1. CONTEXT – LAMBETH THE COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

1.1 Over the last two years, Lambeth council has developed its approach to becoming a Cooperative Council. As part of this vision, it has made it clear that it will increasingly be a commissioner as opposed to deliverer of services. A fundamental part of this is the introduction of cooperative commissioning, and a move away from a traditional model of commissioning. This involves citizens working alongside council staff and elected members in the commissioning of services and is dependent on closer cooperation between all the key stakeholders.

1.2 The council is currently going through a major reorganisation and change programme in order to ensure the council is structurally fit for purpose to support the delivery of cooperative council ambitions. As part of this, a new commissioning structure is being established within the council to lead on this work.

1.3 The YLC, was developed by Lambeth Council as a vehicle for this new approach to commissioning some services for 5 to 19 year olds. Subsequently, the YLC has gained membership from the voluntary and community sector and from citizens, including young people. The YLC is aware of the direction of the council and the context in which it will be working in. It is positioning itself as a key strategic partner and mechanism for community commissioning in the borough, initially focused on play and youth services, but growing to encompass a broader range of services in the future.

What is different about this commissioning approach?

1.4 The traditional commissioning approach largely retains a top-down decision making process with outcomes, details of how services are delivered and who delivers them typically decided by the council with varying degrees of consultation with service users. This approach does not rebalance the relationship between citizens and the local state required to become a cooperative council. The council has been clear that in order to become a cooperative council, it must empower citizens so that genuine cooperation can emerge.

1.5 As part of the new approach, the council has made a commitment to working with citizens as equals at every level of decision making. This includes embedding co-production in all aspects of public services, meaning that service users and service providers will be central to how the council commissions, designs, delivers and assesses services. This is a major transformation in the council's approach - citizens will co-decide what outcomes are to be achieved, how resources will be allocated, which activities will be provided and how services will be reviewed and monitored. Co-production will take place at every step of the commissioning cycle; with continuing dialogue between citizens, councillors and professionals - not just when a service is introduced but throughout its period of delivery and review.
1.6 Lambeth Council’s approach is driven by the wish not only to deliver value for money but also on to take account of the social costs and benefits of different ways of running services.

The cooperative approach is driven by a wish to deliver the following changes:

- Making the citizen central to everything
- An explicit focus on outcomes throughout
- Recognising citizens for what they can bring, not just what they need
- An enhanced role for ward councillors as community-facilitators
- Designating cabinet members as commissioners
- Making co-production with citizens the default way of working for all council staff
- Opening up our data and information and making our decision making as transparent as possible
- Developing greater levels of agility and flexibility as an organisation
- Encouraging innovation by becoming risk-aware rather than risk-averse

2. THE YLC COMMISSIONING APPROACH

2.2 The YLC has developed its commissioning approach in line with the council’s cooperative commissioning ambitions. The commissioning approach will be managed and delivered as a partnership between the council, YLC and the community. The YLC believe this is truly a unique way of working and will be a real model for outcome-based locality and community commissioning.

2.3 The YLC is committed to developing an approach which embeds co-production in all stages of the commissioning process. This model of working will put young people and the community at the centre of the commissioning process and all decisions about their local services and area.

2.4 The YLC recognises this will be a significant change to the commissioning model and the anxiety this may cause. The YLC will manage this new process in an effective and open way ensuring that providers and local communities are supported to engage in this new model.

2.5 The YLC will be adopting the Governance International definition of co-production:

“Co-production of public services means professionals and citizens making better use of each other’s assets, resources and contributions to achieve better outcomes and improved efficiency”.

2.6 The YLC will be developing its approach based on the six principles of co-production as defined by NEF:

1. **Building on people’s existing capabilities**: developing a model, which recognises and grows people’s capabilities and actively supports them in using these at an individual and community level.

2. **Reciprocity and mutuality**: offering people a range of incentives to engage which support the development of reciprocal relationships with mutual responsibilities and expectations.

3. **Peer support networks**: engaging peer and personal networks alongside professionals as the best way of transferring knowledge.
4. **Blurring distinctions**: removing the distinction between professionals and recipients by changing the way services are developed and delivered.

5. **Facilitating rather than delivering**: enabling public service agencies to become catalysts and facilitators rather than central providers themselves.

6. **Recognising assets**: People being equal partners in designing and delivering services and moving away from a model of them being a passive recipient of services. This will build on current and previous good examples of young people's involvement in the borough including the Youth Mayor and Youth Opportunity Fund.

**The YLC principles of co-production:**

- Co-production is at the core – the YLC will bring together young people, community, local providers, elected members and professionals at each stage of the process. Young people and the local communities will co-decide what outcomes are to be achieved, how resources will be allocated, which activities will be provided and how services will be reviewed and monitored.

- Locality working – the YLC will focus on developing a joined-up and coordinated service offer across a locality. This will be based on local discussion and collaboration between all parties to agree priorities, outcomes and services, and in doing so utilising and adding to the existing resources and assets in the area.

- Outcomes-based approach – the YLC will adopt an outcomes based model working in line with community-determined outcomes and council priorities. The YLC supports the dynamic model of well-being, shown over page which is being used by Lambeth Council.

- Improved use of resources – the YLC will focus on providers and service users making better use of each others assets, resources and contributions to achieve better outcomes, the elimination of duplication and waste and improved efficiency.

- Robust contract management – the YLC has developed a robust contract management framework, which has a particular focus on quality assuring services and managing risk.

- Collaborative approach – the YLC will develop a collaborative as opposed to competitive process, and encourage joined up and partnership working, without sacrificing the need to maintain value for money.

- Flexible, quicker and responsive process – the YLC will develop different procurement models to fit the commissioning needs to ensure a quicker and more responsive process. This will be the key driver to encourage local people to get involved.

- Youth led and youth focussed – the YLC will develop an approach which puts the safeguarding and well-being of young people at the centre of services.
3. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS WAY OF WORKING?

3.1 The YLC has been founded on the basis that increasing involvement and collaboration between service users and communities will generate more intelligent and responsive services, which in turn will lead to better outcomes for young people.

3.2 We believe the benefits of this approach will include:

i. **Better value for money**, which the YLC will deliver through:
   - Increased partnership and collaboration between service providers, including sharing resources
   - Removal of service duplication and creating a joined up offer
   - Reduction in overheads through reducing the number of contracts
   - A flexible commissioning model which will enable the YLC to commission services more quickly
   - Fundraising and new revenue generation

ii. **Better outcomes for young people**, which the YLC will deliver through:
   - Enabling young people to design services themselves, resulting in services that better meet the needs of young people
   - Creating a better connection between services and development of pathways for young people
• Promotion and encouraging information sharing and multi-agency working
• Promoting and sharing best practice in order to drive service improvement
• Flexible staff team and processes in place which will enable a commissioning model to be developed which adapts to the changing needs

iii. Greater public value, which the YLC will achieve through:
• Attracting additional investment for young people in the borough
• Developing joint commissioning arrangements with other potential funders – e.g. health, housing and the police
• Building on and mobilising existing resources and assets in the community and applying the YLC’s resource as an additional part of the offer

How will the YLC demonstrate its added value?

3.3 The YLC commissioning approach will include a framework for measuring social value, which is being thought through currently. This is particularly linked into the outcomes-based model of commissioning.

3.4 The YLC is using the Social Enterprise UK definition – “the additional benefit to the community from a commissioning process, over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes.”

3.5 The SROI (social return on investment) methodology is likely to be the mechanism used, however, further exploration of this is required. The YLC will need to balance the costs and resource implications of SROI with the level and quality of information that it can provide.
4. THE YLC COMMISSIONING CYCLE

4.1 An overview of the YLC Commissioning Cycle is outlined below. It is based on the typical commissioning cycle but highlights how young people, the community, providers, the council and other partners need to be involved at each stage of the cycle, so that these can all play appropriate roles in the process and have an impact on the end result.

1. Map
   - The YLC will link with the council to use the existing intelligence of the borough (linking to the Coop Brain and data hub) and needs assessment information. This will provide an indication of the gaps and issues.
   - In addition to this, the YLC will build on the needs assessment with an analysis of the resources and assets of a more local level (asset mapping).
   - As a member organisation with good representation across the borough, through its membership and YLC outreach activities, the YLC will find out and record intelligence for each of the localities, including mapping contacts, provision and resources. This will be core ongoing business of the YLC.
   - The YLC will have targeted outreach / engagement activities across the borough which will better connect / interact with young people, local residents and groups who do not typically engage with the Council. The YLC through its work and networks feels it will be better able to engage a wider reach of young people and the community.
   - The YLC will have a role in attending / coordinating local networks facilitating and encouraging collaborative and joint working. This will include developing a close working relationship with ward councillors.
2. Focus

- Working from the high level outcomes defined by the council (using the key findings from the needs assessment and asset map), the YLC will through its membership and locality links, undertake an engagement programme bringing people together for a discussion on local need, priorities and outcomes. This is significantly different to the current model where council officers would largely do this piece of work.
- YLC communication channels will be used to promote the engagement programme / provide opportunity for people to feed into the discussion, including online platforms.
- YLC locality champions will play a key role in engaging young people, including outreach to schools and local projects.
- YLC will work within the set outcomes framework, agree outcomes for that locality and develop a means for allocating resources. This will include agreeing themes / target groups / priorities.

3. Design

- An expression of interest process for potential providers, inviting anyone interested to be part of the commissioning process will be undertaken.
- Collaboration events will take place – YP and community will present to interested providers the priorities and desired outcomes for the area. Through existing work and links in the area, providers may also have knowledge and awareness of the area / priorities and can feed this into the dialogue.
- Collaborative discussion will take place between young people, community and providers regarding options for meeting outcomes, service needs and service design. This will include providers doing some background and co-production work with young people to design services.
- A process or procedure for identifying the provider, including the assessment criteria, will be identified, including agreeing what we mean by service quality. This will be a robust, open and transparent process with a standard application form and agreed evaluation criteria. Particular focus will be on partnership working, involvement of young people in all stages of the project development, delivery and assessment and community governance.
- The documentation will not include a detailed service specification, instead providers will be asked to respond to a range of outcomes and service qualities. They will be expected to co-produce with young people the activities that they believe will achieve the outcomes and performance indicators which will best measure their delivery. They will also need to demonstrate why their chosen activities will achieve the outcomes and how they intend to embed co-production within their service delivery.
- They will also be expected to demonstrate how they will collaborate with other partners, in order to deliver the outcomes in their submission.

4. Procure

Different models will be used according to the commissioning needs a few examples of the main approaches are outlined below:

**Lead provider model:**
- Use of a lead contractor model (could involve partnerships, sub-contracting or consortium working). This is aimed at ensuring a joined up locality offer and also a way of enabling a large number of delivery partners, including smaller groups, to be involved in the commissioning process without a large number of agreements.
• Interested providers would be brought together to discuss a delivery model for the area and will be encouraged to collaborate, form partnerships or run a consortium model.
• Clear role and expectations of lead provider will be developed and briefing / support sessions will be put in place for providers ahead of the start of the commissioning process.

Grants model
• Use of a simple and typical grants process to enable small projects to be funded and delivered. This would typically be for short-term projects e.g. summer projects.

Contract framework
• The YLC will develop a framework of approved providers which will be used to get provision / services delivered quickly when needed. This will be used for example if the YLC needed to de-commission a project and need to get alternative interim provision in place very quickly or if any activity is needed in response to an incident in the borough.
• This will be set up in a way that enables spot purchasing of approved high quality providers, giving the council access to a very flexible and responsive service.

Key features of the procurement stage:
• YLC application process will be developed and issued to providers for them to provide details of their project and delivery arrangements, including activities, outputs, outcomes and PI’s.
• Evaluation criteria will be developed which will include a focus on co-production and whether the providers have sufficiently demonstrated the logic behind their projects and how this has been co-designed by young people.
• The assessment process, will include the locality champions (young people and community representatives) on the panel, to which providers will present their proposal, so that local young people and the community can play an important part in the scoring process.
• Following confirmation of the provider, contract negotiation will take place, including agreeing targets and indicators and putting contracts in place.

5. Market
• Services / activities will be put in place and the delivery will commence.
• The locality offer of services will be promoted through local networks and champions and through YLC website and communication channels. A planned communications approach including phasing in order to keep messaging and interest will be undertaken.
• Providers will be expected to promote services and use the YLC / council brand. The communication strategy will be co-produced with young people.
• Information will be shared with council to promote as part of offer of services in the borough – YL website
6. Assess

- The YLC contract management framework will be implemented (included in Appendix 1) – this will be a simpler but equally robust process to the contract management framework used by the council.
- The Framework will include monitoring, evaluation and review undertaken by the YLC in partnership with young people, the community and providers.
- The YLC’s approach will focus on 2 aspects:
  - Provider reporting – work with providers to agree a system which provides the information needed in the most effective and simplest way. Quantitative data will continue to be captured through a performance management system.
  - Quality assurance – this will be the key difference to the council previous approach as it will involve young people and the community in a variety of ways in the overall assessment of the service delivery.
- The YLC will play an active role in visiting projects to see them first hand and to meet service users regularly to hear their views and personal stories.
- Young people and the community will be involved in developing some of the approaches including peer inspection.
- The contracts with the providers will include the requirement for ongoing community engagement / involvement in the projects and will include the requirement for an annual open session to review service delivery. The model will emphasise accountability to service users rather than to the YLC.
- The assessment process will be an ongoing process, linked to mapping and locality engagement.
- Contract performance reviews will be undertaken and if the requirements are not met, providers will either go through the improvement planning or decommissioning process.
- Contracts will be robust and will include defaults and termination clauses.

5. THE YLC CONTRACT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

5.1 A diagram outlining the YLC’s contract management framework is attached in Appendix 1. This will be developed in detail during the transitional phase of the YLC. This will be a very robust framework.

5.2 This will focus on three areas:
1. Service delivery: ensuring that the service are being delivered as agreed to the required level of performance and quality
2. Relationship management: keeping the relationship open and constructive, aiming to resolve or ease tensions and identify problems early
3. Contract administration: handling the formal governance of the contract and changes to the contract documentation

5.3 Key features of the contract management framework will include:

- Provider reporting: data submitted through a performance management system / submission of project reporting
- Quality Assurance: monitoring visits, peer inspection, community session to review and discuss projects
- Performance rating, improvement planning and decommissioning as appropriate
5.4 The process will include an implementation review at the early stages of the contract and provision of ongoing performance management and review structure that allows contracts to be evaluated at different intervals.

Safeguarding

5.5 Safeguarding will be central to the YLCs commissioning approach and contact management framework. The YLC Safeguarding Policy has been developed which details the organisational approach.

5.6 In summary, the commissioning approach will include the following:
- Requirement of the providers to complete the section 11 audit as part of their application
- Safeguarding audit to take place prior to project award
- Safeguarding included in the provider reporting
- Safeguarding included in quality assurance / site visits with a focus on seeing the services first hand and liaising with service users about their experience of the services
- Training for providers to ensure ongoing improvement in the safeguarding practice

5.7 The YLC is aware of the ongoing dialogue about safer recruitment and particularly in relation to monitoring of DBS checks. The YLC will want to continue to have a discussion with the LSCB to agree an approach consistent with the guidance when agreed.
Appendix 1 Draft YLC Contract Management Framework