

Report to: Salisbury Area Board

Date of Meeting: 18 September 2014

Subject: Bass Connection at Grosvenor House

Purpose of the report:

To consider a proposal to maintain the Bass Connection facilities at Grosvenor House prior to its transfer to the Salisbury Campus in autumn 2015.

Area Board Objective:

To provide positive leisure time activities for young people by maintaining the well regarded and popular Bass Connection music service in Salisbury until it can relocate to the new Salisbury Campus at 5 Rivers Leisure Centre.

Bass Connection

Bass Connection is a thriving and well regarded facility where young people can develop their musical skills in a secure social environment. Based at Grosvenor House in Salisbury, the facility includes rehearsal space and equipment for use by local bands and young musicians. Over the years, the facility has supported many local bands, and hundreds of young musicians many of whom have gone onto professional careers in the music industry. In the past, the service has been supported by Wiltshire Council as part of its integrated youth service, operating two open sessions each week. From 1st October the integrated youth service will be discontinued in its present form as the Council moves to a new community-led approach to the delivery of positive leisure time activities for young people. As part of the change, the Council has made a commitment to move the Bass Connection music facilities to Salisbury Campus at 5 Rivers Leisure Centre which is due to open toward the end of 2015. Salisbury Area Board has been exploring ways in which the service may be maintained and supported until the Campus is open and this report sets out a proposal that would achieve that aim.

Grosvenor House

No decision has yet been made regarding the future of Grosvenor House. However, upon the cessation of the current integrated youth service, the building will no longer be required by the service and staff will be withdrawn. Activities and services previously offered from the centre will become part of a new community-based approach delivered by existing and new community groups at a wide range of community venues in the City. While no decision has yet been taken to dispose of Grosvenor House, the Council is looking to sell redundant capital assets to help fund the new Campus providing enhanced leisure and community facilities including space for young people and the Bass Connection facility. The Council is currently examining options for Grosvenor House, but in the meantime it can be made available for use by Bass Connection provided a formal key holding arrangement is reached with any third party provider of the service. Any such agreement would be subject to the Council retaining the right to terminate the agreement should it wish to proceed with disposal.

The Sound Emporium (TSE) proposal

[The Sound Emporium](#) is a local community group set up and run by professional musicians and music enthusiasts with backgrounds in teaching, training and production. It provides events, summer schools and educational activities as well as guitar, bass and drum lessons, vocal coaching, stagecraft, song writing, poster & leaflet design, badge making, live gigs, competitions, talent shows, fundraising, digital music production and sound and lighting techniques. The Sound Emporium also runs the Salisbury School of Rock - two weekly after school educational sessions for young people. Although commercial in its structure, the Sound Emporium is a registered ASDAN Centre (Reg No: 35102). [ASDAN](#) was formally established as an educational charity in 1991 with awarding body status, providing courses to schools, colleges, training providers and youth centres across the UK. Its charitable purpose is: "The advancement of education, by providing opportunities for all learners to develop their personal and social attributes and levels of achievement through ASDAN awards and resources, and the relief of poverty, where poverty inhibits such opportunities for learners." In addition the Sound Emporium works alongside charity [Rise:61](#) who work with young people on Bemerton Heath to raise money for young people to access music provision, sporting and leisure activities (Registered Charity No.1158086)

The Sound Emporium has expressed a formal interest in taking over the support for Bass Connection, until such time as it relocates to the Campus. The proposal (which contains two options) is set out in Appendix 1. In return for a grant, the group would provide two (or three under Option 2) sessions per week at Grosvenor House for existing and new users of the facility. Sound Emporium fully understand the position in relation to the building and would be willing to sign a user license that would recognise the Council's right to terminate the agreement in the event of it moving forward with disposal. This safeguards the Council's position and would not jeopardise the capital funding strategy for the campus programme.

- **Proposal Option 1:** The Sound Emporium proposes to open Grosvenor House between the hours of 7pm and 9pm on a Tuesday and Thursday (the same as the current sessions) and provide two qualified DBS checked and insured members of staff to run the Bass Connection activities. The Council would be required to ensure that the building is maintained in a safe state and that services are maintained – as is currently proposed until any sale is considered. For further details please see Appendix 1.
- **Proposal Option 2:** In return for access to the building at other times to run additional activities – such as the Salisbury School of Rock after school club - The Sound Emporium proposes to open Grosvenor House for Bass Connection sessions between the hours of 7pm and 9pm on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and provide two qualified DBS checked and insured members of staff to run the centre. This would be on similar terms as set out under option 1 and subject to legal agreement with the Council. Under this proposal Bass Connection would benefit from an additional session, extending the current offer to more young people. The Sound Emporium would benefit from an additional City Centre venue from which to provide its activities.

Costs

The Sound Emporium would provide the services offered at Option 1 and Option 2 up until the end of 2015 in return for a grant of £12,000. This equates to 120 sessions (£100 per session) under option 1 and 180 sessions (at £67 per session) under option 2. It is proposed that any grant is subject to review after 6 months to ensure that the sessions are meeting the needs of young people and are being delivered in accordance with the Area Board's objectives. The review would be undertaken by the Community Youth Officer and the Sound Emporium and incorporate the views of young people using the service. This would enable the Area Board to award £6,000 from its budget in 2014/15 and, subject to satisfactory evaluation, to consider a further award of £6,000 from its 2015/16 budget (subject to Council budget decisions).

Issues for consideration by the Board

- Currently Bass Connections sessions run for 2 ½ hours and this includes setting up and taking down equipment.
- Under option 2, The Sound Emporium would be able to utilise the building for income generating activities at its own discretion.
- Safeguarding and health and safety issues have been examined by the Community Youth Officer and conditions are included below to meet quality assurance standards and mitigate any risks.
- Under each option TSE would require secure access to areas of the building where £18,000 worth of the group's equipment will be stored. This will form part of the user agreement.

Area Board decision

Salisbury Area Board is asked to consider the grant application submitted by The Sound Emporium. In coming to any decision upon the matter, the Board is recommended to incorporate the following conditions:

- Any use of Grosvenor House will be subject to final legal agreement with the Council incorporating a termination clause should the Council wish to pursue disposal of the building.
- Funding is subject to satisfactory performance and evaluation after 6 months as outlined in this report.
- Payment will be staged into £6,000 for the first 30 weeks and subject to satisfactory evaluation a further £6,000 to cover the remaining 30 weeks (subject to reasonable summer holiday closures/reductions).
- The grant covers the provision of the sessions agreed and not the setting up and taking down of equipment prior to or after sessions.
- The Sound Emporium will be required to assist with the migration of the Bass Connection service to Salisbury Campus when that facility becomes available.
- The Sound Emporium will provide to the Community Officer:
 - Details of training undertaken and the date of DBS checks to ensure these remain current until the transition from Grosvenor House to the Campus.

- Clarification that existing policies referring to 'children' cover young people between 11 and 19 (up to 25 in the case of young people with a learning disability).
- A risk assessment relating to the proposed activities covering the following:
 - The maximum number of users per session
 - How child protection and safeguarding policies will operate in practice taking account of the Council's current policy /practice on early warning and prevention as set out in the common assessment framework (CAF).
- Evidence that any permanent electrical equipment installed into the building by The Sound Emporium has been or will be PAT tested.
- The Sound Emporium will meet on site with the Community Youth Officer prior to the commencement of the service to discuss and agree operational arrangements.

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Documents used in preparation of this report: The Sound Emporium - Project Proposal, Qualifications and Training, School/Care Provision Risk Assessment.

Date: 8 September 2014