



Andover Town Council

Item No.

9b

- To **receive** and **note** the report.

To: Community and Events

From: Town Clerk

Date of Report: 18 June 2026

Purpose of the Report

To deliver an update to members on the U-Choose holiday card for 11-16 year olds.

U-Choose Summer Holiday Card Update

Preparations for the expanded U-Choose Summer Holiday Card are progressing well, with a number of exciting developments helping to strengthen the scheme ahead of the school summer holidays.

Following the success of the Easter pilot, which received positive feedback from both families and schools and demonstrated the value of providing affordable activities for young people, work has continued to broaden the range of opportunities available through the scheme. Families reported that the card helped reduce financial pressure during the holidays and enabled young people to access activities they may otherwise have been unable to enjoy. Schools involved in the pilot were also very supportive of the project's continuation and expansion.

A significant development is the involvement of the PEAS Network, the family support teams operating across Andover schools. The network has now joined the project and is distributing marketing materials directly to participating schools, ensuring consistent communication across all sites. The first information pack was circulated to schools and families during the week commencing 15 June, providing an excellent platform to raise awareness of the scheme and maximise uptake.

Confirmed activity partners currently include Andover Leisure Centre, Riverside Activity Zone and High Score, with High Score already agreeing discounted rates to support the scheme. Riverside Activity Zone continues to offer excellent value, including a soft drink within its provision. Discussions are ongoing with Andover Leisure Centre Contract Manager, Danny Churcher, regarding the potential addition of food and beverage options, subject to costs remaining within the approved project budget. The Community and Events Officer is also exploring whether additional discounts can be secured with High Score to enable two visits to be included on the card rather than the single visit originally proposed.

While the Odeon Cinema has now confirmed that it will not be participating in the scheme, this has created an opportunity to enhance the existing offer and further strengthen partnerships with the venues already involved. One of the key lessons learned from the Easter pilot was the need to simplify access and booking arrangements for families. In response, the Community and Events Officer has designed a dedicated U-Choose website, which will act as the central information hub for the scheme. Accessible via a QR code printed directly onto the physical card, the site will provide booking instructions, venue details, eligibility criteria, frequently asked questions and other important information, helping to create a smoother and more user-friendly experience for parents and young people.

Marketing activity is also being expanded significantly. Promotional materials will be displayed at participating venues and key locations throughout the town, supported by a press release due to be issued before the end of June. This coordinated approach aims to ensure that all eligible families are aware of the opportunity and understand how to access the scheme.

In line with previous Council approvals, the scheme is targeted at mainstream secondary school pupils, Year 6 leavers transitioning into secondary education, and home-educated young people aged 11–16. Home-educated young people will be able to purchase and collect their cards directly from the Community and Events Officer at Andover Town Council's offices within ACE on Bridge Street during July on Wednesday mornings. At this stage, the project budget and approved scope do not allow for distribution to special schools.

Overall, the project continues to develop positively and remains on track to provide hundreds of young people across Andover with affordable access to leisure, social and recreational activities during the summer holidays, building on the strong foundations established by the successful Easter pilot.

Recommendation

- To **receive** and **note** the report.