

ITEM 5: CYCLE WORKSHOP

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1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report highlights the work being done by other cycling related social enterprises whose experience could help to inform similar projects in the Royal Borough.

2. Supporting Information**Background**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 11th February 2013, the Cycle Forum, it was suggested that a scheme whereby young people not in employment, education or training could be given cycle maintenance training, repairing bicycles that they could then use to attend interviews, etc.
- 2.2 It was considered that this could be beneficial for the young people and for the town centre if the facility were to be based in a vacant unit in the town. The Forum agreed that this would be a very positive scheme and should be investigated further in conjunction with the Town Centre Manager.
- 2.3 Initial investigations have shown that there are many similar projects around the country that have similar aims.
- 2.4 **Bikeworks**: This project in London delivers work based vocational training placements and employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Participants have the opportunity to gain accredited professional qualifications in bicycle mechanics and national standards cycle instruction.
- 2.5 Trainees attend Bikeworks a minimum of two days per week spending one day being instructed in bicycle mechanics and another half day practising their newly acquired mechanic skills in the workplace. The other half day is spent training to become cycling instructors. At the end of the course trainees complete a 4 day intensive examination course to become accredited cycle instructors.
- 2.6 Of the people who have participated in the Cycle into Work programme to date:
- 260 have completed 'build a bike' courses earning a bike of their own
 - 62 have graduated from the full 3 month 'cycle into work' programme
 - 38 of these have moved into stable employment

- 2.7 Bikeworks are also involved in all ability cycling, bike recycling, bike hire / tours, business services, cycling for health, cycle training, and cycle sales / maintenance. For further information see: www.bikeworks.org.uk.
- 2.8 *Guildford Bike Project*: This initiative provides opportunities for people who may have missed out on learning in the past to engage in running a local enterprise, to acquire new skills and thereby to improve their employability and sense of well being.
- 2.9 They take in donations of unwanted bicycles from the general public and fix them up with the help of volunteers, NEETs and jobseekers, whilst at the same time providing training, life skills and work-based experience. They then sell the refurbished bikes to members of the local community for an affordable price, providing a healthy transport option. In addition, the income from sales of the bikes makes the project sustainable.
- 2.10 The enterprise will use refurbishment of donated bicycles to promote self-reliance and self-confidence by giving young people and jobseekers the opportunity to learn, acquire new skills and gain work experience. Each participant in the project will also experience the accomplishment of having earned a bike through their own work.
- 2.11 The learning and skills developed through the project will range from office and business skills to bike maintenance skills leading to accreditation. Two volunteers to the project are being trained to become tutors in the Lifelong Learning sector. Over time it may be possible for those who have developed in confidence and acquired bicycle maintenance qualifications to progress to courses offered by the local college in areas such as motor vehicle or plumbing.
- 2.12 Further information on the project is available at: www.guildfordbikeproject.org.uk.
- 2.13 The Grow Our Own project is supported by the Royal Borough and provides support, advice, guidance and skills training to local residents who want to find employment in their home area. They aim to help anyone into work, particularly those who may be finding it difficult, such as:
- Lone parents
 - People who have been made redundant
 - School leavers
 - Adults with mental health issues or moderate learning difficulties
 - Older people
 - Ex-offenders
 - Those who want to develop their career in a different direction
- 2.14 Grow Our Own have indicated that they would be interested in the cycle workshop proposal. From a skills perspective, the new shared community learning and skills service (CLASS) can offer City & Guilds qualifications and they are in the process of planning provision to take place from August 2013. Also, from a transport viewpoint,

this would help a number of unemployed local residents find it hard to get to work due to transport difficulties.

- 2.15 Discussions with the Maidenhead Town Centre Manager suggests that she would be willing to make contact with landlords of retail units in and around the town centre that have lain empty for extended periods of time to see if they would be willing to offer an initial rent-free / discounted period. However, this would be dependent upon economic conditions at the time.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 In order to explore the concept further, it is recommended that members of the Cycle Forum and other interested parties visit an existing facility such as Bikeworks or the Guildford Bike Project to see first hand what they do and to learn about what is involved in setting up and running such a project.**
- 3.2 If members of the Cycle Forum then feel that they wish to pursue the concept further, it is recommended that the Council's External Funding Team be engaged to advise on suitable organisational structures and funding sources, which could be the basis of a future report to the Cycle Forum.**