



**Report to Prudhoe Town Council meeting
on Wednesday 27th November 2019**

PLANS FOR EAST YOUTH HUB

Purpose of this report : The Partnership would like to consult Councillors about its plans so far for the redevelopment of the East Centre. George Hepburn will be in attendance to answer questions.

Background

PCP is hoping to apply for an asset transfer of East Centre to convert it into a modern fit for purpose youth hub shared by a number of different agencies led by Prudhoe Youth Project and Mortal Fools.

Consultation

In developing ideas for the site PCP has consulted and is continuing to consult:

- Young people through the detached youth workers
- Other youth organisations in the town – through a meeting held in October
- NCC Youth Service
- Prudhoe Youth Project
- Mortal Fools
- Happy Faces
- Dragon Tale
- Princes Trust
- Prudhoe Childrens Centre
- Ferndene
- Youth Focus North East
- Youth North East
- Carlisle Youth Zone

Vision

To create a striking building that catches the eye and lifts the spirits coming into Prudhoe

To provide a multi purpose hub for young people, that will invite young people off the streets; is attractive to use and fun to hang out in.

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Facilities – though still subject to change

- To be centred around a spacious central concourse for informal get togethers capable of holding up to 50 young people in small groups probably with café opening off.
- To include a flexible performance space with 150 removable seats and associated dressing rooms.
- A multi-use rehearsal space suitable for physical activities with c30 people
- Two or more activity rooms (eg a 'girls' room/quiet room, a music room, a craft room tbc)
- A sensory room
- A meeting room for up to 20 people
- Two small counselling rooms (preferably near from door with adjacent toilet)
- An outdoor space for games
- An outdoor space for gardening
- Mortal Fools Office to accommodate 6 – 10 desks,
- PYP office with four desks (may double as reception office)
- One further office
- Ample storage space for Mortal Fools, Happy Faces and others
- Inclusive toilets and showers

Asset transfer

PCP has held an opening meeting with NCC Strategic Estates Dept and is working towards submitting an application for an asset transfer at the end of the year.

NCC propose:

- 125 year lease
- On a self repairing basis
- Once capital fundraising has been completed
- For community use
- With some 'income generating' activity to subsidise community activity
- To resolve the existing covenants imposed by Northumberland Estates
- Support PCP is resolving 'party wall' issues with the former caretakers house

All these are deemed manageable to resolve during 2020 if the asset transfer application is accepted

Architects Proposals

PCP has appointed Newton Architects based in Ryton (following a competitive tender) to produce sketch designs so that the building can be costed and the running costs estimated. These designs will be used to submit a 'pre planning application' to NCC to identify any major planning issues. The costs will inform the business plan in the asset transfer application. PCP is paying Newton for this work.

Newton has proposed three options

- Option 1: Renovation of both buildings – which it does not recommend as the main school building is so dilapidated
- Option 2: Renovation and rebuild – retaining the Open Door building which is in better condition with an adjoining new building on the former school site
- Option 3: Demolition and complete rebuild – which is slightly more expensive (plus £200k)but much cheaper to run (1/3 of costs)

The Partnership has asked Newtons to proceed with option 3. It is conscious of possible public sympathy to retain the existing building but has no doubt that a new building will provide far better facilities and improve the entrance into town. It is also keen to keep the running costs as low as possible and a new building will be to 'passivehaus' standards.

Newton's initial idea is the new building will be at the west end of the site (next to the police houses) and set back from the road to minimise traffic pollution and maximise sunlight. There will be a garden area and hard standing for games. Existing stone work will be reused wherever possible and a 'green wall' of shrubs is proposed facing on to Front Street.

The Partnership has asked Newtons to reserve the east end of the site for a possible separate building of shops or offices which would continue the existing line of shops leading to West Wylam Inn which could provide income to subsidise the youth hub operation.

Plans should be available for viewing at the Council meeting on 27th November.

Conclusion

PCP would welcome councillors views on these plans and would welcome their support.