

## **Update on lending, loaning, and reuse project, including Cambridge scrapstore**

### **To:**

Councillor Anna Smith Executive Councillor for Communities Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee 24.03.2022

**Report by:** Vicky Haywood, Community Development Manager

**Wards affected:** Abbey, Arbury, Castle, Cherry Hinton, Coleridge, East Chesterton, King's Hedges, Market, Newnham, Petersfield, Queen Edith's, Romsey, Trumpington, West Chesterton

### **1. Introduction / Executive Summary**

In October 2021, the Executive Councillor for Communities approved recommendations to support a review of Scrapstore to greater align to corporate priorities. This paper provides an update on progress and further recommendations.

Following a mapping exercise and workshop with community partners, an options appraisal and feasibility work has taken place to consider the broader topic of community lending, loaning and reuse and options for direction of travel going forward.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 1) Note progress on wider project work to support community lending, loan and re-use in the city in line with the council's priorities
- 2) Note progress to establish alternative options and support for individuals and groups to access arts, craft and scrap materials, noting

intention to close down Scrapstore in its current form and repurpose the unit for Cambridge Food distribution hub in July 2022.

### **3) Background**

Scrapstore was established not only with the aim of encourage re-use, but also with the aim of generating income for the council. However, the 2019 review of Scrapstore found that once staffing costs had been considered, the project has a net annual cost to the council of £46.5k.

The Report to committee in Oct 2021 [here](#) agreed to refocus the service and re-align with corporate objectives, with a focus to support council's anti-poverty work with the community and voluntary sectors. .

Our new approach will focus on supporting the existing and growing lending, loaning and re-use agenda within the City. Our work will support place-based approaches where services and projects are delivered in the heart of communities, supporting places where people go already rather than from a place people have to make a special journey too, or even struggle to find. Our new model will harness the power of local and support further-development of peer to peer lending and re-use within communities; this could take the shape of many things including, but not limited to, lending schemes, uniform swaps, skill-share events and repair cafes co-located alongside community events and hubs.

Lending and loaning libraries are developing rapidly across the country and take many forms from incorporated models within existing library systems to community interest models and franchises. Lending libraries help contribute to more sustainable, connected communities and support those on low incomes whilst reducing consumer ownership. Local Cambridge residents are currently exploring a Library of Things in the City. Discussions are underway to see where this aligns with our objectives and how we support a city-wide lending scheme going forwards.

The current Scrapstore location is sub-optimal, is not easy to access and has relatively low take-up of membership from city residents.

Consideration should also be given to the projects environmental credentials. The most up to date recycling techniques can now turn the previously unrecyclable items into products using modern manufacturing techniques. In its raw form, some of the products donated to Scrapstore could be recycled. Re-distributing for use as play and craft materials simply gives items an extra

life before ending up in landfill, rather than being truly re-cycled or re-purposed.

Scrapstore is not the only provider of this service-type in the local area. Discussions are underway with **Reimagine Resource Centre in Witchford** to explore where we may be able to work together for mutual benefit of our customers and community.

The re-focusing of our work will shift from delivery of a service in one location to being able to support lending and re-use across multiple neighbourhoods building on local needs and interests. This might take the shape of activities delivered in community centres, hubs, libraries and alongside community events.

We want to keep the current project running on part time basis until May 2022, subject to staff capacity. Surplus stock will be distributed to support Platinum Jubilee events and our existing members. Following this, the unit will be re-purposed to support a key council objective in the short term. Cambridge City Council has committed £200K to support the development of a food re-distribution hub and learning kitchen; supporting our shared goal of reducing food waste and tackling food poverty. The programme supports 8 food hubs across the City, distributes surplus and locally grown fresh produce to communities in need. This partnership project needs a temporary home whilst the permanent site is under development and construction.

## **4) Implications**

### **a) Financial Implications**

The Scrapstore project currently has a net annual cost of £46.5K. These changes will make savings, however, it is not possible to fully account for these prior to the completion of the full review of ChYpPS and Neighbourhood Community Development later in 2022.

There is an opportunity for increased revenue for property services who will re-market the commercial unit on Barnwell Drive once it is no longer in use by the food distribution hub.

### **b) Staffing Implications**

Two part-time roles will be impacted by these changes. The posts will be deleted, however, individuals currently working in these posts will be re-deployed to support other projects pending the phase two service review.

planned for October 2022. There are **no redundancies** expected from these changes.

### **c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

An EQIA has been completed. The re-shaping of the Councils offer to support lending, loaning, re-use and repair will bring significant positive impacts to our communities; particularly for families and those on low incomes. The re-focusing will also help strengthen the Cities' voluntary sector organisations who already provide programmes which support re-use. Working collaboratively with this sector and local communities will bring many benefits, providing opportunities for skill-sharing, uniform swaps, tool sheds and other ideas that develop from the communities we work with. Any negative impacts can be mitigated in the short term through alternative provision and signposting.

### **d) Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

A climate rating tool has been completed for changes planned. If the project was designed and launched today in its current form, Scrapstore would receive a **medium negative** rating when taking into account the mileage travelled for items to and from the unit, customer journeys and storage. In its current form, the project currently does not contribute to meeting the councils net zero carbon target by 2030.

The shift in service priority to lending, loaning and re-use give this project a new **Medium positive** climate rating. In spending time to fully explore lending and re-use across the City, local residents will see new benefits which are currently not on offer within the existing operating model.

### **e) Procurement Implications**

No implications

### **f) Community Safety Implications**

No implications

## **5) Consultation and communication considerations**

Workshops and local mapping with voluntary sector partners has taken place to explore opportunities for loaning, lending and re-use across the City

Engagement with customers and local stakeholders will help shape the next phase of development

Communications regarding the shift in focus will be shared with customers following approval at committee, and appropriate support given to find alternative suppliers given

## **6) Background papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

## **7) Appendices**

- Equality Impact Assessment

## **8) Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Vicky Haywood, Neighbourhood Community Development Manager

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