

7. YOUTH SPACE UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services providing an update on the Armadale Youth Space.

The report recalled that the Youth Space in Armadale was established in March 2009 after extensive consultation with young people after gaps in provision/space had been identified. Armadale Community Education Association and the local youth issues group worked in partnership with Education, Community Learning and Development, West Lothian Youth Action Group, Lothian Association of Youth Clubs, Community Regeneration, Police Scotland and local politicians to bring the project to fruition. Consultation and engagement with young people also took place about the design and development of the space and was officially opened in May 2010. It was located at 18a North Street, Armadale.

The Youth Space was fully booked both day and night during the week with a few gaps at weekends and an example timetable was attached to the report at Appendix 1. It was also noted that the Youth Space was the preferred choice of many youth groups in the area.

Funding was secured for the first three years of the project with subsequent funding applied for on a year-by-year basis to ensure the project remained viable.

The report continued by outlining the aims of the Youth Space for 2015-16 and included :-

- Secure long term funding for the project;
- Reinvigorate the youth committee and recruit new members;
- Enhance the makeup of the youth issues group; and
- Continue working with partners to deliver strong relevant programmes and maximise usage of the space.

The committee thanked Helen Davies for the very informative report.

The committee then posed a number of questions in relation to the future viability of the Youth Space noting that funding had not yet been secured for its long term, the Youth Issues Group was under represented and that the accommodation being used was expensive to rent and that any alternatives should be explored.

Helen advised committee that a lot of work was being done to secure the long term funding of the project and that they continued to work closely with the council on a number of funding applications including to the Alcohol Diversionary Fund. They would also be happy to look at alternative venues, including council premises, however it was noted that the location was very liked by those using the groups. And finally the

committee were advised that the Youth Issues Group was actively seeking new members and would ideally like the Police to be back on board.

Decision

- 1) Noted the contents of the report;
- 2) Noted the challenges that lay ahead for the Youth Space particularly in relation to funding;
- 3) Requested that officers give consideration to the future relocation of the Youth Space to reduce rental costs; and
- 4) Requested that officers give consideration to how best encourage participation in the Youth Issues Group including representatives from Police Scotland.