



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20TH MAY 2015

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY CENTRE SERVICE – UPDATE

REPORT BY: CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on details relating to community centre provision and discuss a way forward in the context of the Council's MTFP.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Report recommends draft terms of reference and criteria for the Member Task and Finish Group.
- 2.2 The MTFP 2015/2018 makes a notional further reduction to the community centre service budget of £64,000 in 2016/17.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Community centres contribute to a number of the Council's core priorities including the key themes of its Community Strategy and Single Integrated Plan.
- 3.2 Community centres act as a social hub, providing the opportunity for the promotion of a wide range of activities and events that further the educational, cultural and recreational needs of all sectors of the community.

4. THE REPORT

Background

- 4.1 Caerphilly County Borough Council currently supports a network of 38 community centres. The Council owns 35 of these facilities which are leased to their respective management committees. The management committees of all 35 community centres benefit from charitable status with a number registered formally as charities. Abertridwr community centre is held on a long term lease while Glan y Nant and Rudry village halls are supported under historical arrangements that reflect commitments undertaken to each facility during the 1970's. A map noting the location of each centre is included within this report as Appendix 1.
- 4.2 A report outlining future service options for the Council's community centre service taking due note of the Authority's MTFP, and the requirement to deliver budgetary reductions, was presented to Scrutiny on September 18th 2014. The report included 5 possible options for the future delivery of the community centre service:

- Option 1 - Maintain present community centre network 'as is'
- Option 2 - Community centre service withdrawn
- Option 3 - Community centre service is reconfigured to a smaller number of sites
- Option 4 - Suitable community centres are offered to local groups via asset transfer
- Option 5 - Community centre service is transferred via grant aid arrangement to a third sector body or equivalent organisation.

4.3 In principle, Members supported a combination of options 3 and 4. In this context, Members requested the creation of a task and finish group to undertake the review process that will identify which centres may be suitable for asset transfer or where activity levels and proximity to other facilities suggest that closure merits consideration.

4.4 The establishment of a Member task and finish group with defined terms of reference and criteria for community centre evaluation would be required to begin the review process to achieve the requirements of option 3 and 4.

4.5 The draft terms of reference and criteria that may be appropriate are outlined as follows:

- Budgetary spend per site per annum
- Site condition and anticipated remedial or development work required to make the location fit for purpose
- Investment made in capital projects to improve each centre over the last 5 year period
- Distance / proximity between centres within the Borough's network
- Performance information, including occupancy levels and weekly usage data
- Range of use made at each centre by other organisations and services
- Alternative community venues in each area where a centre is currently located
- Produce equality impact assessment (EIA) for each option.
- Whether there is a strong Management Committee with sufficient capacity to manage the centre.
- To make recommendations in respect of options 3 and 4.

The group will be facilitated by officers and will include a representative from the Council's Asset Management Group.

4.6 Members of Education for Life Scrutiny Committee will be invited to take part in the task and finish group up to a maximum of 10 Members (including co-optees) with political representation from all groups. The Chair of Education for Life Scrutiny Committee can take part in an ex-officio capacity but cannot chair the task and finish group or vote on its recommendations. It is anticipated that the task and finish group's deliberations would commence in June and be concluded by end October 2015.

4.7 The community centre service budget for 2015/16 is as follows:

Description	£'000
Staffing (central team)	78
Staffing (caretaking)	223
Repairs & maintenance	138
Miscellaneous	82
	521

The budget figures reflect the reductions made in accordance with the budget strategy, as agreed by Council on 25 February 2015.

- 4.8 Further budgetary reductions will need to be considered in the context of the Council's MTFP. Provisionally a further reduction of £64,000 has been included in 2016/17.
- 4.9 An analysis of the condition surveys has been undertaken and in summary the details are as follows:

<u>Priority 1</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Priority 2</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Priority 3</u> <u>£'000</u>	<u>Total</u>
219	1656	1010	2885

The definitions of priorities 1-3 are as follows:

Priority 1 - work defined as that of the highest importance and, unless undertaken, may lead to closure of the building or a serious breach of h&s legislation.

The cost for work in Priority 1 falls in year 0 (i.e. immediately).

Priority 2 - work defined as required to be carried out within a year that falls outside of the priority 1 scope.

The cost for work in priority 2 falls in year 1.

Priority 3 - work defined as required to be carried out from years 2 to 5.

The cost for work in priority 3 is calculated by summing the costs in years 2, 3 and 4.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Appropriate equality impact assessment's will be undertaken dependent on which option, or combination of options, Members elect to explore. This information will be provided to the task and finish group to assist with their evaluation.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The community centre service budget has seen planned reductions in repairs and maintenance and miscellaneous spend that will see future water rates and personal indemnity insurance obligations being passed to each respective management committee to address.
- 6.2 Members should note that to achieve further efficiency savings linked to the Council's MTFP the community centre service has limited budgetary flexibility and that either the maintenance budget would require further reductions or facilities will be required to close or be delivered in a different manner.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Both options proposed for consideration for future community centre provision may involve the loss of posts or alternative employment of caretaking staff at the locations identified. TUPE arrangements may well apply to the caretaking staff in the event of asset transfer. The full HR implications will form a key part of the appraisal and future reports to Members.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The views of all consultees listed have been incorporated in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The views of the Scrutiny Committee are sought in relation to the suggested task and finish group to be established to review future provision, including criteria, terms of reference, and timeline as outlined.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure that Scrutiny Members' views are taken into account in the future budget setting process.

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Consultees: Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer

Tony Maher, Assistant Director, Planning & Strategy

Gareth Hardacre, Head of Performance Management & Development

Councillor R Passmore, Cabinet Member, Education and Lifelong Learning

Councillor W David, Chair of Education for Life Scrutiny Committee

Councillor J Pritchard, Vice-Chair of Education for Life Scrutiny Committee

Colin Jones, Head of Performance & Property Services

Jane Southcombe, Principal Accountant, Planning & Strategy

David A. Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities & Welsh Language)

Angharad Price, Solicitor, Legal Services

Gareth Evans, Interim Manager Community Education

Steve Hawkins, Community Leisure Officer

Background Papers:

Education for Life Scrutiny Committee, 18th September 2014 - Caerphilly County Borough Community Centre Service MTFP 2015/17 – items for consideration

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Map of Community Centre Locations