

Durham Area Youth (CIO)

Summary Business Plan and Financial Projection

Charitable objectives

Durham Area Youth (CIO) is a new organisation to deliver services to young people in the Sherburn area and beyond to help them advance in life and relieve needs of young people through:

- (a) The provision of recreational and leisure time activities provided in the interest of social welfare, designed to improve their conditions of life;
- (b) Providing support and activities which develop their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals.
- (c) The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation in particular by the provision of facilities for the playing of particular sports.

The organisation was created by trustees and other volunteers to provide youth services after the withdrawal of County Council funded youth work in West Rainton, to continue grant funded youth work in Pitlington, to set up new youth work services in neighbouring villages such as Sherburn Village, and expand the range of partnerships, services and activities provided for the benefit of young people and families in the area.

Structure

Durham Area Youth is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered with the Charity Commission under reference 1174888.

It currently has four voluntary trustees and one voluntary committee member who have a diverse range suitable professional and community backgrounds and experience and are drawn from the communities the project will serve.

Current provision (West Rainton)

In West Rainton the current youth provision is provided by Mid-Durham Partnerships (MDP) which delivers an 'open access' youth service one night a week out of Jubilee Hall. This service had a Lead Youth worker (Keely Fingleton) and usually two support/sessional youth workers. The wages of these workers have up until March 2017 been funded by Durham County Council. Due to Government cuts to local councils all funding for open access youth work was ceased by Durham County Council in March 2017 with those employed either being re-tasked to other work or made redundant.

The current provision has only been able to continue from March 2017 to March 2018 as a result of grant funding obtained from Councillor David Hall and Durham Area Action Partnership. This funding was to allow time for a transition to a new project.

Originally the provision from MDP was more than one night a week due to additional staffing in previous years and some nights were also able to be split between male and female. As funding has decreased over the years so too has provision down to the current one night a week.

The project was aimed at providing activities to help young people reach their potential, a safe place to socialise and remove them from potentially harmful activities, and engage them in constructive community activities.

Alongside the benefits to young people local partners such as Police and others have previously commented on the decrease in anti-social behaviour around the village and on the opportunities a project such as this opens up possibilities for constructive engagement with young people.

All of the current youth workers will leave the project in March 2018, having either already been re-assigned by the County Council to other duties or due to other personal reasons unrelated to the project or transition.

Future Provision by Durham Area Youth (CIO) – West Rainton

The starting point for the project will be that as a minimum the current provision will continue but the project seeks to roll out an exciting new offer for young people in the area.

The project is in the process of recruiting a new Lead Youth worker. Once recruited there will be a period of shadowing with the current project and consultation with the young people and local partners like the Parish Council, as to what they wish to see the new youth project working on with the young people going forward and what gaps they feel exist with youth provision and services in the village.

The aim would be to develop real partnerships and communication between the project and local community organisations and representatives.

It is from this process of consultation and engagement that the wider roll out of the project will be based and further recruitment of youth support workers will take place to fit that community led design.

Feedback from the community so far is that there is not enough for young people to do. This appears to be reflected in the parish plan as well and the project would be eager to work with the parish council to address this priority. Some anecdotal feedback is that perhaps the current project only serves a one section of young people across the village, a limited age range, and has a limited range of activities and courses due to reduced resources. That it also does not operate all year around and that there are sometimes no activities during some school holidays also has been mentioned in the past.

The project will seek to drill down and address the gaps and needs that exist for children and young people across the village, and seek to further engage them in wider village life and activities.

Over time the project intends to develop core project themes around different aged children which will look to develop and deliver separate age provision, for example 9-15 and 16-18yo, though subject to consultation, funding and resources. A key aim is to engage local young people at an earlier age and they and the project then develop together, with the project adapting to them and their needs over the years using youth forums, youth reps at trustee meetings and youth led projects to ensure the project remains properly connected its young people.

We also aim to work with local primary and secondary schools to do this and a key focus will be the use of sport as a hook to bring young people into healthy lifestyle pursuits.

In the longer term we hope to have services for ages up to 25yo focussed on skills and employment support and development, and housing and financial advice or signposting where needed.

One of the things that has been difficult for the new project to establish is the tangible outcomes of the existing project. People see it working, feel it has benefit, and clearly know that the project is wanted and needed but actually measuring it, such as a school would the attainment and achievement of its pupils, has been difficult, which is not uncommon for open access youth projects.

The new project will set about establishing a process for review and assessment of its activities and projects so we can see what was done, why, what was the outcome and who benefitted. Also engaging with the community, parish, Police, local schools and others will allow a gap analysis to take place, for us to be able to assess going forward what gaps exist, how we are meeting that gap, and indeed evidence to partners and future funders the need for resources to do so.

We also wish to ensure our activities are inclusive and so we will actively review how accessible our provision is to young people with additional needs, such as the less physically able or those with different types of autism for which there seems little local provision. We will also seek to engage young people in cross village and cross generational activities and work to create confident young people and future community champions.

Funding

For the first twelve months the aim is one of stabilising and ensuring current provision and preparing the ground for expansion of activities.

Funding of wages is always going to be the key challenge. The West Rainton project has been fortunate in that it has never had to fund the wages of its youth workers before now because the County Council did, but now it has to. Most grant funders will fund wages as part of a specified project's costs but not on their own, and often not for existing projects or activities.

In order to ensure the survival of the current provision and sustainability of the project Durham Area Youth must ask parish councils to contribute towards the wage bill for the Lead Youth worker needed to finalise design, deliver and manage day to day provision.

For security and sustainability the project asks for multi-year funding of £6,000 each year for three years, subject to annual review. We understand this is not a simple ask so if this is not immediately doable then we respectfully request a one year contribution from West Rainton of £6,000, with a view to repeating this request each year for two years if satisfactory.

So far we have commitments from Sherburn Village and Pitlington for their areas' respective share of the youth worker costs. We will raise funding from grants and Trusts for the remainder of the project's yearly costs.

The financial projection on the next page is based on the minimum starting position required for the project to deliver the current provision and provide a stable and sustainable base from which to develop according to local needs over the next 12 months and beyond.

Conclusion

There is clearly has been and remains a need for a youth project within the village. The new project has been set up by committed and experienced people to deliver at the very least the current provision in the short term, and in the longer term develop a stronger and more wide ranging and impactful project reaching out to current young people using the project, as well as new young people of broader ages and ensuring accessibility by young people from different areas of West Rainton. Durham Area Youth very much wants to work with the parish to develop West Rainton's youth project to best effect and for it be based on and responsive to the needs of young people and the village over many years to come.

We thank you for your consideration.