

Eco Bicester Strategic Delivery Board

Date of meeting: 4 October 2012	AGENDA ITEM NO: 6
Report title: Bicester Sustainability & Reuse Centre	
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is to provide information for the Board on the development of the Bicester Sustainability and Reuse Centre.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Bicester Sustainability and Reuse Centre will be a 'one-stop shop' providing goods, services and information on all aspects of sustainability. There will be a large element of reuse – selling items diverted from the waste stream - but its unique strength is the combination of different elements. The Centre will be an independent social enterprise, led by the local community, providing social and environmental benefits.
- 2.2 Following a number of Stakeholder Meetings and a Feasibility Report by Grassroots Bicester, funding was approved to pay for a Project Development Manager for one year.

3. Progress

- 3.1 The Project Development timetable is being adhered to, with recruitment of the Project Development Manager, and preparation of Business and Funding Plans. Next tasks are to register a social enterprise, submit more funding applications and negotiate agreements with delivery partners. Early next year, we intend to secure premises and recruit key staff, with a view to opening the centre spring 2013.
- 3.2 The Business Plan and a Funding Plan (Appendix L) accompany this report.
- 3.3 As well as extensive online research, visits have been made to two comparable enterprises, the Newbury Community Resource Centre, and Action 21 in Leamington Spa, both of which have been generous with their time and very helpful.
- 3.4 The preferred route is to partner with an existing Third Sector body, experienced in running a Furniture Reuse operation. Despite some setbacks, discussions are continuing well.
- 3.5 A stakeholder meeting was held in September, attended by representatives of the Local Authorities, Bicester Vision, potential delivery partners and local stakeholders. There was discussion of progress to date; the Business Plan as drafted at that stage, resulting in various refinements; and the branding of the enterprise, suggesting there was much support for a change to a simpler and more imaginative title for the centre. This discussion is ongoing.

- 3.6 Several risks have been identified. In particular, the project requires some grant funding to commence, and so far only a few potential sources have been identified. One application has been submitted, and more will be made as soon as the enterprise is registered.
- 3.7 The first issue of a newsletter has been produced, and a press and marketing strategy has been drafted.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 Note the progress.