

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 20 September 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment

SUBJECT: Community Shop

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Executive Board with an update on the Community Shop initiative, outline potential options for the introduction of a Community Shop in Halton and ask Executive Board to endorse continued progression of this initiative.

2. RECOMMENDED: That Executive Board

- 1) note the options set out within the report; and**
- 2) receive a further report in October to consider how best to proceed to deliver Community Shop in Halton, following the outcome of the options appraisal.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Executive Board has received previous reports in respect of Community Shop; which have subsequently been presented to the Employment, Learning, Skills & Community PPB. Members of both Boards agreed that Officers explore the potential for a Community Shop to be established in Halton. Five Members of the Executive Board, along with the Director of Public Health, visited Company Shop and a Community Shop in Barnsley in June 2018.
- 3.2 Community Shop is a Community Interest Company subsidiary of its parent company; Company Shop Ltd. In essence, Community Shop is a supermarket that has targeted membership to help tackle food poverty. The Community Shop model provides fifteen job opportunities; twelve retail jobs for Halton residents, two mentors and one cook. The model also provides for further opportunities to support employment through skills development and linkages to the wider retail sector through food partner relationships.

- 3.3 The Council has been in dialogue with Company Shop for approximately three years in an attempt to secure a Community Shop for Halton. Following the opening of a Company Shop store in St. Helen's in January 2018, Company Shop now has the required infrastructure in place to support Community Shops in the Liverpool City Region and they are extremely keen to progress the establishment of their first Community Shop in Halton.
- 3.4 Consideration for a potential Community Shop in Halton began with the Big Local initiative in Windmill Hill in autumn 2014. Halton's Business Connector introduced the concept to the Big Local Partnership Board who were keen to explore the matter further. It soon became apparent that, due to the scale of its operation, Community Shop has the potential to serve a much broader area than just Windmill Hill, however, given the initiative's origins and the levels of deprivation within that Ward, Windmill Hill residents were identified for initial membership of any established Community Shop in Halton.
- 3.5 Officers have progressed the identification of potential premises with Community Shop over the last 18 months or so; supporting options appraisals and developing negotiations with potential premise owners. Community Shop has its own framework for identifying suitable locations and premises and, after much consideration, they identified Windmill Hill as a preferred location to site a Community Shop.

4.0 POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR A COMMUNITY SHOP IN HALTON

Integrated Hub

- 4.1 A feasibility study for an Integrated Health & Wellbeing Hub for Windmill Hill was commissioned by the Big Local Partnership & Well Halton in September 2017. As a result of their desire for a Shop to be sited in Windmill Hill, Community Shop asked to be part of this feasibility study. The study has now been completed and the final report is due to be presented in the near future.
- 4.2 In summary, the feasibility study identified a number of potential options; all of which include utilisation of the existing Children's Centre. These options were refined and a preferred option has been identified. This option increases the floor space with a significant ground floor extension to provide accommodation to co-locate the Children's Centre and Community Shop; whilst also providing office accommodation and meeting rooms. The estimated cost for these works is circa £2.7m. However, there are currently no funds to enable the build. The External Funding team are looking at options that either the Council or Community Shop could apply to for capital investment and Well North have offered an Associate's time to provide a resource for applying for funding.

- 4.3 The feasibility study for Windmill Hill also presents an opportunity for further development at St Berteline's Church to create a large hall space for flexible use and increased social and café space. The estimated cost of these works is £1.1m. Development at both sites (which are within close proximity to each other) would create a 'hub' offer of buildings and services. If the full project was realised there would also be remodelling of public realm aspects; improved pathways for pedestrian access, lighting, community space, etc. The total cost for the entire project is £4.5m.
- 4.4 Community Shop has a strong ambition to see a Shop open in Halton by November 2019. However, as no funding has been secured for the Integrated Hub project at this stage, and given that there is an estimated design, procure and build programme of 97 weeks, it is highly unlikely that this will be achieved.

Upton Community Centre

- 4.5 As a result of the uncertainty surrounding the Integrated Hub option, Community Shop asked for a contingency site and Officers suggested Upton Community Centre as an alternative. This would require a ground level extension to the side of the building and plans would need to be developed. Costs are unknown at this stage.

Windmill Hill Children's Centre Building

- 4.6 Whilst they are considering Upton Community Centre as a contingency, Community Shop's preferred location for siting a Shop remains firmly as Windmill Hill. Given this, and concerns over the deliverability of the Integrated Hub option within desired timescales, another option has been identified for potential exploration. This would be to operate a Community Shop from the existing Windmill Hill Children's Centre building.
- 4.7 Activities currently delivered from the Windmill Hill building are varied and include;
- Use by other agencies for services such as a weekly CAB drop-in,
 - Adult learning courses
 - Baby health clinic and work in partnership with the Health Improvement Team; for groups such as healthy eating and cooking
 - Drop-in sessions for parents with small children; on play and moving
 - A 'swap shop' for clothes.
 - A volunteer scheme for parents who can use the experience as part of their preparation for work.

- 4.8 Under this option, a number of the activities listed above would still be delivered in the building but would also continue to be delivered by maintaining the current practise of visiting children and families directly in their home and by using other venues in the community. 'Team around the Family' support is increasingly delivered more effectively in the home and other activities could be delivered as 'outreach' provision. Remodelling the delivery of services in this way would represent an enhancement to the 'family offer' and ensure that support reaches those most in need.
- 4.9 As part of a review of 'early help and intervention' a new Early Help Strategy has been produced in consultation with Children and Adult Services, partners and other stakeholders. The Strategy is 'all age' and has more of a family focus. To this end, a review of how, and by whom services are delivered is being undertaken. A Community Shop, based in the community with an emphasis on family support, would not only complement and enhance current services, but it would also accord with the future approach of supporting families to be more resilient and cope with common issues of poverty, worklessness and low aspiration.
- 4.10 This option would require less work in remodelling the building and require less funding compared to the Integrated Hub option. This option is emerging as the most attractive, cost effective and feasible option to deliver Community Shop in Windmill Hill. It also sits well with the development of other community services for children and families

Other Options

- 4.11 There are two other options at this stage. First, would be to undertake a further site/buildings options appraisal to identify alternative premises for the siting of a Community Shop. Second, would be the 'do nothing' option. Appended to this report is a summary of considerations for each of the current five potential options.

The Next Steps

- 4.12 There is a significant risk that Company Shop/Community Shop could withdraw their interest in establishing a Shop in Halton if a solution on the development of such a Shop is not presented in the mid-term. In light of this, it is considered prudent that the Council maintains a number of options that support the development of a Community Shop. Therefore, in addition to continuing the work to deliver the Integrated Hub option, Members are asked to endorse that Officers also progress with appraising the option of operating a Community Shop form the existing Children's Centre building on Windmill Hill.
- 4.13 A further report will be brought to Members in October.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Securing capital funding in a timely manner is key to enabling the project to be successfully delivered.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no new Policy implications as a result of this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Community Shop is targeted at households in need of support, and children & young people would benefit by virtue of the targeted approach.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The model provides direct employment opportunities for 15 members of staff. There would be opportunities to support linkages to further employment across the retail and logistics partners linking into Halton Employment Partnership (HEP). The mentoring programme focusses on skills development and employability.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

Access to low cost food provision, including fresh produce, will improve the quality of food intake. The mentoring programme that goes alongside the shopping offer will increase knowledge and practice of healthy eating for the scheme participants and their households.

7.4 A Safer Halton

A sense of community and community connectedness reduces residents' fears of crime where they live. Residents are likely to feel a stronger sense of belonging and safety in an environment where the community members know each other, are active and there are established links to other stakeholders like police, housing associations, community wardens, etc. Community Shop can engender this approach in the Community Hub.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

A Community Shop would be an asset within the Borough and provide a targeted retail offer. A location is yet to be determined, but will be identified through exploration and further understanding of the Shop's impact.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Community Shop provides the opportunity to address food poverty, work intensely with individuals to support building skills and employability prospects, create employment opportunities and overall positively impact on health and wellbeing.

There is a risk that not securing the establishment of a Community Shop will result in the failure to realise these benefits in Halton.

9.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES

This initiative targets the most financially disadvantaged residents in Halton's Community. Poverty and inequality are often elements of a complex set of circumstances which present exclusion. This initiative aims to tackle poverty and generate improved life chances for disadvantaged members of our local community.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Employment, Learning & Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board Report 23 rd March 2015 - Community Shop	Municipal Building Kingsway Widnes	Angela Scott
Executive Board Report 15 th March 2018 Community Shop	Municipal Building Kingsway Widnes	Angela Scott

Consideration on Options for Community Shop

Option	Pro's	Con's
Windmill Hill Integrated Hub	<p>Delivers an integrated offer in the most deprived ward with the poorest health outcomes in the Borough</p> <p>Community Shop model provides 12 part time employment opportunities for local residents</p> <p>Community Shop social impact outcomes</p> <p>An opportunity for a collaborative approach with other initiatives (Well North, Healthy New Town) and stakeholders to invest in Windmill Hill - building community confidence, aspiration & resilience</p>	<p>£4.5 million investment needs to be realised - risk of not achieving required funding levels</p> <p>Lengthy timescales to secure funding, procure & build – estimated 97 weeks</p> <p>Risk of not meeting Community Shop timescales (ambition to open in 2019) leading to Community Shop withdrawing from the Integrated Hub proposal; which could jeopardise the project.</p> <p>Negative comments and objections received from local residents; particularly around the 'saturation of assets'.</p>
Windmill Hill Children's Centre Building	<p>Community Shop have identified as their preferred option</p> <p>Other elements of the integrated hub concept (hall development at St Berteline's, public realm improvements) can still be progressed and realised independently</p> <p>Assists the Council with rationalisation of Children's Centre provision with an option of outreach delivery</p> <p>Efficiency saving from reduction in existing Children's Centre building running costs</p>	<p>Potential criticism if the initial integrated plan is not realised</p> <p>Funding required to work up RIBA stage 3 plans & cost report (£17k approximately & 6 weeks to deliver), this needs to be secured to progress</p> <p>Capital investment required to modify the centre - Community Shop don't provide capital costs outside of shop 'fit out' however, they would consider being the lead applicant for funds. Initial plans estimate capital investments of £787k would be required</p>

	<p>Provides an option for future sustainability of a Council asset with a secure anchor tenant</p> <p>Community Shop model provides 12 part time employment opportunities for local residents</p> <p>Community Shop social impact outcomes</p> <p>Public Health can provide outreach service delivery GP Federation keen to support outreach provision</p> <p>Less capital funding required to modify the asset</p> <p>Residents in the immediate vicinity have identified the area as being 'saturated' with further use - this option would reduce those concerns</p>	<p>Governance model to be considered, lease, asset transfer etc Community Shop open to negotiation but won't consider becoming landlords for other users</p>
Upton Community Centre	<p>Positive use of Council asset</p> <p>Hough Green is the second highest ward with the percentage of population living in most deprived</p> <p>Larger footfall area</p>	<p>Potential reduction in level of activities and access to services currently provided at the Community Centre</p> <p>Capital investment required to modify the centre - Community Shop don't provide capital costs outside of shop 'fit out' however, they would consider being the lead applicant for funds</p>
Identify another location	<p>Opportunity to reconsider locations repeating an options appraisal</p>	<p>Options appraisal already undertaken and further exercise unlikely to identify new alternative sites</p> <p>Length of time taken to undertake appraisal leading to Community Shop withdrawing their interest</p>

Do nothing	No capital costs	Loss of Community Shop in the Borough Loss of employment opportunities Loss of social impact opportunities that the Community Shop model provides
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