

## CALL-IN: JONATHAN PAGE PLAY CENTRE REVIEW

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 To enable the Environment and Living Scrutiny Committee to review the decision taken by Cabinet on 17 December 2013, which agreed in principle to the cessation of the funding of services currently run at the Jonathan Page Play Centre, at the latest by September 2014.

### 2 Recommendations/for decision

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to concur with Cabinet's decision or to refer it back for further consideration in the light of views that Members wish to express on the issues raised through the call-in.

### 3 Executive summary

- 3.1 In a Cabinet Decision Notice dated 17 December 2013, Cabinet took a decision agreeing in principle to the cessation of the funding of services currently run at the Jonathan Page Play Centre, at the latest by September 2014.

- 3.2 Cabinet's decision was:-

- (1) That approval be given in principle to the cessation of the funding of services currently run at the Jonathan Page Play Centre, at the latest by September 2014.
- (2) That a further report be submitted to Cabinet setting out options for the staff and the Centre.
- (3) That the Equalities Impact assessment forming part of the Cabinet report be noted.

- 3.3 Cabinet's decision was called-in by Councillors Cashman, Mrs Smith and Vick for the following reasons:-

- (i) we are very concerned that the consultation that was carried out did not mention closure or ceasing funding.
- (ii) we feel that the decision is premature and alternative solutions have not been fully investigated.
- (iii) the lead time of the implementation of the decision does not provide sufficient time for alternatives to be fully costed and developed.
- (iv) the on-costs and maintenance of the site, once closed, had not been taken into consideration.
- (v) we are aware that the Jonathan Page Play Centre has had a year long plan to deliver service changes, yet there is no evidence that this has been taken into consideration. Therefore, this is not in line with the principles of the New Business Model.
- (vi) The withdrawal of funding will force closure of services to a deprived community. This will have a detrimental affect on the community it serves and this has not been considered in line with the AVDC Corporate Plan.

- (vii) the impact and outcomes of the charitable foundation (and origination) of the Jonathan Page Play Centre have not been given due consideration.
  - (viii) the impact and outcomes of the withdrawal of funding.
- 3.4 To assist the Scrutiny Committee in their consideration of the call-in, a copy of the report that was submitted to Cabinet on 17 December 2013 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to concur with Cabinet's decision or to refer it back for further consideration in the light of views that Members wish to express on the issues raised through the call-in.
- 3.6 In response to the reasons submitted in the call-in, officers have responded as follows:
- (i) The consultation was focused around how the service could be improved, with the aim to increase income for the centre. There was no remit to consider closure or ceased funding for the centre at the time of the consultation.  
  
The decision to withdraw funding was brought forward post this consultation. The decision is based upon the need for the Council to make considerable savings and the belief that the Centre was unlikely to cover its costs under the current model of operation, even with the measures which had been identified by officers and through the consultation.
  - (ii) This decision is part of a council-wide budget saving process, including reviewing all services and their income and cost implications, and is one of many budget-saving measures being considered across the Council. Councillors will be aware that the approved medium term financial plan for the Council indicates savings in the magnitude of between £1million and £2million need to be found **each year** for the foreseeable future.  
  
Officers have been considering options to improve the financial performance of the Centre for some considerable time prior to the Cabinet report being produced. Officers eventually concluded that none of the options considered would have a good chance of significantly and sufficiently mitigating the financial losses being incurred by the taxpayer from this service. Officers are now working with parents, partners and the wider community to identify alternative models of operation which do not require ongoing taxpayer subsidy. Officers have appointed a consultant who has expertise in the field of child care to support this process.
  - (iii) The cabinet decision gave 9 months notice that the council would suspend funding for the service. Officers believe that this should be sufficient for a business plan to be developed and begin to be implemented. Reference has been made to other child care facilities in the town that have been able to go from concept to live operation in a matter of months, also to social enterprises/trusts that the County Council has been able to launch within a relatively short period of time.
  - (iv) It is noted that were no service to run from the building there would be costs for its maintenance. However officers are working with parents and the community to identify another model of operation and any

other provider would have to take maintenance costs into account. Further work is also ongoing to consider the overall ownership, operation and management of all Community Centres that the council currently runs, of which JPPC forms part. This would be an important consideration if, for instance, a community run and funded successor operation decided that it wished to run a successor service from another venue. If the council is able to remove or avoid any ongoing maintenance costs from the building, then potentially the savings to the taxpayer would be greater than those shown in the original Cabinet report.

- (v) As noted above, officers have been considering options to improve the financial performance of the Centre for some considerable time prior to the Cabinet report being produced. Officers eventually concluded that none of the options considered would have a good chance of significantly and sufficiently mitigating the financial losses being incurred by the taxpayer from this service. The ideas considered by officers for improving the service and encouraging more business would of course be shared with any potential successor provider.

The principles underpinning the New Business Model are that the Council should act more commercially and financially astutely, generating new products and services which customers value, and ceasing to subsidise services which customers do not place great value on. Whilst individual customers of JPPC clearly value the high quality service they receive greatly, the very small numbers of children attending in recent years (steadily reducing to just 17 children per day on average at the after school club) is indicative that, looking at and weighed against the interests of taxpayers across the Vale, this not a service which district-wide is greatly valued. It is certainly the case that a commercial organisation would not have provided a loss-making service for such a long time.

- (vi) The Cabinet decision is to withdraw AVDC funding. Officers and Members would support and encourage the community or another organisation to take the service on. Even if that were to prove impossible, given that on average only around 17 children attend the after school club service, the impact of this is limited and it is hard to argue that an entire community would be detrimentally affected by its closure. Bearing in mind the significant financial pressures facing the council and the limited and focused use in a small area of the district, the decision was taken to cease funding. This is in line with the Corporate Plan aims concerning the prudent use of taxpayers resources.
- (vii) The original Jonathan Page Play Centre was run by a charitable foundation but this burnt down. Following this, AVDC set up the Centre in its current location using the original name, but it has been owned, managed and run entirely by AVDC since that time.
- (viii) The impact of the withdrawal of funding will save the council around £60K, potentially more depending on the future operation of the service and use of the building. Cabinet are keen to support parents, the community or partner organisations take over the running of the centre if at all possible. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and this was found to have little impact.

#### **4 Options considered and Reasons for Recommendation to Cabinet**

- 4.1 The options considered and the reasons for recommending the decision are detailed in the Cabinet report at sections 9 and 10.

#### **5 Resource implications**

- 5.1 Financial appraisal information is detailed at section 8 of the Cabinet report.
- 5.2 The cessation of the service at the Jonathan Page Play Centre would provide savings to the Council. The ultimate savings would be determined by the options identified for the building and the staff.

#### **6 Response to Key Aims and Objectives**

- 6.1 The recommendations in the report help to achieve the Corporate Plan objectives of delivering efficient and economic services through reducing our costs.

#### Contact Officers

New Business Model - Andy Barton 01296 585430  
abarton@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Leisure Services - Lesley Davies - 01296 585721  
Budget setting reports for the 2014/15 period as  
presented to Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council

## JONATHAN PAGE PLAY CENTRE REVIEW

Councillor Mordue

Cabinet Member for Leisure

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The report seeks agreement in principle from Cabinet to cease funding the service operating from the Jonathan Page Play Centre (JPPC).
- 1.2 The report seeks agreement that a further report on options for the Centre and the staff is brought to a future Cabinet meeting early in 2014.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees to the principle of ceasing the funding of services currently run at the Jonathan Page Play Centre, at the latest by September 2014.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees to receiving a further report setting out options for the Centre and the staff.
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes the Equalities Impact Assessment in Appendix B of the report.

### 3 Executive summary (if longer than 2 pages)

- 3.1 JPPC provides an After School Club and a Holiday Play Scheme and provides a positive experience more than just child care through educational and development opportunities in a play environment. The Centre has a hosting arrangement with BCC for a Sure Start Children's Centre.
- 3.2 The Centre is part of the Play Service which provides play activities beyond JPPC such as Play around the Parishes and is an integral part of delivering major Leisure events such as Play in the Park and the Roald Dahl Festival.
- 3.3 As part of the review of Leisure Services through the New Business Model approach, the JPPC has undergone a thorough review. Customer insight work has been carried out and this has informed the recommendations contained within this report. This is part of the wider review being undertaken across the Council to assist in addressing the severe financial pressure that the Council faces for the foreseeable future.
- 3.4 The report recommends that the services at JPPC are no longer funded because of the cost to the Council and the declining take up of the services offered over recent years. Options for the staff and the building will be investigated, which will be informed by the work which has been carried out as part of the NBM review of the Play Service.

- 3.5 The annual net cost of the services run at JPPC is £63,000. The detailed financial assessment is given in Section 8. The Centre is financially unviable and it is felt that whilst a number of options that have been investigated so far for changing the service would have a positive impact upon the bottom line, they would fail to make the significant financial change required.
- 3.6 The options for JPPC will be informed by the work currently underway on the children's day nursery. As the JPPC is part of the Quarrendon and Meadowcroft building complex, the outcomes will also be informed by the work on identifying options for the future of AVDC's community centres.

#### **4 Background to JPPC**

- 4.1 The JPPC is part of the Play Service in Leisure Services and provides a number of activities, these include:
- The operation of the After School Club at the JPPC
  - The operation of the Holiday Play Scheme at the JPPC
  - Taking play to the rural areas of the Vale through *Play Around the Parishes*
  - Participation in events e.g. Roald Dahl Festival, Mad Hatters Tea Party
  - Organisation of play events e.g. National Play Day in Vale Park
  - Organisation of events at the JPPC e.g. Junior Spring & Autumn Watch
  - Hosting the Sure Start Children's Centre at JPPC
- 4.2 The JPPC was opened in 2000 as part of the new Quarrendon and Meadowcroft Community Centre complex. Whilst the Community Centre is managed by the Quarrendon and Meadowcroft Community Association, the purpose-built play facility remained in the management of the Council for play activities to be delivered. This followed the destruction of a building that had been owned by the then Aylesbury Vale Play Association (now the Bucks Play Association). The building was named in honour of a young man who tragically lost his life.
- 4.3 The main activities at the JPPC are the After School Club and Holiday Play Schemes which provide structured and child-led activities such as crafts, sports, music and games. The Centre has a purpose built outdoor area with a go-kart track, climbing frames and multi-use games area. These activities are structured in accordance with OFSTED and the Early Years Foundation Service which ensure high quality care for children.

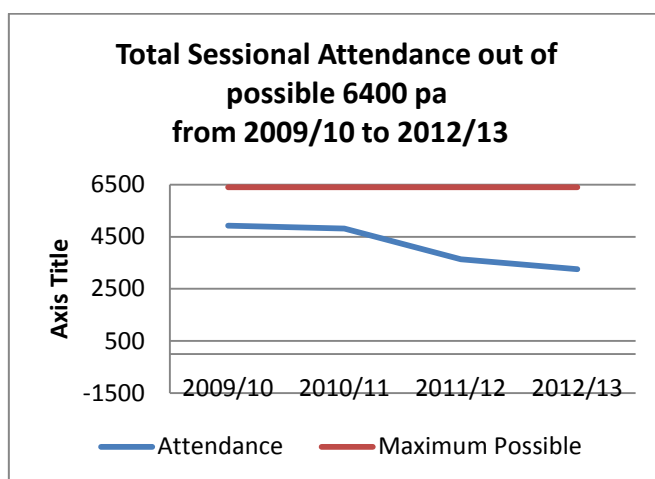
#### **5 Use of the JPPC**

##### **After School Club**

- 5.1 The After School Club is for primary aged-children and runs Monday to Friday, 3.15pm to 6pm with collection services from the Thomas Hickman, Turnfurlong and Buckingham Park Schools via walk, minibus and taxi service in an effort to maximise catchment opportunities.
- 5.2 Most of these users come from the 'comfortable communities' category which means although they may not be very wealthy they have few major financial worries. In terms of ethnicity and disability they broadly mirror the population of the Vale.

- 5.3 The number of users of the After School Club has declined over the past 4 years by circa 30% from 4927 in 2009/10 to 3256 in 2012/13. Figure 1 demonstrates the pattern of decline compared to the 6400 total possible sessions per year. [Note: the statistics in this paragraph were clarified after the original Cabinet report was published. The figures quoted above are labelled ‘users’ but actually represent the total number of places booked on after school sessions during those periods. A relatively small number of regular users will have booked repeatedly throughout the year, and will have accounted for a high proportion of the 3,256 places booked during that period. To get a truer picture of the level of usage at the centre, latest figures for 2013/2014 show an average of 17 children attend each after school session at JPPC. Around 81 different children used the after school club during that period – some of these will have been regular users, some will have booked only for short, or possibly one-off periods.]

**Figure 1: After School Club attendances**



### **Holiday Play Scheme**

- 5.4 The Holiday Play Scheme takes place in school holidays for children aged 5 to 13 years. The pattern of attendance mirrors that of the After School Club in that numbers are declining – the attendance in 2012/13 was 2,930, a 10% decrease on the 2011/12 figures.
- 5.5 Competition for the Play Scheme has increased recently with more alternative activity-based offers available, although JPPC benefits from proximity to other diverse Council-owned facilities which are used in the Holiday Scheme, including Meadowcroft all-weather pitch, grass pitches, multi-use games area, two play areas and community centre with sports hall.
- 5.6 The price charged for holiday play is broadly on a par with competitors, although slightly towards the lower end of the scale.
- 5.7 The Holiday Scheme is run by specifically qualified and experienced staff with Level 2, 3 and 4 play qualifications. The activities are Ofsted rated, so meet very high standards of child care in line with educational facilities.

### **Sure Start Children's Centre**

- 5.8 BCC who operate the government's Sure Start programme locally has been renting the Jonathan Page Play Centre during the weekdays (9am – 2pm) since July 2008. The licence runs until 2033.
- 5.9 The closure of the Centre may require serving notice on Sure Start.

### **Reasons for decline in use of the Centre**

- 5.10 The operation of JPPC has been thoroughly reviewed and a significant level of customer insight and data collection has been carried out (see Appendix A).
- 5.11 The gradual decline in numbers using JPPC relates to a number of factors:
- An increase in the number of After School Clubs run by schools which were not available when the JPPC service was launched. They offer on-site provision which makes a much more attractive offer for parents to drop off and collect their children from one location.
- The impact of the recession has seen an increased use of friends or extended family to provide similar child care at no/little cost.
  - There has been a shift in provision of 'wrap' round care for working parents where pre and post school offers are now more common. JPPC could offer this wrap around care if Sure Start were not located there.
  - The change in provision has seen more specific commercial after school activities and holiday schemes such as specific sports or dance classes held at schools.
  - Customer insight has shown that the lack of an AVDC on-line booking and payment system and of a dedicated website have depressed the take up of places at the Centre.
  - The branding is out of date and should be clearly distinguished from the AVDC branding.

## **6 Competitor analysis**

- 6.1 JPPC is the only purpose built play centre in Aylesbury with a large fully enclosed outside area. It provides a service to children at schools where there is no after school club.
- 6.2 It is in competition with schools, child minders, friends/relatives, nannies, homework clubs and sports and arts activities for working parents.
- 6.3 Much of the after school provision is linked to specific primary schools and only open to the children who attend those schools. Some provide breakfast clubs in addition to an after school club, offering breakfast and some offer cooked food during the evenings. Many schools also offer activities after school such as sports, drama and music clubs. The majority of these after-school clubs operate from 3.15pm to 6pm, with 2 open for longer and 2



having shorter opening hours. JPPC currently offers a service to children at schools with no after school club.

- 6.4 Customer insight demonstrates the key factors for parents in determining which childcare provider to use. The key issues are:
- Quality of the centre and its settings
  - Convenience
  - Costs

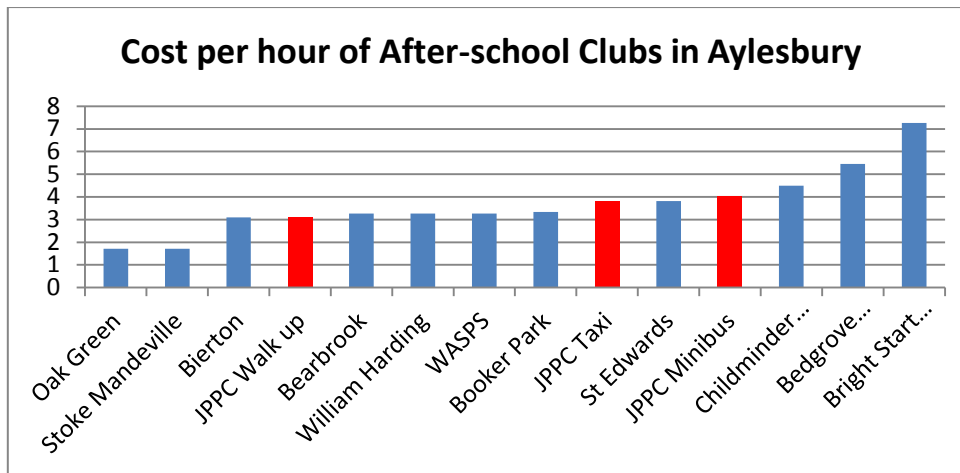
### **Quality of the environment**

- 6.5 JPPC has the advantage of offering a high quality, purpose built centre for children with a large outdoor area, which is staffed by highly qualified experts in play.
- 6.6 JPPC is located in one of the more deprived areas of Aylesbury. This was part of the original reasons for locating the Centre here, but it appears that the perception of the area is putting off potential business.

### **Convenience**

- 6.7 The difficulty of operating a centralised after school club facility at JPPC is getting children to the site. After school clubs are primarily used by working parents to extend the time children are cared for. This means that children have to be moved from the school they attend to JPPC largely without parents present. This is currently done via a walk up service from local schools, as well as a minibus and taxi service to transfer children. This means added cost to the users of this service, which is further compounded by taxis not being liked by parents due to the perceived risks associated with children being transported on their own or in small groups.
- 6.8 Several schools run after school clubs and JPPC does not compete with the convenience of these offers although there is potential for AVDC to work with schools to offer services at their school sites.
- 6.9 The locational issues also means that there are only limited options to widen the service to a larger catchment due to the costs and critical mass required without investing in additional transportation.
- 6.10 The service at JPPC depends upon how the children arrive i.e. by foot, taxi or minibus. The walk up service is one of the most reasonably priced offers. For those collected by minibus this is circa £3.00 to £4.00 per hour. The hourly rate of competitors cost ranges from £1.70 to £7.30 which places the JPPC offer in the mid to high end of the price range (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: comparison of cost per hour with the local competition**



## 7 Options for the JPPC

7.1 A number of options have been considered to seek to reduce the cost of operating the Centre. Of the options explored so far, some have the potential to make some inroads into the cost to the Council, although none are likely to make the significant difference required. The marketing, branding and booking limitations have not been addressed, although without introducing these it is difficult to say what the bottom line impact on finances would be.

7.2 Appendix C sets out the options which have been considered so far. The future options for the staff and building will take this into account and may include:

- Service run out of schools
- Holiday play schemes run across the Vale
- Sale/lease of the JPPC as a going concern

7.3 These options will be fully scoped and brought to Cabinet in a subsequent report.

## 8 Financial appraisal

8.1 The net costs of running the services at the JPPC is circa £63,000 per year, excluding central recharges (see Figure 3). This is split 60:40 for the After School Club and the Holiday Play Scheme, £36,000 and £24,000, respectively.

8.2 This takes into account the time spent by Officers on JPPC, central recharges, building and running costs, and income.

8.3 Cessation of the service at the Centre provides the opportunity for an alternative use of the building. The actual savings generated would depend on the options which are agreed for the staff and building. The proposal for the JPPC runs alongside the other work which Leisure Services is carrying out as part of the New Business Model in identifying new income generating activities and one option would be for the staff to focus on this. Discussions are underway with schools regarding running a service within their buildings.

8.4 The implications for staff have to be considered. Five members of staff would be most directly impacted by this proposal, along with regular casual members of staff. These members are:

- Senior Community Development Officer (10% of his time)
  - Community Development Officer (30% of her time)
  - Play Centre Manager
  - Four Play workers
- 8.5 As set out in AVDC policy, options for redeployment will be explored prior to any redundancy. Any redundancy costs would need to be financed through the savings made. If the service were transferred to another provider, TUPE would apply for staff who transfer.
- 8.6 The future of the building will be considered as part of the wider Community Centres work following the Cabinet decision in July 2013.
- 8.7 The feasibility work for a children's day nursery has been running concurrently and its findings will inform the future options for the Centre.

### Figure 3: breakdown of JPPC costs and income

#### **COSTS**

Staff costs	£106,052	
Building costs	£38,500	
Transport costs	£5,000	
Running costs	£8,200	<b>£157,752</b>

#### **INCOME**

Bucks CC Sure Start	-£10,000	
After School Club	-£29,000	
Play centre	-£1,600	
Play schemes	-£57,400	<b>-£98,000</b>

#### **Net cost**

**£59,752**

Staff costs take into account that only 30% of the Community Development Officer's time is for JPPC

Internal recharges	£49,100
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## 9 Options considered

### Option 1

- 9.1 To continue to operate the services currently provided at JPPC. This option is not recommended because of the cost to the Council. Under the New Business Model reviews numerous options have been explored to try and find ways of significantly reducing the deficit for this service (as set out in the report and in Appendix C) but it has been concluded that the possible changes would not be sufficient to change the Centre to a financially viable position under its current model of operation.

### Option 2

9.3 To cease running the service at the JPPC and to identify options for the staff and the building. This option is recommended. Options for the staff and the building would be developed and brought to a future Cabinet meeting.

## **10 Reasons for Recommendation**

10.1 To assist with addressing the financial pressures facing the council over coming years and to ensure the provision of the service is as efficient as possible.

10.2 The JPPC is discretionary and provides a service to a relatively small number of children. It is felt that better use could be made of the building, whilst looking at options to use the staff to provide an improved play service.

10.3 The market for holiday play schemes and after school care has changed in recent years. There are more options open to parents, some through private providers, with the school setting for after school clubs becoming more popular.

10.4 Through the competitor analysis it is apparent that there are other viable options to the current service provided by the market. As such it is believed that current users, given sufficient notice, should be able to find alternative options either through other market providers.

10.5 With the experience and quality of the staff who provide the current service there is also the opportunity to further explore offering dedicated After School and Breakfast Club care in school settings where schools do not currently provide this service. This recognises the value of play to children, the value of child care to AVDC residents, the expertise of the AVDC staff and the opportunities to create greater partnership working.

## **11 Resource implications**

The cessation of the service at the JPPC would provide savings to the Council in operation of the building. The ultimate savings would be determined by the options identified for the building and the staff.

## **12 Response to Key Aims and Objectives**

The recommendations in the report help to achieve the Corporate Plan objectives of:

- Delivering efficient and economic services through reducing our costs.

Contact Officers

New Business Model - Andy Barton 01296 585430  
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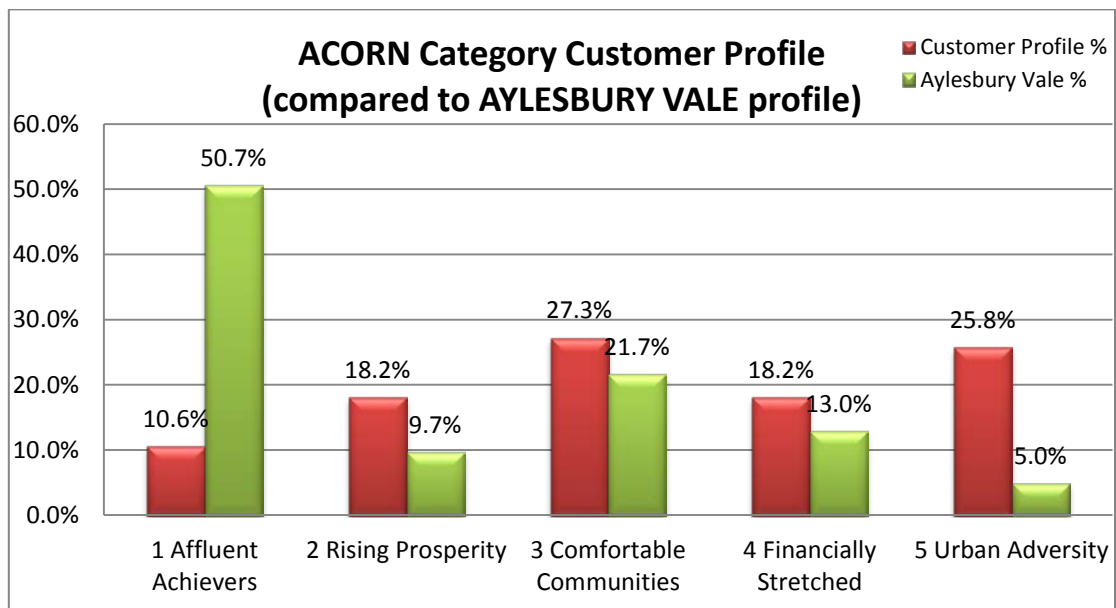
## APPENDIX A – CUSTOMER INSIGHT

### *Profile of Current Users: After School Club*

There are currently 66 registered children for the autumn term after school club. Of these 70% of the children are of white ethnicity and 27% are of non-white ethnicity. (3% of parents declined to provide their child's ethnicity).

This compares with 81% and 19% respectively for the Aylesbury Wards and 90% and 10% respectively for the population of Aylesbury Vale as a whole. 8% of the children registered have a disability, compared to 14% of residents who said they had a long-term limiting illness or disability in the 2011 Census. 26% of children attending get a reduced rate through the AVDC Passport to Leisure Scheme as their parents receive benefits payments.

Over 50% of the users are from the most well-off categories. Most are from 'comfortable communities' category, although they may not be very wealthy they have few major financial worries. The next category is 'urban adversity', these are the people who are finding life the hardest and experiencing the most difficult social and financial conditions.



## **APPENDIX B CONSULTATION**

Consultation was undertaken from July to October 2013 and included focus groups with users and staff, and online surveys with users and non-users. The numbers of participants has been low, and as a result, whilst indicative of views, they should not be considered 'robust', more indicative of views.

### **Consultation with users: parents**

Of the parents who attended the focus group:

- Cost was a significant factor - comparisons quoted by parents indicated that JPPC looks expensive; discounts for siblings, loyalty discounts suggested.
- The parents of children 8 years+ find the play scheme hard to "sell" to their children. Differentiated age groups suggested.
- Communication is not always as good as it needs to be between parents and staff, eg new parents had no idea there was flexibility to book on the day.
- Some parents needed more information on what children had done, particularly new parents.
- A bit more 'parent pampering' required'.
- Trying to be too many things – too broad, harder to sell benefits.

### **On-line consultation**

- 48% also use family and friends; 30% an afterschool club on school premises; and, 13% childminder / nursery.
- The 'quality of any facility' was ranked most important to parents when choosing childcare, av. rating score 4.6 (Max. score 5); 'value for money' 4.5; and 'Ofsted rating' 4.4.
- When asked about the range of services JPPC offers, 'Ofsted rating, inc fully qualified staff' ranked top, 4.6; Flexible bookings 4.5; and value for money 4.4.
- Most popular future activities selected (maybe an extra charge), included 'Bikeability' and 'supervised homework club'.
- Payment preferences, 92% prefer to book and pay online

### **Non-users**

- Those who use afterschool childcare, 54% use family and friends; 46% childminder / registered nursery; and, 8% afterschool club at school.
- 87% had heard of JPPC
- The 'quality of any facility' was ranked most important to parents when choosing childcare, av. rating score 4.5; 'value for money', 4.1; 'Ofsted rating', 'word of mouth recommendation' and 'opening hours' all rated 4.05.
- When asked about the services JPPC offers, 'Ofsted rating, inc fully qualified staff' rated top, 4.2; 'flexible bookings' and 'value for money' both at 4.1.
- Top future activities preferred (maybe an extra charge), included 'outdoor nature activities', 'organised sports coaching' and 'Bikeability'.
- Payment preferences, 66% prefer to book and pay online; 31% book by email, pay online.

## **APPENDIX C: work carried out to review the business operation**

### **Completed**

- The level of staffing of the taxi and minibus service has been reviewed along with the feasibility of reducing minibus staff from 2 to 1 to reduce staff costs. An extra space in the mini-bus was created and staffing level was reduced by one member of staff. Pending changes to Ofsted regulations may enable the reduction of one member of staff in the future, however an implementation date for this change in regulation is not yet known.
- Investigated whether more activities or facilities could be provided for slightly older children. It would take a while to build up an older child audience which has diminished over the past two years. Options included creating separate areas for older children to do their own thing. Customer insight suggests that after school care is no longer a popular option for 10+ children and therefore this option was not considered to be viable.
- Investigated the feasibility of developing a package to offer private children's parties. This was introduced in September with a trial event and the result has been positive. This has not yet been insufficient time to fully market this offer and test its potential for new income generation.
- Investigated scope to hire out JPPC to more new organisations. The feedback was that not many organisations wanted the space.

### **Identified but not concluded**

- Increased marketing and communications to specific customer groups could be carried out.
- Rebranding the offer to appeal more to both children and parents (who are the primary segments whose wants and needs are being fulfilled) and market it to a wider audience. This was one of the primary recommendations of the day nursery consultant's review of JPPC but this has yet to be put into place.
- Reviewing the pricing structure of the After School Club and Holiday Play Scheme, associated transport services, including options for pricing activities differently, such as higher rates for booking one day compared to booking whole week.
- Opportunities to run services based at a school(s) setting rather than at JPPC. Discussions with schools have already commenced and have been positively received.
- Opportunities for a more lucrative play offer at the existing site i.e. active play options, sports sessions.
- Opportunities should Sure Start leave e.g. baby sensory sessions, pre-school setting, breakfast club.

## APPENDIX D – EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>step one – identification and scope</b>	
<b>1.0 The title of this assessment</b>	Cease funding the service provided at the Jonathan Page Play Centre
<b>1.1 Date of the assessment</b>	2 December 2013
<b>1.2 Responsible officer</b>	Lesley Davies, Leisure Services Manager
<b>1.3 Extension number</b>	5721
<b>1.4 Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:ldavies@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk">ldavies@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk</a>
<b>1.5</b>	This is an assessment of the impact the closing of the JPPC service (after school club and holiday play schemes) will have on residents and current users of the facility.
<b>1.6 These are the aims and objectives of the policy or function and the scope of the assessment</b>	<p>At the JPPC, AVDC currently provides an after school club and a holiday play scheme. The After School Club (ASC) runs on weekdays after school from 3.15pm to 6pm at JPPC with collections from three different schools. Children who attend are offered a healthy snack, a quiet homework area and an opportunity to make friends, indulge in creative and active activities or to relax after a busy school day. The Holiday Play Scheme provides activities during school holidays for children aged 5 to 13.</p> <p>The New Business Model and the review of the JPPC after-school service contribute to the Delivering Efficient and Economic Services strand of the Council's Corporate Plan 2011/15.</p> <p>The assessment will look at the current users and alternate provision in Aylesbury.</p>
<b>1.6.1 Who will benefit from this activity? (e.g. communities or groups)</b>	The Council tax payers will benefit as this project is based upon reducing the cost to the Council.
<b>1.6.2 In what way will they benefit?</b>	<p>The tax payer will no longer be subsidising a service used by a relatively small number of residents.</p> <p>The net cost of the AVDC service run at JPPC is circa £60,000 per annum, taking into account staff and building costs and income.</p>



1.6.3	<b>Who will be affected by this activity but will not benefit directly? How will they be affected?</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff will be affected with possible redundancies, although redeployment will be considered in the first instance</li> <li>- Current users will be affected as they will no longer be able to use the service, however they will be given sufficient notice to make alternative arrangements. We have completed a competitor analysis that shows that there is sufficient alternative provision of a comparable price.</li> <li>- Discussions are underway with the schools where the children who use the JPPC come from to see if we can provide a service for them</li> </ul>
1.6.4	<b>How will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between groups / communities?</b>
	<p>The proposal does not seek to promote strong and positive relationships between groups and communities; it is a financial decision. However, the Leisure staff are in discussion with schools to establish if there is a market for providing the service within their buildings to reduce any adverse impact on the current users.</p>
1.7	<b>These are the sources of evidence used and the key facts that informed the assessment of the function or policy</b>
	<p>Demographic and Acorn Analysis of current users.          Consultation with current users, non-users and staff          Play Services Review April 2013          Financial Assessment          Competitor Analysis</p>
<b>step two – consultation</b>	
2.0	<b>This is how and when the consultation was carried out</b>
	<p>A programme of consultation was undertaken from July to October 2013. This included focus groups with users and staff, and online surveys with users and non-users. The numbers of participants has been low, and as a result, whilst indicative of views, they should not be considered ‘robust’.</p>
2.1	<b>These groups/stakeholders were consulted</b>
	<p>Current users          Non users          Staff</p>
2.2	<b>This is a summary of the responses</b>
	<p>Of the parents who attended the focus group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost was a significant factor - comparisons quoted by parents indicated that JPPC looks expensive; discounts for siblings, loyalty discounts suggested.</li> <li>• The parents of children 8 years+ find the play scheme hard to “sell” to their children. Differentiate age groups suggested.</li> <li>• Communication is not always as good as it needs to be between parents and staff, eg new parents had no idea there was flexibility to book on the day.</li> </ul>

- Some parents needed more information on what children had done, particularly new parents.
- A bit more 'parent pampering' required'.
- Trying to be too many things – too broad, harder to sell benefits.

Of those who completed the on-line consultation:

- 48% also use family and friends; 30% an afterschool club on school premises; and, 13% childminder / nursery.
- The 'quality of any facility' was ranked most important to parents when choosing childcare, av. rating score 4.6 (Max. score 5); 'value for money' 4.5; and 'Ofsted rating' 4.4.
- When asked about the range of services JPPC offers, 'Ofsted rating, inc fully qualified staff' ranked top, 4.6; Flexible bookings 4.5; and value for money 4.4.
- Most popular future activities selected (maybe an extra charge), included 'Bikeability' and 'supervised homework club'.
- Payment preferences, 92% prefer to book and pay online.

#### *Non-users*

- Those who use afterschool childcare, 54% use family and friends; 46% childminder / registered nursery; and, 8% afterschool club at school.
- 87% had heard of JPPC
- The 'quality of any facility' was ranked most important to parents when choosing childcare, av. rating score 4.5; 'value for money', 4.1; 'Ofsted rating', 'word of mouth recommendation' and 'opening hours' all rated 4.05.
- When asked about the range of services JPPC offers, 'Ofsted rating, inc fully qualified staff' rated top, 4.2; 'flexible bookings' and 'value for money' both at 4.1.
- Top future activities preferred (maybe an extra charge), included 'outdoor nature activities', 'organised sports coaching' and 'Bikeability'.
- Payment preferences, 66% prefer to book and pay online; 31% book by email, pay online.

#### *Staff*

- The staff were a united group in what they saw the benefits as to coming to JPPC.
- Issues which stop people coming were seen as the lack of school pick-ups, financial constraints for parents and some competition from after school clubs at other schools.
- Children, 10+ are less likely to be 'keen' to come; staff feel that the service will attract younger children in the future.
- Staff feel they make a difference to children, teaching them new things which will help them.
- Booking system an administrative nightmare for staff. Very lengthy - often have to bring children in from outside if there's too much office work.
- Staff would like to offer birthday parties and 'events' which they have confidence to run.

**2.3 What actions were taken/amendments were made as a result of the consultation?**  
 These results have been fed into the decision making process.

<b>step three – assessing impacts</b>						
<b>3.0 Was any evidence that the policy or function discriminates against one or more of the equality groups found?</b>						
<p><b>1</b> No.</p> <p>There are currently 66 registered children for the autumn term after school club. Of these 70% of the children are of white ethnicity and 27% are of non-white ethnicity. (3% of parents declined to provide their child's ethnicity). This compares with 81% and 19% respectively for the Aylesbury Wards and 90% and 10% respectively for the population of Aylesbury Vale as a whole.</p> <p>Approximately 8% of the children registered have a disability, compared to 14% of residents who said they had a long-term limiting illness or disability in the 2011 Census.</p> <p>This shows that the percentage of people using the afterschool club from non-white ethnicity is slightly above that of the general population and the number of children with disabilities using the service is comparable with the general population. The JPPC does not provide a service specifically tailored to these groups so it is not considered that the closure of the service would discriminate against either of these groups.</p> <p>There appears to be sufficient alternative provision of after school options across Aylesbury as shown by the competitor analysis.</p>						
<b>3.1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Analysis of Impacts</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Summaries of how it impacts and any reasons identified for the impact</b>
			<b>Yes</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>No</b>	
	<b>8</b>	<b>Race</b>			No	
		<b>Gender reassignment</b>			No	
		<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			No	
		<b>Sex</b>			No	
		<b>Disability</b>			No	
		<b>Age</b>			No	
		<b>Religion or Belief</b>			No	
		<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			No	
		<b>Communities/ groups</b>			No	
		<b>Neighbourhood</b>			No	
		<b>Other (Please specify)</b>				
<b>3.2 If any groups were specifically excluded from the benefits of the policy or function these are highlighted here</b>						
N/A						
<b>3.3 Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?</b>						
N/A						

<b>3.3.1</b>	<b>What will you do to communicate that this activity will increase social justice?</b> Communications around the closing of the service will make the background to the decision clear.						
<b>3.4</b>	<b>The council has these procedures and actions in place to mitigate against any potential impacts</b> A communications plan for the closure is being drawn up and this will address any potential impacts. A closure date is being considered that will allow parents sufficient time to arrange alternative after school care.						
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Where this assessment has revealed specific impacts, here we identify the changes we need to make and the controls we need to put in place</b> N/A						
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Where we have identified additional needs for some groups, we have considered whether positive action can be taken to meet these</b> N/A						
<b>3.7</b>	<b>These are the budgetary implications for change</b> The service currently costs a total of £158,000 pa, and achieves income of £98,900. This results in a net financial position of circa £60,000.						
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Actions to be taken</b>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Date</th> <th>Priority level (high/medium/low)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Date	Priority level (high/medium/low)			
	Date	Priority level (high/medium/low)					
<b>3.8</b>	<b>The council used the following methods to gain feedback on the main issues raised in this assessment</b> The feedback will flow from the results of the consultation process and the preferred course of action will be reported to Cabinet.						
<b>3.9</b>	<b>These were the responses received when this assessment was circulated</b> To follow						
<b>3.10</b>	<b>These are the additional actions/amendments identified</b>  To follow						

<b>step four – feedback, action planning and monitoring</b>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>This is how the actions identified here will be monitored and what will be measured</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>9 Responsibility for monitoring these actions</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>10 These specific actions are included in team targets</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>✓ 1 x</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Yes 1 No</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>This impact assessment should be reviewed in 3 years. This is the date of the next assessment</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>This impact assessment was presented to the Stakeholders/Consultees for endorsement on</b>
<b>4.5</b>	<b>The stakeholders/consultees endorsed this assessment on</b>

***Please return the completed form to: People & Payroll, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 8FF, once it has been signed by your head of service.***