic staff specifically to progress the development of new work.** As an organisation delivering a large proportion of its work to children and young people YCT is committed to ensuring that their views, attitudes and opinions are intrinsic in the decision making processes of the organisation. In addition to existing consultation processes, **YCT will aim to use a variety of methods to ensure that current service users, and non-service users, especially those in hard-to-reach groups, input into and affect the delivery of existing and future work.**

As a well-respected, professional, service delivering services to a high standard YCT will seek further opportunities to **engage with other services in order to complement each other's delivery and to jointly deliver work.**

YCT is already involved in a number of partnerships and networks and involved in joint bids for funded work. **YCT will aim to develop new work in partnership with existing and new partners, giving opportunities for expansion and increased income-generation.**

The preservation and further development of YCT's public profile and reputation is vital. YCT will **continue to maximise on communicating its principles, services, aspirations and successes to as wide a range of stakeholders, the media, children and young people and the general public as possible.**

The current model of delivery of YCT's work can be replicated across wider geographical areas than the existing Essex, Hertfordshire and North London. **Opportunities will be sought to deliver work over a wider geographical area than at present.**

4.3) YCT's service delivery.

The main model running through YCT's entire existence has been of one-to-one, person centred therapy. Additionally, over many years, group work has enabled the effective delivery of some aspects of YCT's work. Whereas the YCT Board remains committed to the continuation of such work, it also recognises that there are valuable gains to be made delivering work that is aimed at positive mental health. **Work on 'resilience'. 'self-worth' 'confidence', relationships' etc. will form an increasing part of YCT's service delivery.**

Mentoring is evidenced as being valuable to many young people and can be a very effective way of incorporating volunteers into its work. **YCT will continue to deliver and develop its mentoring provision.**

Attending face-to-face sessions of therapy at agreed appointment times suits many of YCT's clients. However, YCT aims to ensure that its services and its service delivery are accessible by and relevant to the lives of all children and young people. YCT plans to **develop types of services and models of delivery which are relevant to the lives of today's children and young people and the environments in which they live.** This might include telephone and e-counselling, the use of Apps, less formal appointment times, etc.

Group work, involving courses for groups of young people, sometimes chosen by school staff as being appropriate, have been part of YCT's service delivery. **The delivery of therapies through the delivery of 'group work' will be continued and developed.**

An organisation the size and structure of YCT is able to **respond swiftly to new pressures, themes and opportunities.** This facility will be exploited where possible, **enabling new areas of work to be brought on-stream within fairly short time-frames.**

YCT has, over the past few years, had its service delivery enhanced, and benefitted those children and young people who respond best to such approaches, through the provision of a range of therapies. **YCT will continue to provide, and promote the increase in play, art, music and drama therapies.**

Forest School has been part of YCT's delivery in the past. **New Forest School partners will be recruited and a full Forest School programme delivered.**

Animal therapy has been shown to produce overall improved emotional well-being in those with autism, medical conditions and those with behavioural issues. **A trained YCT therapy dog will be based at YCT House** during normal working hours and available for use by therapists delivering work there.

In seeking to extend YCT's reach, **opportunities in the field of domestic violence will be explored and developed.**

YCT's expertise enables it to offer a range of training opportunities and professional development. YCT will **offer Continuing Professional Development** opportunities, at cost, to its team of self-employed therapists. YCT will also **continue and grow its training and support offers to fellow professionals** through the continuation of group supervision and through the development of **a structured training programme of courses relevant to allied professionals.** Additionally, **bespoke training courses will be made available when requested.**

As a 'learning organisation' YCT is committed to the professional development of therapists and will **continue to offer 'placement therapist' places to counsellors and other therapists in training.**

5) Quality Standards

As a service accredited by BACP (the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy) YCT aims to ensure that every aspect of its operation and work are of the highest standards and that all staff and contractors are appropriately trained and experienced in order to undertake their roles effectively.

6) Review

This Strategic Plan is a dynamic document and will be reviewed, adapted and updated by the YCT Board on a regular, six-monthly basis.

7) Monitoring and Evaluation

YCT aims to ensure that it walks the walk as well as talks the talk. This Strategic Plan will be monitored and evaluated using the format shown at Appendix 1.

Version 1c. Approved by the YCT Board 17.07.19