

**Chairperson and Committee Members**

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

12 SEPTEMBER 2013

Meeting Status: **Public**

Purpose of Report: For Decision

**YOUTH INITIATIVE FEASIBILITY - YOUTH CENTRE**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1 This report summarises the findings and recommendations from the feasibility study on developing a youth initiative and seeks support from the Committee for the next stages. This will involve more detailed work on establishment, management and operation of a youth centre. The executive summary from the youth initiative feasibility study report is provided as Appendix 1. The full feasibility study can be found on the Council website at [www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/Forms-Documents/Reports-and-Surveys/](http://www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/Forms-Documents/Reports-and-Surveys/)

**SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION**

- 2 This report does not trigger the Council's Significance Policy.

**BACKGROUND**

- 3 In the 2012 Long Term Plan, the Council resolved to bring forward the development of youth centre from 2022/23 to 2014/15 (year 3). Provision has been made for a capital cost of \$650,000 and \$193,000 for annual operating costs.
- 4 In order to progress the development of a youth centre, Council staff developed a brief for a feasibility study and established an Advisory Group to provide advice to Council on the findings and recommendations of the study. Submissions to the 2012 Long Term Plan showed that, while there was considerable community support for a youth centre, there were also community concerns (SP-13-963). An advisory group made up of Council, Youth Council and community representatives provided the environment for discussion about those concerns during the conduct of the feasibility study.
- 5 The Advisory Group was established in September 2012. The membership of the group is found in Appendix 3. This group recommended widening the scope of the project to allow for consideration of other options than a youth centre. As a result, the purpose of the initiative and the feasibility study brief were broadened. The feasibility study brief is provided as Appendix 2.
- 6 The purpose of the initiative was defined as:  
Providing open access space/s where young people in the south of the District have the opportunity to:
  - gather and be themselves in place/s which they feel ownership over
  - participate in free unstructured and structured social, recreation and educational activities which contribute to their development
  - access the support of youth workers in their lives.

- 7 The target group is young people aged 13 – 21 years of age. The youth initiative is an open access service for all young people as opposed to a targeted service for a few young people. While not targeting 'at risk' young people, the initiative would not exclude them. It also acknowledges the difference in need/interest within the age range, gender, ethnicity and youth sub-cultural groups. Programmes would be developed accordingly.
- 8 The youth initiative is underpinned by a youth development approach delivered by youth workers. This helps to transform a social and recreational opportunity into something which better supports young people's social and personal development. In New Zealand, youth work is most commonly offered through open access youth centres.
- 9 The south of the District refers to the area from Paekākāriki to Waikanae. It was acknowledged the initiative will not meet the needs of young people in Otāki and Te Horo. Further investigation into the needs of young people in these communities will be considered after the development of the current initiative.
- 10 This report summarises the key findings, considerations for option development, assessment of options and recommendations of the study. It then provides information on key considerations for the preferred option and next steps.

## CONSIDERATIONS

### About the feasibility study

- 11 Paragraphs 12 to 21 provide summarised information from the feasibility study.
- 12 The scope of the study was focused on how the social, recreational needs of young people could be met while providing youth development outcomes for young people. It did not include health and social services needs of young people. The study drew on international, national and local information. Local surveys, interviews and focus groups were undertaken with organisations and individuals, including young people. The executive summary is included as Appendix 1.
- 13 Key findings and considerations of the study are;
  - None of the options would duplicate activities or services for young people in the area. Findings from the study show that one of the biggest barriers for young people to participating in organised activity is a lack of clubs catering for their interests.
  - Outward focused projects which engage with the community are more likely to succeed. A majority of local social and recreational organisations surveyed were interested in engaging with the proposed youth initiative.
  - Location and management operations largely determine success of a youth initiative, especially in early stages of establishment.
  - The youth initiative would provide activities not currently available in the community which young people are interested in. The surveys show young people would like more provision of activities to support their social and recreation needs than is currently provided in the south of the District.

- Targeted activities are required to reach the different needs of young people in this age range.
- Considerations about how young people move around the area and where they feel safe are important in the development of the initiative. The Coastlands area was identified as a key place which young people felt was 'neutral'; where anyone from anywhere can go and 'hang out there'.
- The youth initiative needs to involve young people in decision making to ensure youth ownership and success. Findings from the study show that having young people involved in the development and implementation of the project is crucial to its success.
- A central theme from the focus groups was a need/want for a place specifically for young people which provides access to free or low cost activities, opportunities and spaces not available to them otherwise.

### **Youth Initiative Options**

- 14 Drawing on existing international and national models as well as local findings and consultation, three options were developed and assessed;
- Option 1 - Clubs based would provide programming through existing organisations. No youth worker is assigned, instead youth work training would be provided. A coordination role would be required. Funding would be directed to supporting existing organisations and their engagement with young people. This option was developed as a result of interest from some stakeholders for a model which provided better access for young people into existing club activities with support.
  - Option 2 - Mobile Service is the provision of a mobile service which could have a physically mobile space attached (i.e. bus). It involves 'detached' youth workers engaging with young people through activities and events in the community. It would draw on existing organisations and their spaces (as in Option 1) and activities would also take place in public spaces.
  - Option 3 - Outward Focused Centre is based on a modified youth centre model. Youth workers would provide programming in a central youth space and other community spaces. There is opportunity for events and activities to be held beyond the physical space in partnership with existing organisations as well as inviting the community 'inwards' to provide services to young people in the central space.

## Analysis of Options

- 15 The three options were assessed against the youth initiative criteria in the feasibility study. The following table from the study shows that Option 3 best meets the criteria.

Youth Initiative Criteria	Option 1: Club Based	Option 2: Mobile Service	Option 3: Centre Based
a) Potential for space/s to provide youth ownership			
b) Ability to provide a wide range of activities			
c) Ability to provide good youth worker support under a youth development approach			
d) Ability to be community connected			
e) Open to all young people aged 13 – 21 in the south of the District			
f) Could be easily accessible			
g) Be cost effective and sustainable			
h) Reflect the Council's Treaty of Waitangi obligations and be culturally inclusive			
i) Not duplicate existing services for young people			
<b>KEY</b>			
Does not meet criterion			
Some challenges to overcome to meet criterion			
Strong likelihood of meeting criterion			
Further investigation required			

- 16 The strength of Option 1 (Clubs based) is that it draws on existing community resources and minimises possibilities of replication of activities. A key benefit is that it encourages clubs to develop their youth membership and understanding of youth development. Limitations include; that it does not meet the youth initiative criteria or the gap identified in activity provision. Findings concluded that Option 1 would be more attractive to those aged 15 and under.

- 17 The strength of Option 2 (Mobile Service) is that it draws on existing community resources and engages young people in community spaces. Key benefits include; that it provides mobile youth workers and resources for events which other organisations could access. Key limitations include; that it does not meet the criteria of the youth initiative, would be attractive to those aged 15 and under and provides limited physical space for young people to meet. Issues to consider include; difficulties ensuring youth ownership, weather dependency and a need for staff with a wide range of skills including transporting equipment.

- 18 The strengths of Option 3 (Outward Focused Centre) are that it enables programming in a central space and the community, provides stability and a communal space for young people to connect. It has come from a youth initiated concept which increases youth ownership. Limitations include; that it requires a physical space, will take time to become embedded into the youth culture and will require ongoing subsidy to operate. Barriers which would need to be addressed include negative stereotypes of young people and related public scrutiny of the facility. Depending on programme management, Option 3 has the potential to engage a wide demographic range of young people who vary in age, gender, ethnicity and interest.
- 19 Young people preferred Option 3. It was viewed as a space that could be youth owned with the support of youth workers, where young people could initiate and 'do their own thing', not just be 'occupied' by structured activities. Young people also liked the stability a physical space offered.

### **Recommendations of Feasibility Study**

- 20 The key recommendation from the feasibility study is that the Council establishes a stand alone youth centre (Option 3) as the most effective model for the delivery of the youth initiative.
- 21 It is also recommended that;
- the model is outward and youth development focused, engaging with communities, iwi and organisations young people access
  - young people are heavily involved in the development and the delivery
  - qualified youth workers are employed.
- 22 Both the Youth Council and the Advisory Group are essentially in agreement with the recommendations of the study. In addition, the Advisory Group also makes the following recommendations. The youth centre needs to:
- employ high quality youth workers in a "youth owned" physical space
  - be centrally location, neutral and safe
  - avoid any duplication
  - be managed independently of Council
  - be established as soon as practicable
  - be located in a leased space to minimise risk.
- 23 The advisory group stated that the youth centre would take a minimum of 3 years to 'bed in' and therefore recommend a long-term commitment by Council.
- 24 The full statement of the Advisory Group's recommendations is found in Appendix 3.

### **Other considerations: Stakeholder thoughts**

- 25 In general, local stakeholders were supportive of the development of a youth initiative. Most felt a youth centre would have benefits and opportunities for young people they worked with. There were some concerns that;

- the model needed to be based in a youth development framework
  - that a youth centre needed to be carefully developed
  - and the project should not be operated by Council.
- 26 Faith based youth group leaders and youth pastors were interviewed to gather information on current activity and future plans for youth groups in the area. There was support for the youth initiative and interest in a youth centre model. There is no duplication foreseen with church youth groups. Half of those interviewed stated they would benefit from having a free and accessible space available to their group for events or weekly use.
- 27 A meeting was held in August 2013 with Kapiti Youth Support staff to discuss the findings and recommendations of the feasibility study. This group raised concerns about a centre based model in terms of its capacity to deliver youth development support to a wide range and number of young people. They suggested a hybrid model that connects young people into existing groups and activities and were interested in exploring models of management and operation for such a model.

### **Considerations for Development of Option 3: Youth Centre**

- 28 As presented to Council in 2012, the youth centre facility is proposed to be a multi-functional facility that would enable variety of activities and tools for youth engagement; somewhere for young people to express themselves through music, art and performance, develop projects, learn, connect and socialise.
- 29 It is envisaged that the centre will be open between 40 – 50 hours per week. Research into the patterns of existing youth centres shows the majority have clear visitation patterns regardless of size or geographical location. Peak use tends to occur after school, weekends and holidays up to 7pm plus special events after 7pm.
- 30 Location and visibility are key determinants of use for youth centres and are important for safety and ease of access. Findings show a Paraparaumu based youth centre is best positioned close to Coastlands within walking distance of the Paraparaumu train station with open visibility in the community.
- 31 The future town centre needs to be considered in the long term development of a youth space. The Kapiti Community Centre raised interest in a youth centre alongside their re-development which is likely to take place over the next ten years. The Paraparaumu library is another option for an attached youth space in the future.
- 32 It is recommended the location of a youth centre in the future town centre is considered once this area is further developed rather than as an option in 2014/15. A youth centre is best positioned in a busy location. Large vacant areas, lack of lighting and lack of pedestrians particularly in the evening and weekends are all factors which could impact negatively on a youth centre. Investigation into a permanent location in this area could occur once the future town centre project is progressed.
- 33 Young people's preferred option is a stand alone building in close proximity to Coastlands and the Paraparaumu train station. Young people were not in

support of a youth space located within an existing community facility. Key concerns include; lack of youth ownership, lack of youth interest due to attachment to adult space and restrictions by adult expectations (i.e. noise, issues about young people gathering).

- 34 The youth space needs to accommodate unstructured social interactions, different age groups and structured opportunities all in a safe, supervised environment. This has an impact on facility layout and building requirements. Further research with young people is required to help determine the specifications of a physical space. The funding and the choice of available space in close proximity to Coastlands/ Paraparaumu railway station will also limit what is possible. The Advisory Group advises a 'modest start' and recommends leasing a physical space to minimise risk.
- 35 A number of factors impact in the participation of young people from the different communities in the south of the District. Locating activity close to central public transport hubs is important. Having a strong mobile programme and locating the youth centre near the Paraparaumu train station would help to minimise barriers for those young people from communities outside of Paraparaumu.

### **Next Steps**

- 36 The second stage of feasibility will investigate in detail;
- requirements of young people in the service
  - activity and resource requirements
  - most appropriate governance model for the service
  - appropriate buildings available for lease/sale
  - final costs for a youth space
  - operation and delivery, staffing and management.
- 37 Three governance options are proposed that require further work;
- Council directed and operated service
  - Service delivered by Council contract agreement with an existing community organisation
  - Service delivered by Council contract agreement with a new organisation (e.g. a trust specifically set up to manage the service with community and Council representatives).
- 38 A majority of Councils provide financial support to a charitable trust or incorporated society specifically set up to operate youth centres. A youth related charitable trust is often better suited to managing and operating such a service. The charitable trust model allows funding to be accessed from philanthropic organisations which Council cannot access. A disadvantage could be that the youth centre is not under Council management.
- 39 The Advisory Group recommended consideration is given to management structures for the youth centre. They comment that it is important youth workers spend time on providing services to young people rather than on maintenance of the space.

## Financial Considerations

- 40 Provision has been made in the Long Term Plan for a capital cost of \$650,000 and annual operating costs of \$193,000 from 2014/15. In 2013/14, \$65,000 has been brought forward to fund further feasibility work on the chosen option. Capital and operating costs may change as a result of the second stage of feasibility.
- 41 The cost of establishing Option 3 has not changed from what is stipulated in the Long Term Plan. Initial investigation of buildings for lease/purchase in the central Paraparaumu area has been undertaken with leases between \$60, 000 – 70,000 per annum. The cost of purchasing a building would be significantly higher. If a short term space was secured, there would need to be allowance for further capital expenditure if the youth centre was relocated to a permanent location at a later stage (e.g. future Paraparaumu town centre).
- 42 Operational costs would need to encompass activity which occurs inside and outside of the central space (including community and mobile programming). Best practice guidelines recommend two youth workers during open hours.

## Legal Considerations

- 43 There are no legal considerations.

## Delegation

- 44 The Environment and Community Development Committee has delegated authority to consider this matter under section 7.1 of the Council's *Governance Structure and Delegations*:

*7.1 Authority to develop (within any wider existing strategic framework) policies and work programmes that support the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the community.*

## Consultation

- 45 Significant consultation with stakeholders in the south of the District as undertaken to inform feasibility study including;
- interviews with local stakeholders working with young people
  - a survey of social and recreational organisations
  - a survey of young people aged 13 – 21 years
  - focus groups with young people aged 13 – 21 years.
- 46 Further community consultation, including with young people, is required to progress the development of the youth centre.

## Policy Implications

- 47 In 2011 the Council endorsed the Youth2U Action Plan 2011 - 2015. The goals and activities in the Action Plan provide a foundation for all activities undertaken or supported by the Council which relate to youth and youth development.



## Tāngata Whenua Considerations

- 48 Options were measured against how they would be able to reflect Council's Treaty of Waitangi obligations. Two focus groups were held exclusively with rangatahi from local iwi. Tāngata whenua were involved in stakeholder interviews. The role of tāngata whenua and how the youth initiative can best meet the needs of rangatahi Māori needs to be considered as the project moves forward.

## Publicity Considerations

- 49 A communications plan will be developed to manage the next stages of the project.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 50 That the Committee notes the findings and recommendations of the feasibility study for a youth initiative, including the advice of the Youth Centre Advisory Group.
- 51 That the Committee approves the recommendation of Option 3 - Outward focused Centre – and the next stages of the feasibility study which will investigate options for establishment, including site selection, management and operation.
- 52 That results from the next stage be reported back to the Committee in February 2014.

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## ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix 1: Executive Summary from the Youth Initiative Feasibility Study Report
- Appendix 2: Feasibility Study Brief
- Appendix 3: Recommendations and Membership of the Youth Initiative Advisory Group