

Subject: Central Youth Hub – Extract from the proceedings of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee meeting held on the 8 March 2021

Date of Meeting: 18 March 2021

Report of: Executive Director Families, Children & Learning

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of Policy & Resources Committee

To consider the report and the recommendations from the Children Young People & Skills Committee.

Recommendations:

- (1) That it be agreed that the Council can enter into a non-legally binding Memorandum of Understanding with Brighton Youth Centre and OnSide as a basis to submit a funding application and to develop proposals for a Youth Zone in the centre of Brighton;
- (2) That it be agreed to submit a joint funding application with OnSide and Brighton Youth Centre to the Youth Investment Fund; and
- (3) That the revised funding arrangements as set out in the Central Youth Hub report and financial implications be approved.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS COMMITTEE

4.00pm 8 MARCH 2021

VIRTUAL

MINUTE EXTRACT

Present: Councillor Clare (Chair) Hills (Deputy Chair), Allcock (Opposition Spokesperson), Brown (Group Spokesperson) Grimshaw, Hamilton, Lloyd, McNair, Nield and Simson.

Co-optees: Ms L Brown, Mr T Cristin, Mr B Lewis, Mr A Muirhead and Mr S Parr.

77. Central Youth Hub

- 77.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Families Children & Learning which provided information on the option to form a partnership with OnSide and Brighton Youth Centre (BYC) to bid for funding from the Government's Youth Investment Fund (YIF) to develop a Youth Zone in the city and outlined the Council's financial commitment if there was agreement to proceed. The report was introduced by the Head of Service - Integrated Team for Families, Youth & Parenting, and by Mr M Roe (BYC) and Ms C Kanakides (Onside).
- 77.2 Ms L Brown supported the idea of a youth centre but was concerned that if it were located in the centre of the City it may not be accessible for young people living further away, particularly with the cost of bus fares, and suggested that the funding be distributed to a number of projects across the whole City instead. The Head of Service said that was a good point, but data showed that young people did travel across the City to access youth centres. Ms Kanakides said that one of the issues being considered was providing a minibus and/or providing a bus pass to allow people to travel for free.
- 77.3 Councillor Simson noted that there may be an option of selling the Council the land and building and asked what the financial implications maybe for the Council. The Head of Service said that would need to be discussed further before any decision was made. Councillor Simson noted that OnSide Centres worked with 8 -19 yr olds and asked where the funding would come from to work with those aged 8 -11 as currently the funding from the Council that was given to youth provision was from age 11 upwards. Mr Roe said that they already worked with those aged 8-11 as funding came from a variety of sources so there would be no demand on the Council to provide finance for that age group. Councillor Simson was also concerned that having a Centre in the middle of the City could be detrimental to those living in the outlying areas who for various reasons may not be able to access it. The Head of Service said that there was a commitment to retain the neighbourhood projects, which would be linked to the Central Youth Hub and would support access.

- 77.4 Councillor Hamilton noted that this was the first step in a long process, and that a funding application was being made which may or may not be successful. The report said that ideally the venue would be built on land owned by the Council in the centre of the City, but he understood that the only possible sites were in Moulsecomb, Coldean and Portslade and so the Brighton Youth Centre was really the only viable option. He said that recommendation 2.3 was important and asked that the fringe areas were not sacrificed for a central venue.
- 77.5 Councillor Brown said that the Conservative Group did have some reservations, and whilst they fully supported the idea were concerned about the financial implications of such a large project. She noted that the capital investment required from the Council, even with a successful bid to the Youth Investment Fund, had increased from £2.1m to £2.7m since the pre-meet held a few weeks before this meeting, which was a concern. Only £30m of the £500m of the investment fund would be released and that made our chance of securing the money slimmer. The report said that the land could be bought for a nominal fee but there was no indication of what that fee would be or of the long-term financial implications for the Council. The Head of Service referred to the change to the finances and said that when the papers were prepared for the pre-meet the figure was £2.1m, but it had increased as usually councils would be asked to contribute £400k a year for the three years, and an agreement had been made previously that instead of paying £400k this Council would pay £200k and pay £600k up front in capital, so that was where the difference of £600k came from. The Chair added that the revenue money put in the budget this year covered that funding and that would cover the capital funding and but also some revenue which could be save up to the point that the revenue was available.
- 77.6 Councillor Hills said that it would be good to have a state of the art centre for young people in the City. She noted that the venue may be in the pilot low-traffic neighbourhood and asked if there would be provision to store bicycles and hoped that the building would have a low environmental impact. Mr Roe said that he hoped that there would be places to park bicycles and the building would be environmentally friendly.
- 77.7 Mr Muirhead said that youth investment could only be a good thing and was pleased that BYC would be a key provider.
- 77.8 Councillor McNair asked if the new partnership would work with other groups such as Scouts etc. Mr Roe said that the facilities would be available to all groups and expected there to be more interaction with other youth groups.
- 77.9 Councillor Allcock said that it was important to invest in young people and welcomed the investment from OnSide. It would be important to ensure that the project was as sustainable.
- 77.10 The Committee voted on the recommendations. The Conservatives confirmed that they would be abstaining, and all others were in favour of the recommendations.
- 77.11 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee –
- (i) Agreed that the Council could enter into a non-legally binding

Memorandum of Understanding with Brighton Youth Centre and OnSide as a basis to submit a funding application and to develop proposals for a Youth Zone in the centre of Brighton;

- (ii) Agreed to submit a joint funding application with OnSide and Brighton Youth Centre to the Youth Investment Fund;
- (iii) Noted that any revenue the council commits to this scheme would not detract from the existing neighbourhood focused Youth Service Grants to areas 1, 2 and 3.