

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

21 January 2015

PROPOSAL FOR A CYCLE CAFÉ ON VIADUCT WAY

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[Minutes](#) of Winchester Town Forum, 24 September 2014 (Item 5: Presentation Regarding Cycle Café)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In September 2014, Winchester Town Forum received a presentation from the SPUD Group (Space, Place-making and Urban Design) which considered the possibilities for a cycle café on Viaduct Way in Winchester. The presentation followed a SPUD youth project, and included initial designs produced by the participants.

Members were enthusiastic about the concept, and asked for a more detailed proposal for a cycle café to be brought back to a future meeting. This Report sets out suggested next steps in realising such a project, based on a paper (at Appendix 1) produced by SPUD.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Town Forum

- i) supports the proposals for a further week of design workshops set out in this Report, as part of the continued investigation of the feasibility of a cycle café;
- ii) confirms that, subject to final approval of the Town Account budget for 2015/16 at Council in February 2015, a one-off revenue budget growth of £1,000 be made available in 2015/16 to support the costs of the workshops in April 2015.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In September 2014, Winchester Town Forum received a presentation from the SPUD Group (Space, Place-making and Urban Design) which considered the possibilities for a cycle café on Viaduct Way (the cycle and pedestrian route from Hockley Viaduct to Winchester which formally opened in 2013). The presentation had been requested by Members who had previously attended an event marking the conclusion of a SPUD youth project.
- 1.2 The project had operated from Architecture PLB offices in Winchester on one evening a week during the 2013/14 academic year. Participants had been challenged to design a cycle café, to give a practical application to the skills they were being taught.
- 1.3 The Town Forum presentation included two of a number of designs produced by the group – one a temporary structure alongside Wolvesey Castle and the other taking the form of a permanently-installed old train carriage at St Catherine's Hill.
- 1.4 Members were enthusiastic about the concept of a cycle cafe, and asked for a proposal to be brought back to a future meeting, setting out how such a project might be realised. This Report sets out a suggested approach to the next steps, based on a paper (at Appendix 1) produced by SPUD.
- 1.5 It is proposed that a further Report be brought back to Members exploring technical feasibility, land ownerships, costings and delivery once a preferred design and location have been identified.

2 Developing a Working Design Concept

- 2.1 The initial proposal received from SPUD seeks to build on the involvement of young people in creating detailed design concepts. It is suggested that a further intensive week of workshops be run, potentially between 9 and 5pm over 5 days during the Easter school holidays. Two city centre architecture practices have already offered their support, and at the time of writing Architecture PLB have just confirmed the availability of their conference room, facilities and technical equipment for an intensive SPUD Youth workshop from 7 to 10 April 2015.

- 2.2 Assuming Town Forum continues to be supportive of the proposal, it would be necessary to carry out some additional information-gathering from colleagues and stakeholders. Areas for consideration would include:
- environmental health requirements for a café;
 - potential interest in the café operation as a social enterprise or training venture to support the Council's wider employability programmes;
 - winter storage facilities and costs (if required);
 - land ownership;
 - planning policy and permission (including South Downs National Park if relevant);
 - risk and insurance issues;
 - the potential for external funding or support;
 - benchmarking with other similar initiatives, etc etc.
- 2.3 SPUD will be carrying out some further investigations over the coming weeks which will seek to identify the most likely location on Viaduct Way in order for the workshops to focus on a potentially realisable site.
- 2.4 SPUD are also proposing to involve some business and/or catering students in the workshops, which would once again give young people real input into creating the business plan for the café, with associated cycle hire/repair workshop. As can be seen from the proposal at Appendix 1, the design and construction of the café is only one element of the project: the ongoing business operation will potentially determine its eventual success or failure. The proposal flags some considerations which will be important for the Council in making a final decision to take this project forward.
- 2.5 The proposal at Appendix 1 and in this Report reflect the next small steps in developing a cycle café project. Following the workshops, it is anticipated that a robust project estimate and delivery plan would be developed for further consideration by Members before any decision to commit to the project could be taken.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3. COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 3.1 A cycle café could potentially support delivery of all three community outcomes:
- encouraging active communities by involving young people and volunteers in designing, creating and running the café;
 - promoting economic wellbeing by providing new skills for the young people through the workshops, but also potentially 'entry level' training and development for paid employees working at the café once operational;
 - enhancing the built and natural environment by creating a new feature of interest along Viaduct Way, and creating a new incentive for cycling and walking in Winchester.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 A sum of £1,000 was proposed at the November 2014 Winchester Town Forum meeting as a one-off revenue growth bid in 2015/16 to support the development of the cycle café initiative. This is subject to final recommendation at the January Town Forum and final approval at February Cabinet and Council.

4.2 SPUD has estimated costings for the week of workshops as follows:

Planning and recruitment of participants	2 days	£ 700
Workshop development	1 day	£ 350
Workshop delivery	5 days	£1,750
Presentations/exhibition	0.5 days	£ 175
Report and next steps	2 days	£ 700
Materials and printing		£ 350
Room hire		in kind
Architecture students		in kind
Professional support		in kind
Web page and content		in kind
Contingency		£ 250
Total Cost:		£4,275

4.3 Assuming Town Forum affirms its commitment to its contribution, a maximum of £3,275 will be made available from Commissioning Budgets to support the project, taking the total Council contribution to £4,275. Commissioning Budgets are intended to support one-off or start-up projects that will help to deliver Community Strategy Outcomes.

4.4 It is anticipated that more detailed costings for delivery of a cycle café would be developed as a result of the workshops, and a further report to Town Forum – and potentially Cabinet - would consider the desirability of pursuing the project at that stage, together with potential funding options. Appendix 1 shows some estimate costs for illustration purposes.

4.5 Should a full delivery plan is approved, the SPUD proposals note that success of the cycle café will almost certainly require Council support such as a Business Rates rebate (if policy allows), grant aid, partnership working on marketing and promotion and so on. These resources would be considered as part of any decision-making report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

[Appendix 1: Cycle Cafe: A proposal by SPUD Group and SPUD Youth](#)

Cycle Café, Winchester

A proposal by SPUD Group and SPUD Youth

December 2014

Outline

This proposal outlines the necessary steps to develop a working concept for a new cycle cafe for Winchester to be located along the national cycle route connecting Winchester with Hockley Viaduct. This will build on the existing work created by youngsters as part of the SPUD Youth programme.



SPUD Youth research visit to London 2014

Brief History

The idea for a 'cycle cafe' in Winchester emerged from the award-winning SPUD Youth programme. SPUD Youth is a programme for young people aged 14-21 interested in urban design, architecture and placemaking. A hugely successful SPUD Youth group ran in Winchester from September 2013 until July 2014. The group was regularly attended by a mixed group of around 12 youngsters.

Having looked at routes and around the city and the connectivity of the centre with the railway station as part of their first project, the group were then asked to consider the design of a new temporary building. The focus for this was the idea for a cycle cafe, to be located somewhere between the town centre and Hockley Viaduct, along the canal and national cycle route.

SPUD Youth participants have already developed a number of basic concepts for a cycle cafe and identified potential locations. Their ideas were presented to a group of civic leaders and professionals in June 2014 and again to the Town Forum in Sept 2014. Based on these presentations and the genuine interest of Town Forum members, Mark Drury from SPUD Youth was asked to put together an outline proposal to establish a SPUD Youth group in Winchester that could develop the cycle cafe concept more fully.

Initial Idea

Only two ideas were presented at the Town Forum and of these the 'railway carriage' concept really caught peoples imagination. Student, Alex Grice had developed a concept to reuse an old railway carriage as the buffet car, complete with additional buildings to create workshop and bike hire space.

Alex's suggestion was to place the railway carriage on a disused railway bridge along the cycle route to Hockley Viaduct. This was advantageous as it made good use of exiting footpaths, cycle route and car-parking facilities, therefore allowing greater access to the cafe. It also gave a nod to the cycle routes heritage by utilising old railway rolling stock. Alex had even taken steps to source and price up a disused railway carriage.



Hampshire Chronicle article

Next Steps

Although Alex's idea was very positively received it is important to remember that SPUD Youth consisted of several more students, with equally strong ideas. It is our opinion that the next steps actively involve young people again in developing the concept design. This could easily be achieved within a relatively short time frame by offering an intensive SPUD Youth design week as follows:

SPUD Youth Workshops - the proposal is to run an intensive week of workshops to develop the initial concepts more fully and ensure engagement and input from the original young designers. These workshops would happen between 9 and 5pm over 5 days during the Easter School Holidays. This would avoid long-term disruption and costs associated with renting a space out. Having already approached architecturePLB they have indicated their initial support to host these workshops at their offices on St Thomas Street, which will further reduce costs. Another local practice, SNUG projects, have also stated that they would be willing to support these workshops.

A proposed timeframe for the workshops would be:

- Feb 2015: Plan out workshops and secure workshop space
- Feb 2015: Recruit local architecture practices to support workshops
- Mar 2015: Recruit existing and new students to SPUD Youth - March 2015
- Apr 2015: Week long workshop - Easter school holiday - 3rd to 19th April
- May 2015: Presentations to Town Forum/WCC
- Jun 2015: Report

Costs to develop and deliver the workshops:

Planning and recruitment:	2 days	£700
Workshop development:	1 day	£350
Workshop delivery:	5 days	£1750
Presentations/exhibition:	0.5 days	£175
Report:	2 days	£700
Materials and printing:		£350
Room Hire:		FREE
Architecture students:		FREE
Professional Support in-kind:		FREE
Web page and content:		FREE
Contingency		£250
Total Cost:		£4025

In addition to the design aspect of these workshops it would be sensible to explore the potential to involve some business and/or catering students in the workshops. These students could have a real input into creating the business plan for the cafe and cycle hire/repair workshop.

The Cycle Cafe Business

Setting up and running any new business is difficult and a cafe can be particularly demanding. Combine this with the remote location, low footfall and time needed to raise awareness up the new cafe and it will be a challenge for anyone to make this business stack up financially.



Bissoe Cycle Way Cafe, Cornwall

It will be critical that the Council support this as a 'special' initiative and consider a flexible approach to the following:

- Business rates - reduced and on a sliding-scale in the first 3 years
- Grants to support the initial set-up fit out of the cafe
- Working in partnership to promote the cafe business as part of the cycle and walking route
- Explore potential for sustainability grants to support and develop the cycle hire/repair side of the business

- Consider partnerships with established local restaurant owners. For example the new River Cottage restaurant
- Develop partnership with local cycle/hire business
- Incorporate cafe into City Trails and tourist information
- Careful consideration needs giving to the level of service offered by the cafe - i.e. is it just coffee, cakes and sandwiches or does it offer hot food?

It is important that the cafe is set up as a semi-permanent structure, utilising secure buildings like shipping containers that can easily be closed up at night or out of season. The aim should be to have the cafe opening all year, even if hours are reduced during winter months. It needs to establish a strong reputation and become a real destination for walkers and cyclists. There are examples of similar initiatives elsewhere in the country that are flourishing and attract a very loyal group of customers, including cycling groups etc.

Construction Costs

The costs below identify some of the basic cost elements for creating this semi-permanent cycle cafe and hire/repair workshop space. These are very broad-brush figures and are for illustration purposes only.

Second-hand railway carriage	£4000
Refurbishment of railway carriage	£5000
Shipping containers	£6000
Refurbishment of shipping containers	£5000
Kitchen extension	£8000
Cafe/workshop Equipment	£6000
Landscaping/groundworks	£6000
Canopies and outdoor furniture	£8000
Total:	£48,000

The above figures do not include transportation and services. These costs could be reduced by acquiring cheaper/second-hand shipping containers and potentially utilising local construction companies and students/apprentices to undertake the work. The more this can be viewed as a community initiative the more local people will adopt it.

Other Considerations

The cycle cafe presents a brilliant opportunity to explore the potential to involve young people in the set-up and running of it as a project. Does this have the potential to link in with a local college - could it become a space for catering students to do work experience? What opportunities does it provide for local business, charities and young people to come together - for example is it something that could be led through the Princes Trust?