

Report from the Assistant Director, Partnerships and Early Intervention

## **CITY CENTRE FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE – An update**

### **Summary**

1. This report offers Members a further brief update on the search for sites and funds to establish enhanced facilities for young people close to the city centre.

### **Background and Progress**

2. The development of new city-centre facilities for young people continues to move forward in two distinct and complementary strands.

### ***myplace***

3. We are still working with Phil Bixby to continue to explore the potential to develop a facility for young people at the ruins of St.Leonard's Hospital adjacent to the Museum Gardens. The design proposals for a contemporary adaptation and extension of the ruins have been discussed informally with city heritage staff, English Heritage, City Strategy and other key groups that might contribute to the development of a programme of activities and events utilising the new facility. Although there has been broadly positive responses from most parties, there are some sensitivities around the current design proposals which will need to be considered in more detail. Further consultation is continuing. It is unlikely that we will be able to progress these discussions to a more formal phase without the funds to back a scheme, and to enable us to commission more detailed designs.
4. Clearly, therefore, the success of this proposal will depend on sourcing funding for the scheme. The current climate is not particularly conducive to this, as the latest news on York Central illustrates. Nevertheless we are still pursuing two possible avenues of support. The Heritage Lottery Fund has a specific 'youth fund' element within its resources and it is keen to work with local authorities to bring about innovative and ambitious restoration that can include community involvement, volunteering and skills training. The Assistant Director for Partnerships and Early Intervention is also meeting with the directors of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to explore possible longer term funding. It is unlikely that these will bear fruit in the short term, but we will assess the medium term prospects and report back to Members.

## ***“myplace now”***

5. The proposal for a youth-run city centre social facility continues to command support, and a steering group has been established including representation from St Michael-le-Belfry, FUSE, York CVS and council officers. The group have met regularly to consider strategies to get a city centre café/ venue that could be run and used by young people. It is hoped this could be part of a larger building, with rooms that could be let to various user groups in order to bring revenue into the building to make it sustainable.
6. The steering group has agreed that a new charitable body be established, and the creation of a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee is being investigated. This body would adopt broad aims to support all young people in the city, with an open door policy. This strategy would assist in securing additional funding.
7. Discussions have begun with Active Life Academy, a local charity and company with comparable aims and objectives. They would be willing to work in partnership to get a building they can use that has a café area for young people. Ideally a building such as the Old Orleans Building or Divan Centre would allow a café to be developed on the ground floor with other community services. Having contacted Development Control, the Divan Centre building would seem to be the best option worth pursuing in the short term. The identification of funds to support the project remains the key priority and needs the support of all the partners to make it happen.
8. A group of young people from York travelled to Northern Ireland in August to visit ‘Exodus’, a venue for young people that has a café and a gig area. They were inspired by what has been achieved with the help of a local philanthropist. The café had leather seats and “was better than Starbucks”. The young people would like something like this in York!

## **Consultation**

9. Involvement of young people in both proposals is crucial and we have reconvened meetings with two key groups following the summer break. Their views and aspirations will form the basis of final proposals.

## **Options and Analysis**

*(This report is for information.)*

## **Corporate Priorities**

10. A successful project to enhance city centre youth facilities would contribute to meeting the following corporate priorities:
  1. Improving the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city.

2. Improving the health and lifestyles of the people that live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest.
3. Increasing people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
4. Increasing the use of public and other environmentally-friendly modes of transport.
5. Reducing the environmental impact of council activities and encouraging, others to do the same.
6. Reducing the actual and perceived impact of violent, aggressive and nuisance behaviour on people in York.

## Implications

11. Any relevant financial, HR, equalities, legal, crime and disorder, IT, property and planning issues will be identified at an appropriate point as the work progresses and brought before Members as necessary.

## Risk Management

(There are no significant risks inherent in this report. A full risk analysis will be completed before any specific proposals are brought forward.)

## Recommendations

12. That the Young People's Working Group note this update report and comment as they wish.

*Reason: additional investment in youth facilities in the city is in line with our corporate priorities, and the views of residents and young people themselves.*

## Contact Details

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Report Approved

Yes

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Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes: None