

Bath & North East Somerset Council

DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Mark Elliott	
DECISION DATE:	On or after 03/05/2026	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3694
TITLE:	Abated Rent for Mentoring Plus to occupy Riverside Youth Hub under a contracted-out lease	
WARD:	Walcot	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heads of Terms for grant of lease• Commissioning service award		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The tenant, Mentoring Plus Bath & North East Somerset Ltd has been occupying Riverside Youth Hub since 1st April 2019. The current lease is due to end on 31st March 2026. Mentoring Plus Bath & NE Somerset Ltd is one entity (a company limited by guarantee and also a registered charity). The proposed lease will be held by this entity, as is currently the case.
- 1.2 Bath and North East Somerset proposes to lease Riverside Youth Hub to Mentoring Plus. at an abated rent on the condition that a commissioning service runs alongside the lease. Mentoring Plus have been awarded a wholly funded commission for Student & Family Support (SAFS) which was renewed in September 2025 for 4 years extendable to 6.
- 1.3 Mentoring Plus has been in occupation at Riverside Youth Hub under a different agreement since 2019 at a peppercorn rent. This lease will be in place until the end of August 2029 at a peppercorn rent (if abated). If the commissioning service is brought to an end for any reason during the term of the lease, then the tenant can stay in occupation (at the Council's discretion) but will be required to pay market rent.
- 1.4 The premises are used for the general community benefit of the people of Bath and North East Somerset, primarily to provide public rooms for use for recreational and educational purposes, together with ancillary office space and catering facilities.

1.5 The decision for an abated rent will contribute towards keeping the property occupied. Furthermore, Mentoring Plus will be responsible for keeping the building in good condition throughout the term of the lease but excluding liability for the structural integrity of the building including roof, which will all remain the responsibility of Bath and North East Somerset Council in its capacity as landlord. Mentoring Plus will yield it up in this condition at the end of the term. Mentoring Plus will also be responsible for all other out goings, such as business rates and utilities in relation to the use and occupation of the property.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is asked to delegate to the Head of Corporate Estates & Development authority for:

2.1 The granting of a new lease from 1st April 2026 until the end of the commission for Student & Family Support, which will be outside of the security of tenure provisions set out in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

2.2 Mentoring Plus satisfying Bath and North East Somerset Council in the Council's absolute discretion, that throughout the terms of the lease:

- The premises are used for the general community benefit of the people of Bath and North East Somerset, primarily to provide public rooms for use for recreational and educational purposes, together with ancillary office space and catering facilities. Space must be made available for hire by Community Groups
- Mentoring Plus ensures delivery of two days per week (for minimum of 2 hours per session, for 44 weeks per year) of accessible positive activities for young people aged 13-19.
- A robust business plan is in place has been presented by Bath Mentoring Plus and approved by the Council's accountants, setting out how they can deliver and identify commensurate improvements to economic, social or environment wellbeing in the area to be delivered from the project.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 Mentoring Plus is a BathNES youth charity providing 1-1 mentoring, in-school mentoring, school attendance support and open-access youth work to children and young people in the county. It reaches up to 300 young people each year, referred to the charity by schools, social care and families. Young people struggling with education (disengagement, poorly met SEN, low attendance), family issues (bereavement, family breakdown, care responsibilities, criminality) and poor mental wellbeing (depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, social isolation) are supported by positive adult role models to reflect on difficulties, find coping strategies and pursue positive interests. They also provide highly valued family support and multi-agency casework and safeguarding.

3.2 The work that Mentoring Plus offers directly helps young people's confidence, engagement with education, employability skills and aspirations. At Riverside Youth Hub, Mentoring Plus welcomes mentors and mentees, other community organisations including Genesis, Bath Toy Library, Dorothy House and Pandas,

as well as providing 88 x sessions per year of open-access youth club including hot meals, sports coaching, live music workshops, arts and crafts.

- 3.3 The open market rent for this site is £25,180 p.a. The market rent will be reduced to a peppercorn rent subject to abatement of the rent to allow the charity to continue to provide their services to the community.
- 3.4 Mentoring Plus will be responsible for keeping the building in good condition throughout the term of the lease but excluding liability for the structural integrity of the building including roof, which will all remain the responsibility of Bath and North East Somerset Council in its capacity as landlord.
- 3.5 Mentoring Plus will be responsible for all other out goings, such as business rates and utilities in relation to the use and occupation of the property.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The terms are less than best consideration as the lease is less than 7 years and as such is compliant with S.123 (2) of the LGA 1972.
- 4.2 Mentoring Plus have been awarded a wholly funded commission for Student & Family Support (SAFS) which was renewed in September 2025 for 4 years extendable to 6.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The proposed contracted-out lease will benefit from an abated rent to allow Mentoring Plus to provide the community with support for young persons. The market rent is £25,180 p.a. which will be reduced to a peppercorn rent.
- 5.2 Mentoring Plus will be responsible for the upkeep of the building including all bills, rates and insurance. This will mean that the building will run at cost neutral.
- 5.3 There will be no financial impact on the Council as the same tenant has been in occupation under a different agreement since 2019 at a peppercorn rent. This lease will be in place until the end of August 2029 at a peppercorn rent (if abated). If the commissioning service is brought to an end for any reason during the term of the lease, then the tenant can stay in occupation (at the Council's discretion) but will be required to pay market rent.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 Mentoring Plus demonstrates clear, positive impacts across all protected characteristics, with particularly strong benefits for young people with SEND, mental health needs, and those experiencing socio economic disadvantage. No negative or discriminatory impacts were identified. Existing inclusive practices and ongoing monitoring ensure that the service continues to promote equality of opportunity and reduce barriers to engagement.

7.2 Equality Impact Assessment:

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact	Evidence / Rationale	Mitigation / Actions
Age	Positive	Service is designed for children and young people aged 7–21. Mentoring, youth work and attendance support are age-appropriate and tailored. Open-access youth sessions provide safe, structured environments for adolescents.	Continue age-appropriate safeguarding, activity design and mentor training.
Disability (including SEND and mental health)	Strongly Positive	High proportion of referrals relate to poorly met SEN, neurodiversity, anxiety, depression and social isolation. Mentors trained in trauma-informed practice and adapting communication. Riverside Youth Hub is accessible and offers quiet spaces.	Maintain and expand SEND-specific training; ensure accessibility audits; monitor outcomes for young people with SEND.
Sex / Gender	Positive	Boys and girls access services equally. Mentor matching considers comfort and safeguarding. Activities appeal across genders.	Continue gender-sensitive matching and monitoring participation by gender.
Race / Ethnicity	Positive	Service is open to all ethnic backgrounds. Staff trained in cultural awareness and anti-discriminatory practice. Collaboration with community groups supports inclusion.	Continue outreach to diverse communities; ensure accessible communication for families with language barriers.
Religion or Belief	Neutral to Positive	Activities are secular and inclusive. Adjustments made for religious observance, dietary needs and cultural expectations.	Maintain flexible scheduling and culturally sensitive practice.
Sexual Orientation /	Positive	Safe, confidential environment for LGBTQ+ young people. Staff	Continue LGBTQ+ inclusion training;

Gender Identity		trained in inclusive language and safeguarding.	ensure visibility of inclusive policies.
Other Relevant Factors (e.g., socio-economic disadvantage, caring responsibilities, trauma)	Strongly Positive	Many young people supported face poverty, food insecurity, caring responsibilities, bereavement, family breakdown or parental criminality. Hot meals, safe spaces, and multi-agency casework reduce barriers and improve wellbeing.	Continue targeted outreach; maintain provision of hot meals and inclusive youth sessions; strengthen multi-agency partnerships.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 The building has a low environmental footprint due to its small scale and existing structure. Its primary impacts relate to operational energy use and transport. With modest upgrades—insulation, heating efficiency, and renewable energy—the building could achieve significantly improved environmental performance. The presence of mature trees and community use contributes positively to the local environment and social sustainability.

8.2 The building’s energy rating is a D and expires in April 2029. Some recommendations were made for the building with most having a low-medium impact on carbon emissions. Replacing the heating boiler plant with a condensing type would however have a potentially high positive impact on carbon emissions although no plans to do so in the near future.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

Lead Cabinet Member: Cllr Paul Roper

Head of Legal and Democratic Services: Michael Hewitt

Section 151 Finance Officer; Stuart Donnelly

Contact person	Rita Gulla 01225 396452
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	