

Portfolio Holder Decision

Youth Investment Fund - Hatters Space development proposal

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Children & Families
Date of decision	10 March 2023
	Signed

1. Decision taken

- 1.1 The Portfolio Holder (Children and Families) approves the submission of a bid to the Youth Investment Fund for funding to facilitate the extension, adaptation and improvement of Hatters Space Community Centre, Nuneaton. Hatters Space is a WCC owned building.

2. Reasons for Decisions

- 2.1 In line with the Constitution of Warwickshire County Council, Portfolio Holder approval is required for any bid for external funding in excess of £250,000 or that will commit the council to funding in excess of £50,000 that cannot be met from a service's allocated budget
- 2.2 The proposed bid will be for £1.287 million of revenue and capital funding from the government funded Youth Investment Fund. Consequently, the approval of the Portfolio Holder is required.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 Following an initial expression of interest submission by the Council in November 2022, officers are seeking approval to submit a full bid to the UK Government funded Youth Investment Fund for the extension and improvement of Hatters Space in Abbey Green to enable high quality, accessible, open access youth work provision.

- 3.2 The total projected cost is £1,287,050.89. This figure has been reached through consultation between colleagues in Children and Families and Strategic Asset Management.
- 3.3 At present there is a lack of suitable and accessible venues to deliver core youth services in central Nuneaton. Hatters Space is also in high demand for use by revenue generating community groups, charities and businesses and as such, valuable youth work delivery space is required. Further, Hatters Space requires modernisation to contribute to the council's net zero plans.
- 3.4 The extension of the existing building at Hatters Space includes the introduction of a brand new, accessible, youth centre comprising of a two-storey building with central staircase, spacious entrance lobby with ramped access, a flexible multi use space with kitchen area, two unisex single occupancy bathrooms including one accessible wet room/shower, a private 121 space for counselling etc, drop-down group spaces and an outdoor enclosed courtyard with workshop and activity spaces.
- 3.5 The existing building at Hatters Space is used for a wide range of activities for all age groups. We anticipate minimal disruption to these activities as a result of the proposed works. The intention is to preserve most of the existing building, improve the reception area and create a bespoke youth centre in an area of need in Nuneaton.
- 3.6 The preservation of revenue streams from third sector hire mentioned at paragraph 3.3 is crucial and key stakeholders were consulted as part of the initial expression of interest.
- 3.7 Young people have also been involved from very early on in the process and have provided invaluable contributions to the outline planning ideas.
- 3.8 We are aiming to bring the full application to the Youth Investment Fund panel in the spring of 2023 following Portfolio Holder approval, architect support and pre-planning applications. Officers are currently procuring architectural support and hope to have a fee proposal back very soon.
- 3.9 Based on the works currently proposed, it is anticipated that the project duration will be in the region of 24 months from successful application to project completion.
- 3.10 Further information, plans, timescales and costings can be found at Appendix - Youth Investment Fund Project Brief (Hatters Space).

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The total cost of the project is £1.287m. The funding for both the capital and revenue spend is being sought externally from the Youth Investment Fund.
- 4.2 The of the total cost, £145,347.36 is revenue cost and £968,982.41 is capital costs
- 4.3 A contingency fund of £111,432 has also been included in the total figure applied for to account for cost overruns and £61,288.14 for Tender & Construction cost inflation between the initial project costing and
- 4.4 Any funding received from a successful application to the Youth Investment fund must be spent by March 31st, 2025
- 4.5 Strategic Asset Management will procure professional services to support planning permission, feasibility studies and technical and architectural design to develop the project to the point of full tendering
- 4.6 As this development work is anticipated to cost under £25k, this will be procured by an existing framework agreement
- 4.7 This expenditure is included the total funding being sought and can be commissioned to run concurrently with the grant application with interim costs being met by Strategic Asset Development Funds.
- 4.8 If the bid is not successful, these costs will be met by Strategic Asset Management and will not need to be repaid unless the project goes ahead in the future
- 4.9 There will be additional revenue costs for the Authority from the running costs of the building once operational. The primary areas will be increased cleaning and maintenance which will be met by reprioritising existing resources.
- 4.10 We are currently unable to accurately estimate any potential increase in costs for electricity, gas, and water offset – it is planned that increased use of utilities should be offset by the design and sustainability measures included in the project brief, e.g. more efficient heating system and solar panels. This is a key point for exploration during the feasibility study stage of project development.
- 4.11 Hatters Space Generates VAT exempt income via hire of rooms to third sector organisations and community groups and as such, any expectation of increased income generation from charging for use of the space will be limited by and carefully considered as a proportion of the overall expenditure from grant funds. This will ensure that any use of the space does not increase the level of expenditure that results in VAT exempt income generation exceeding thresholds as this will impact on what the Local authority is able to reclaim on the grant funded costs of the project. The vision of the project did not focus on increasing income generation methods but creating a sustainable and inclusive space for young people as part of a community.

5. Environmental Implications

- 5.1 A Key focus of the design brief for this project is the exploration and inclusion of sustainable building methods
- 5.2 In looking at the Environmental impacts in the concept design for the project brief, the BREEAM Requirements for Local authorities for sustainable development were used.
- 5.3 Selecting an existing, well used community centre rather than looking to complete a new build project puts front and centre the benefits of retaining, improving and future proofing existing assets.
- 5.4 To support the energy and heating demands of the planned extension, complete replacement of the current Gas heating system of the has been included in the project specification and costing
- 5.5 Upgrading and improvements to the existing electrical systems are planned to incorporate on site sustainable energy generation in the form of solar panels to be placed as part of the build
- 5.6 The concept produced by young people has been heavily influenced by open plan sustainable spaces that use materials that have a reduced environmental impact i.e., recycled shipping container outbuildings, steel frame modular construction etc.
- 5.7 The concept for the building incorporates windows that collect solar energy in the winter but not heat in the summer and other ideas for passive environmental control
- 5.8 External Space, green roofs and vertical gardens have been incorporated into the concept for connection to nature and offers new potential for better wastewater management to be explored in the technical design stage.

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Urgent matter?

No

Confidential or exempt?

No

Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?

No

List of background papers

Appendix 1 - Youth Investment Fund Project Brief (Hatters Space)

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jeff Morgan
Corporate Board – Nigel Minns
Legal – Nic Vine
Finance – Virginia Rennie
Equality – Jo Kemp
Democratic Services – Isabelle Moorhouse
Councillors – Dahmash, Roodhouse and Brown
Local Member(s): Philipps