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Sports Traider Charity, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered no. 1156175, is setting up a new charitable store in Runcorn, Halton, through which we will support people with complex needs, and specifically ex-offenders and/or those at risk of offending, to become work ready. As we build the capacity of the outlet we aim to support children and young adults to engage in sport, across local disadvantaged communities in Halton where there are several neighbourhoods amongst the 10% most deprived in England.

Sports Traider Charity

Sports Traider Charity helps provide a wealth of outcomes including but not exclusively;

- Improving the employment opportunities for people with complex needs
- Improving mental and physical health and wellbeing
- Giving young persons from disadvantaged backgrounds access into sport
- Providing low cost or no cost, high quality sportswear and kit for all abilities

The charity is locally based and has a chain of sports shops in areas in, or close by to, deprived neighbourhoods, selling a mixture of new and some high-quality second-hand sports clothing and equipment at affordable prices, as well as giving pieces free to disadvantaged young people where the shops are located; currently Stoke, Dunstable, Evesham and Loughborough.

Shops are manned by local volunteers, many of whom are young adults with complex needs. Engagement with volunteering improves skills, reduces loneliness and isolation, improves mental and physical health and wellbeing. It gives people a reason to get out of bed, work in a team, building confidence and self-esteem. The skills they learn include organising the shop, dealing with new stock and donations, answering the phone, dealing with the general public, team working, and handling money. Their services and the experience of shop work gained are recognised through references, which may lead to paid employment.

The charity has been very successful in including ex-offenders, engaging them in both the retail and community projects, where, together with contributing their volunteering hours, they can discuss and talk about prison life, social disadvantage, alcohol and drug misuse and abuse. The peer support that they get is proving, in many cases, to be very beneficial to their rehabilitation process. Friendships are forged, with many of our volunteers realising new opportunities to move on to education, employment and/or training.

The social impact is broad, from generating volunteering and work experience opportunities for people with complex needs; creating a level playing field for children and young people to access top quality sports coaching; creating opportunities for young people to engage in further education; enabling more people, of all abilities, to participate in sports by being able to purchase quality items at low prices; as well as promoting environmental issues by reducing landfill and increasing recycling; all of this is achieved in the area where the shops are located.

Sports Traider Charity acquires redundant sportswear and equipment which can be given to disadvantaged young persons, free of charge, to help them participate in their chosen sport, again helping to remove any barriers. The charity recycles sports clothes and equipment, collecting from schools, sporting facilities and sports companies whether the product is second hand or new. Counterfeit goods are also received via trading standards and "rebranded" to ensure that the product is legal.

Runcorn

The proposed new store is located at Runcorn Shopping Centre, Unit 39, Orchard Way, Runcorn, WA7 2EU.

The store is in Halton 013F Lower Super Output Area (LSOA i.e. neighbourhood), which is ranked 519 out of 32,844 LSOAs in England; where 1 is the most deprived LSOA. This is amongst the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. Halton 013F is within Halton Lea ward and one of 79 LSOAs in Halton local authority district, located in the midst of a cluster of 6 neighbouring LSOA's, all in the top 10% most deprived in England.

Deprived areas suffer from high levels of poverty including child poverty, (around 6,500 children in Halton are currently growing up in poverty), health inequality, high levels of long term unemployment, in some cases generational, and high levels of crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB). During April 2020 there were 45 reported instances of ASB which accounts for 46.9% of all reported crime in Halton Lea for April.

In an effort to create a 'thriving and vibrant Borough' and tackle high levels of inequality Halton has a vision, through its Sustainable Community Strategy, where people can:

- Learn and develop their skills

- Enjoy a good quality of life with good health
- Benefit from a high quality, modern urban environment
- Have the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential
- Develop greater wealth and equality, sustained by a thriving business community
- Live in safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods.

Sports Traider Charity through its work supports all, and can contribute to most, of these strategic outcomes. It is against the backdrop of poverty, poor physical and mental health and wellbeing in a deprived neighbourhood that Sports Traider Charity provides services and activities to the most disadvantaged.

Working with Partners

Sport Traider Charity will be looking to establish close working relationships with local partners, not only to support the staff and volunteer recruitment process, but also to ensure greater opportunity for signposting to additional services, and for marketing and promotional activities. Engagement with the statutory and voluntary sectors provides opportunity to address identified local needs both for our team and for future service users who may benefit from the discounted retail stock, and from any additional support/activities we may be able to generate through excess sales income being utilised. Furthermore, local contacts with schools, businesses and sports organisations will support increasing stock levels through donations.

The charity places great store on the local knowledge and diverse skill set provided via partners. Regular communication can help iron out potential problems that might arise from time to time and the counsel that partners bring has proven invaluable in building the capacity in each of our current outlets, together with offering broader opportunity to our service users through network contacts.

Kops n Kids

In the summer of 2020 Sports Traider Charity was pleased to be able to demonstrate partner support to the Kops n Kids programme, with a donation of a 100 or so Mitre footballs. We received the following email from the organiser:

'We thought kops n kids would not go ahead in any form this year, but it has and we estimate that the 3 ½ weeks it's been on we have seen close to 450 children during that time and not committed any Covid -19 violations !!. It's been hard due to the restrictions , but the engagement opportunities for us with the children has been priceless.

They have done football, multi-sport, wellbeing and dance. We have given out the footballs you sent us at the football sessions . The housing providers in Runcorn have been doing food parcels , sharing videos that Everton FC kindly recorded for Kops n kids, so that other children could do football from home. The Mitre Footballs were also given out to these vulnerable families/children.'



Halton Strategic Partnership

Cheshire Constabulary
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service
Cheshire Police Authority
Faith Community
Greater Merseyside
Connexions Service
Halton Association of Secondary Heads
Halton Borough Council
Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise
Halton Housing Partnership

Halton Sports Partnership
Halton & St Helens Voluntary and Community Action
Jobcentre Plus
NHS Halton
St Helens Riverside College Halton

The charity notes that the Halton Strategic Partnership is a key driver of change in the borough and would be looking to help members of the partnership achieve key performance indicators viz:

- Give every child the best start in life;
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives;
- Create fair employment and good work for all;
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all;
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities;
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention

Sports Traider Charity Changes Lives

Where a retail outlet is trading successfully the profits are pumped back into the local community. The store acts as a catalyst in support of local sports clubs and the voluntary sector; a place where we can help build community capacity e.g. through youth diversionary schemes reducing crime and antisocial behaviour; offering alternatives to the gang culture; helping single parents increase participation levels; providing opportunity for NEET young people; offering disabled people greater chances to participate by providing specialist

equipment. The more sales we can achieve, and funds we can secure from local grant giving trusts to cover costs, the greater assistance we can give to local people in need.

There have been too many individual achievements to list them all but one example is where a young boy's mum died and he was forced to live with his auntie with MS. He didn't take well to the loss of his mother and started to get into a lot of trouble at school and with the police. Carers approached us to see if we could help which we obliged and since the young man became involved with the project he has stayed out of trouble, trains 4 times a week, received a full scholarship for a national league team and represented the county at basketball.

In another case, we had two brothers going every other week to football because they were sharing one pair of boots and we provided a free pair enabling them to participate twice as much.

The charity also took on board a young person who was homeless; this young man is now not only able to afford to rent his own place but he has started his own business coaching sports to young persons like himself. This has proven to be a great success story as he understands first-hand the issues that face young people who find themselves in a less fortunate situation. He has recently organised sport events for a local youth hostel. He said, ***'I regularly look back to when I was homeless and I find it hard to believe that I had literally hit rock bottom. This time in my life was really hard for me and I came very close to making some very bad choices but having Lance there helped me stay on track and gave me a structure/direction which I had been lacking for years.'***

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