

TO: LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP		SUBJECT: FRIDAY NIGHT PROJECT UPDATE
FROM: G YEOMAN, FACILITIES MANAGER NORTH LANARKSHIRE LEISURE		
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In May of 2009 North Lanarkshire Leisure in conjunction with North Lanarkshire Council opened a new 3g football pitch adjacent to Keir Hardie Sports Centre. The pitch was instantly successful and has been busy every since.
- 1.2 During one of the Tasking Co-ordinating meetings involving Bellshill Local Area Team a discussion took place with regards to the amount of anti-social behaviour occurring in the Holytown area.

## 2. Project

- 2.1 Following discussions it was agreed to see if it would be possible to set up a diversionary project in the Holytown area which would help to reduce anti-social behaviour whilst also offering a range of activities for young people in the local area.
- 2.2 This would be based on the Saturday Sports scene criteria however with a broader base involving various local partners. It was agreed to involve the partners who were involved in the very successful Blue Light Discos which were taking place on a regular basis in Sir Matt Busby Sports Complex.

## 3. Planning

- 3.1 A meeting was set up on Wednesday 2 September 2009 and all the partners involved in Blue Light Disco were invited to attend. The meeting included partners from North Lanarkshire Leisure.
- 3.2 North Lanarkshire Council, NHS, Strathclyde Police, Young Carers, YMCA and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue. It was agreed to progress with a Friday night activity programme based on sports activities, however other activities would be introduced in the course of the event and that all the partners would fund (in kind) until the end of the financial year, i.e. March 2010. A date for the start of the project was set for 9 October 2009.

## 4. Progress

- 4.1 When setting up the project it had generally been thought the project would hopefully attract 20 to 30 children. Very quickly it became clear that the project was attracting far more and indeed over the next few months we had periods when we had over 100 children attending activities on a Friday night.

4.2 The success of the project quickly meant that further staff were required and this was provided, mainly by North Lanarkshire Leisure.

## **5. Activities**

5.1 A range of activities took place from football to beauty therapy to dancing and introduction to the gym. The partnership approach, whilst it did have some problems, clearly identified that the strengths of each organisation helped greatly with the progress of the activities.

5.2 North Lanarkshire Leisure were able to provide expertise in sports activities, CLAD were able to provide a great deal of expertise in the interface with children and surveys etc. The YMCA provided excellent support with their knowledge of youth work and the NHS were able to identify health issues and strategies (including free fruit for the children) which would clearly have long term benefits both to their future health and wellbeing, other partners were also able to support in various ways bringing their expertise to the evenings events.

## **6. Funding**

6.1 While all agreed funding was available till the end of March 2010, it was accepted that for the project to be sustained over the longer term additional external funding would require to be provided. One of the criticisms of previous projects in the Holytown area was that they lasted for a short time and then disappeared and we were keen to avoid this for this project.

6.2 During this period, mainly with help from the NHS we were able to identify a funding pocket under the Healthy Living Initiative which gave £5,000 which would help to fund the project in the short term.

6.3 Early in 2010 the group was also able to identify additional funding (with great assistance from Lynn Ward from Regeneration Services) under the ADAP scheme and again a successful bid was put in which gave £25,000 in funding till the end of March 2011.

6.4 This funding will significantly help to continue the project however this is currently the limit of the funding bids that are available for this particular project and it will run out at the end of March 2011.

## **7. Friday Night Progress A Success**

7.1 During this period it was clear that apart from the children thoroughly enjoying the events and activities, CLAD have produced documentation to show how much the project now means to the local area. Strathclyde Police were also able to show a significant decrease in the rates of anti-social behaviour in the Holytown area particularly on the night of the activities.

## **8. Future Intention**

8.1 The Friday Night Project Committee are very keen that this project is continued not just in the short term but over the longer term in order that it can further enhance the activities on offer and also provide an outlet for children to enhance their own skills through various training initiatives and certificates.

8.2 It is also keen to promote the idea that the young people themselves will be heavily involved in the planning and future running of the project (this has already taken place with a number of young people attending the committee meetings).

- 8.3 The project continues to go from strength to strength and is still attracting significant numbers of children on a Friday evening at Keir Hardie. We see it as an ideal way to engage with children and could easily be used as a blueprint for future partnership approaches to problems in other areas and is an ideal way to show a significant Social return on investment.

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