

Community, Leisure & Recreation

Report Title:	Community Youth Centre Working Group
Meeting Date:	12 July 2022
Contact Officer:	Mandy Sturdy, Town Clerk Andrea Oughton, Asset Manager

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee on the progress of the planning phase of the Community Youth Building and to elect a Councillor to sit on the Working Group.

Background

2. The Community Youth Centre Working Group (CYCWG) is tasked to oversee the specification, tender, planning application and build process, along with all relevant swift decision making, ensuring a correct legal basis and conformance with all funding and planning conditions in delivering a new Community Youth Building on Southern Road Recreation Ground (SRRG).

Update

3. Following agreement of the outline brief Acanthus Clews Architects (ACA), in conjunction with CYCWG, have developed designs for the new building. ACA and CYCWG have met monthly since February to develop the design. The design has gone through a number of iterations and the project team are now moving towards a set of plans which will be submitted as a pre-planning application to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC).
4. It is expected to submit a pre-planning application by September / October, feedback will then be used to adjust designs. A public consultation will take place prior to submission of a full planning application. The Town Council will be consulted at each stage.
5. Consultations are underway and / or planned with Scouts, Guides, Lord Williams's School students, Army and Air Cadets and primary school students.
6. Here is some consultation feedback received to date: Youth have requested dedicated areas to decorate and make their own, there are no quiet areas to be alone or away from noise of other groups, incorporate study/meeting/homework area, design too open, separate toilets for youth to avoid potential safeguarding issues, flexible wall between the hall and community area to be sufficiently soundproofed.
7. The latest design (see Appendix 1) includes community space, function/community hall (to accommodate 20-100 people which can be opened up to accommodate 200 for special events), dedicated areas for the youth, a kitchen, office, servery, toilets, two changing rooms and referee's rooms.

8. There has been no clear directive from SODC regarding changing room provision due to not having anyone in a leisure post at present. A senior planning officer has suggested the best course of action is to submit a pre-application enquiry with details of what is proposed and how it is supported by the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and SODC will carry out some pre-application consultations with Sport England as part of the process. CYCWG continue to consult with sporting groups to ascertain potential usage for changing rooms on SRRG.
9. Plans also include provision of a new car park and relocation of the play area to the opposite side of the existing access road. The cost of moving the play area is not included in cost estimates and will need to be funded from elsewhere, possibly using s106 or CIL funds.
10. Design consultants have been appointed including, a structural engineer, M&E engineer, BREEAM assessor, quantity surveyor, transport consultant and planning consultant all of whom attended their first monthly meeting with ACA and CYCWG in June. Landscape architects have yet to be appointed. Quotes for an approved inspector, who advises on building control matters have been received and currently under review.
11. Ecology, arboricultural, topographical and transport surveys have taken place.
12. Funding and grant opportunities are being investigated by Thame Youth Projects and Town Council Officers.
13. CYCWG are currently working through a business plan to ensure the building is self-sufficient and provides resources for all aspects of the community.
14. The current programme (subject to funding) is for completion by December 2024.

CYCWG

15. The Terms of Reference for the Working Group dictate the Core Members are made up of four Town Councillors, four Thame Youth Projects Representatives, the Town Clerk and the Asset Manager. Currently the Council is represented by Cllrs Bretherton, Cowell and Gregory with a vacancy following the resignation of James Tipping.

Resource Appraisal

16. Thame Youth Projects are using their experienced fundraising teams to identify suitable grants and funding. Officers are also investigating funding options using experience and lessons from previous successful projects.
17. Promotions and marketing will be required to reach a wider audience for both the building consultation and fundraising – this will include some officer time.

Risk Assessment

18. Planning permission is rejected – potential additional architect fees to resubmit planning application.
19. Increase in build cost above £1.5m plus cost of landscaping and relocation of the play area.

20. The building cannot be funded – value engineering exercise to reduce cost, reduce size of building or delay the build date to allow further time to raise funds. A review of community use to engage new stakeholders who could help fund the build.

Legal Powers:

- Local Government Act 1972 s133
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s16
- Localism Act 2011 s1 General Power of Competence

Action:

- i) To **note** the report.
- ii) To **elect** a Councillor Representative to sit on the Working Group.