



To: **West Central Area Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

Report by: Jackie Hanson  
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Wards affected: Castle, Market, Newnham

## **BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES: Draft Community Centres Strategy**

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 In October 2015 the Executive Councillor for Communities, Arts & Recreation made a decision to undertake a strategic review of community provision. Subsequent decisions have been taken to agree progress at each stage and an update was provided to all Area Committees in March/April 2016 on the initial findings of the city-wide audit of community facilities.
- 1.2 Following the review of existing provision and a needs assessment, a [draft Community Centres Strategy](#) has been developed with the overarching theme of 'Building Stronger Communities'. A review of Council community development resources and funding will follow. The Council is now in a position to consult more widely on the draft Community Centres Strategy, and to begin detailed work to develop specific, deliverable proposals.
- 1.3 This report provides an overview of the recommendations in the draft strategy and the consultation plan.

### **2. Recommendations**

The West Central Area Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the emerging proposals in the draft Community Centres Strategy detailed in section 3.
- 2.2 Note the consultation plan and opportunities for people to feedback their comments on the draft strategy detailed in section 5.

### **3. Building Stronger Communities – Draft Community Centres Strategy**

- 3.1 Four key principles underpin the development of the recommendations in the draft strategy:
- They will provide the Council with a clear corporate steer now and for the future
  - They are supported by robust evidence to target resources at known need in the city
  - They will support change from current provision to the future vision in a supportive way
  - They have been developed in a way which will seek to avoid creating instability for the local community as changes are implemented
- 3.2 The recommendations have been developed to ensure that community provision meets changing needs of the city as it evolves and continues to grow. The emerging proposals are not set in stone, and are being consulted on to seek comments and feedback that will help shape final recommendations.
- 3.3 **The draft proposals** (Map attached: Appendix A)
- a)** Build a new community centre ('Hub') on the site of the existing Meadows Community Centre (Arbury ward).
    - This will improve, but not reduce, community facilities available to provide the services currently offered by The Meadows and nearby Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre (King's Hedges ward)
    - This proposal will also consider potential for a wider range of services and an opportunity for housing
  - b)** Look into the feasibility of being able to provide more housing through the redevelopment of council-owned land currently occupied by Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre, and by reducing the footprint occupied by The Meadows Community Centre
  - c)** Explore opportunities to enhance facilities in King's Hedges ward, as current provision at Nun's Way Pavilion and 37 Lawrence Way is restrictive in terms of size, location and accessibility
  - d)** Improve facilities at Akeman Street (Arbury ward) or a more suitable redeveloped site nearby
  - e)** Invite voluntary sector organisations to take on the management of community centres in some areas: Ross Street Community Centre (Romsey ward), Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre (King's Hedges ward) and Nun's Way Pavilion (King's Hedges ward)

- f)** Retain Brown's Field Youth and Community Centre (East Chesterton ward) as a city council managed community centre
- g)** Continue to provide community facilities at Trumpington Pavilion (Trumpington ward) in partnership with Trumpington Residents' Association
- h)** Meet the needs of new communities by helping to provide new community facilities in growing areas of the city such as Clay Farm in the South West development area (Trumpington ward), and Storey's Field in the North West development area (Castle ward)
- i)** Address gaps in the provision of community facilities in Abbey, Cherry Hinton, East Chesterton and Queen Edith's wards

#### **4. Background**

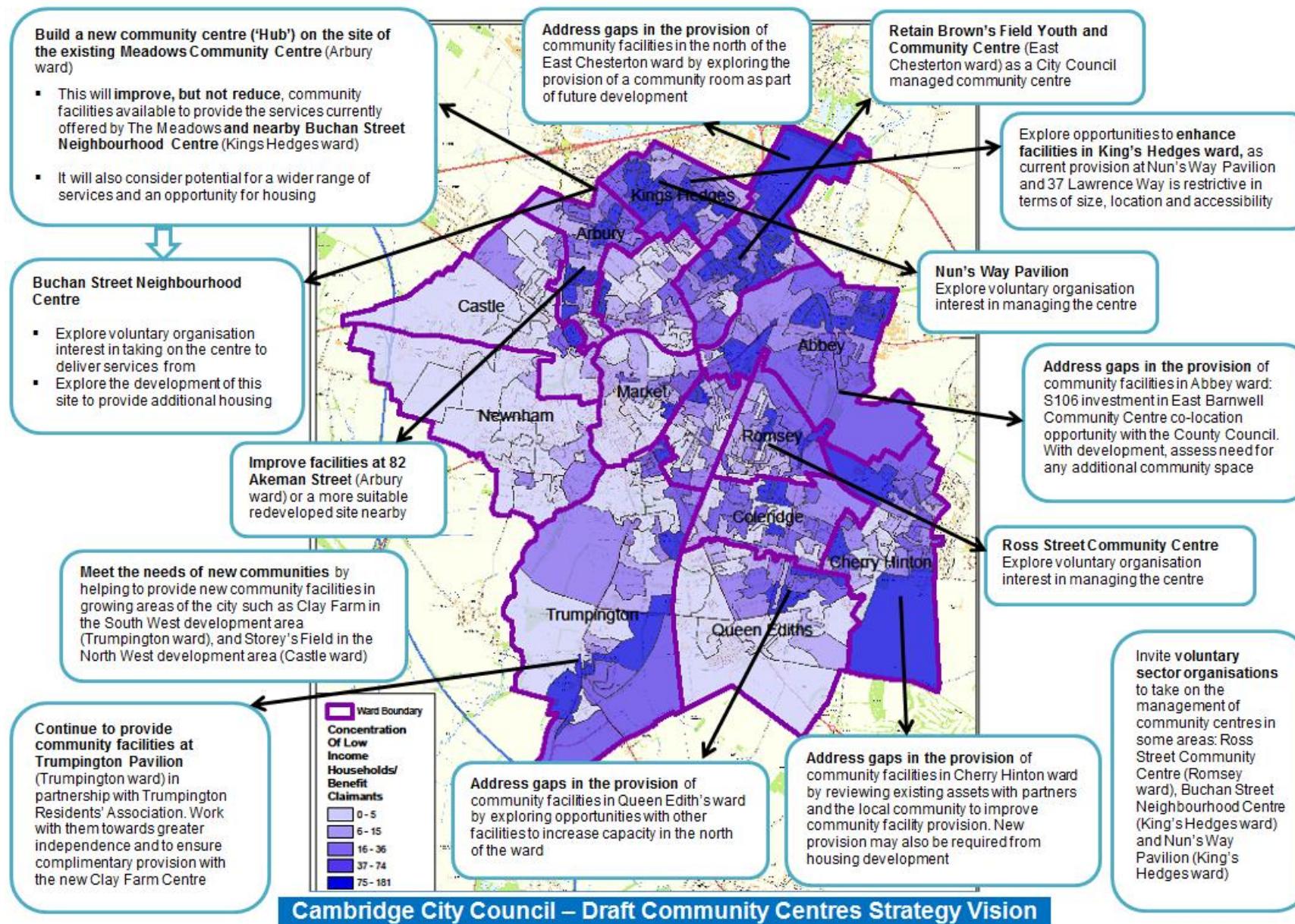
- 4.1 The Council recognises the importance of accessible community facilities to provide services and activities to meet the needs of city residents and values the significant number of community facilities provided by a range of different organisations. There are over 100 venues across the city. Work is underway exploring options to make information collected as part of the review available for wider public use.
- 4.2 The Council currently owns eight community centres, of which:
  - Five are managed directly (The Meadows, Buchan Street, Brown's Field, Ross Street, and 82 Akeman Street).
  - Three are managed by local groups (Trumpington Pavilion, 37 Lawrence Way and Nun's Way Pavilion).
- 4.3 Three new community centres are under development, two of which are expected to open in 2017-18:
  - Clay Farm - new provision for the Southern Fringe growth area. The centre will be run in a joint enterprise with Cambridgeshire County Council, providing a multi-agency community hub.
  - Storey's Field – new provision for the North West Cambridge growth area. The centre will be run jointly by the University of Cambridge and Cambridge City Council via a joint venture, the Storey's Field Community Trust.
  - Darwin Green will be new provision for the NIAB North West Cambridge growth area. The building start date is not yet confirmed.
- 4.4 Since the last update to Area Committees a significant amount of work (detailed in Appendix B) has been undertaken to enable the draft Community Centres Strategy to be developed, which seeks to achieve the following vision:

- Council supported community centres are located in the right areas of the city to address the greatest needs
    - They are financially sustainable and provide accessible, joined up services to residents
    - They effectively contribute to the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities in a cost efficient way
    - The Council has successful partnership arrangements in place with the voluntary sector and other agencies, that meet the needs of local communities
  - Council community development resource and activities are flexible to meet changing needs of the city
- 4.5 The Council's vision 'One Cambridge – Fair for All' highlights an ambition for the City '*to be a great place to live, learn and work...where all local households can secure a suitable, affordable local home, close to jobs and neighbourhood facilities*'. As such, meeting housing need is a high priority for the Council, and the local devolution deal offers an opportunity over the next five years to deliver 500 new Council homes. Therefore, whilst this is a review of community provision, there is also opportunity for corporate consideration about making best use of Council assets. This review has looked at options for best use of land, and whether opportunities can be created for the provision of new affordable Council housing without loss of essential community provision.
- 4.6 On 19<sup>th</sup> January 2017, the Community Services Committee considered the draft strategy and the Executive Councillor for Communities agreed to consult more widely on its proposals, and to begin detailed work to develop specific, deliverable proposals.
- ## 5. Consultation Plan
- 5.1 The public consultation to enable feedback on the draft proposals was launched week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017 for a 12 week period and will close at noon on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017. It can be found [here](#) on Cambridge City Council's website.
- 5.2 A wide range of methods have been used to promote the consultation to provide opportunities for residents, equalities groups, voluntary sector organisations, and partners to participate in the consultation, including: a press release, newsletters, social media, networking lunches, letters, leaflet drops, posters, website, and via other organisations.
- 5.3 Drop in sessions are being held before Area Committee meetings and at community centres (detailed in Appendix C).

## **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 Consultation on the draft strategy and proposals will close noon on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017, and the findings will be used to review the draft proposals.
- 6.2 An update report and final Community Centres Strategy will be considered by Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

## Appendix A – Vision Map



## **Appendix B**

### **A. Methodology – the Community Facilities Audit, Mapping and Analysis**

- A.1 Audit work has been undertaken to develop a comprehensive evidence base of community facility provision across the city. For the purpose of this review, a community centre or community facility is defined as being: a building that is available for use by the wider community, and/or for hire by local groups for a range of community/social activities and meetings, for at least some of their opening hours each week. The facilities have to be accessible to everyone, particularly those covered by the protected characteristics of the Equalities Act 2010<sup>1</sup>.
- A.2 The audit included surveys, follow up calls, and drop ins at Area Committee meetings.
- A.3 Including the Council's community centres, 107 facilities met the criteria to be included as a community centre or facility for the purposes of this review. This is a cautious estimate of provision across the city as some facilities did not respond to the verification process.
- A.4 The audit identified that many groups are unaware of the community facility offer across the city. The strategy recommends further work to improve the promotion of facilities.
- A.5 The 107 verified community facilities were mapped by postcode and colour coded to distinguish:
- City Council community centres
  - Other community facilities whose primary purpose is a community facility
  - Other community facilities whose primary purpose is not community facility provision e.g. church, school
- A.6 Maps were overlaid with data on population density and on needs. This is based on concentrations of low income households and benefits claimants.
- A.7 GIS<sup>2</sup> Network Modelling was used to identify 15-minute walk time<sup>3</sup> catchments for dedicated community facilities, whether owned by the Council or not. Non-dedicated facilities were not mapped at this stage as their availability and offer for community use varied significantly. However, it is recognised that in some communities these provide important capacity.
- A.8 New facilities under development were not mapped for real walk-time as no road or pavement network information is available yet for these sites. The analysis for these has been based on a 15 minute walking radius around the facility.
- A.9 The walk-time catchments maps were analysed to identify:
- Geographic needs (no community facility within a 15 minute walk-time)
  - Demographic needs (high concentrations of low income families and benefit claimants)
- A.10 Further stakeholder analysis was used to understand the strategic importance of Council-owned centres in meeting Council priorities.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights/types-of-discrimination>

<sup>2</sup> Geographic Information System

<sup>3</sup> Travel time of 3mph, covering 0.75 miles in 15 minutes Reference: <https://www.bhf.org.uk/get-involved/events/training-zone/walking-training-zone/walking-faqs>

- A.11 Alternative land uses were considered, including options for commercial or housing development as well as enhanced community provision.
- A.12 This identified inter-dependencies between facilities serving similar catchment areas. Additional risk assessment and scenario planning was therefore undertaken for three sets of Council community centres identified with inter-dependencies.
- A.13 From the analysis of information and risk assessments, the Council's community centres were categorised as either:
  - Core (strategically important, need to be retained and/or further developed);
  - Transitional (less strategically important because they serve less disadvantaged communities or overlap with other centres); or
  - Independent (centres which are already delivering services with little or no Council support)
- A.14 The categorisation process will help form recommendations for the future of the Council's community centres. For example, in developing core centres, or new facilities to address gaps, the Council may work with the County Council and others to consider multi-agency hubs. In reviewing transitional centres, the Council will work with other providers to explore options for community management.

## **B. Partnership and Joined Up Working**

- B.1 Voluntary organisations and community groups were contacted to explore issues of community management. A number of organisations have submitted initial expressions of interest in taking over the running of all, or part, of a Council community centre. This opportunity was also promoted on the Council website.
- B.2 In considering how facilities are managed, the Council will explore alternative management arrangements which could be community led and which could allow buildings to be managed by, or even have ownership transferred to, community organisations. Such arrangements would require appropriate safeguards to ensure access and broad-based community programming.
- B.3 The Council is exploring ways to deliver services by working in partnership. This will include dialogue with statutory partners to consider how services may be efficiently and conveniently co-located.
- B.4 The new facilities at Clay Farm have been developed on a community hub model with the County Council and health providers co-locating services alongside the City Council. This joint planning approach and delivery model provides a more sustainable basis for the long term funding requirement for the building and staffing, and simplified access to services for residents.
- B.5 No recommendations have been made regarding any changes required to the buildings for the three new community centres: Clay Farm, Storey's Field and Darwin Green. These have all evolved from growth-related master-planning, and are categorised within the review as Core Centres. They are currently at different stages in the design, planning and development process. They will be considered as part of the review assessing the outreach community development priorities.

## Appendix C – Consultation Drop In Sessions Information



The City Council has produced a draft Community Centres Strategy which proposes a positive and ambitious vision for improved council-owned community facilities, based on evidence of need, across the city. The aim is to strengthen provision, particularly where need is greatest, rather than reduce it.

**We would like your views on these draft proposals**

**Closing date: 12 noon 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

The Council's community centre provision has developed over a number of decades, and a review was needed to make sure that they:

- continue to meet the changing needs of the city
- are located in the right areas of the city to address the greatest needs
- are sustainable, and provide accessible, joined up services to the residents who most need them

**Complete the online survey on the Council's website: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk>**

**Drop in to any of the following sessions to speak to us and find out more**

<b>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	<b>6pm – 7pm</b>	Before North Area Committee	<b>Shirley Primary School</b> Nuffield Road, Cambridge, CB4 1TF	+ Report during committee
<b>Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>6pm – 7pm</b>	Before West Central Area Committee	<b>St Augustine's Church</b> Richmond Road, Cambridge, CB4 3PS	+ Report during committee
<b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>1pm – 7pm</b>	At the centre	<b>The Meadows Community Centre</b> , 1 St Catharine's Road, Cambridge CB4 3XJ	++ 5.30pm presentation
<b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	<b>1.30pm - 7pm</b>	At the centre	<b>37 Lawrence Way Community House</b> , Cambridge CB4 2PR	++5.30pm presentation
<b>Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>1pm – 7pm</b>	At the centre	<b>Buchan St Neighbourhood Centre</b> , 6 Buchan Street, Cambridge CB4 2XF	++ 5.30pm presentation
<b>Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>6pm – 7pm</b>	Before East Area Committee	<b>Cherry Trees Day Centre</b> St Matthew's St, Cambridge CB1 2LT	+ Report during committee
<b>Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>1pm – 7pm</b>	At the centre	<b>Ross Street Community Centre</b> , Ross Street, Cambridge CB1 3UZ	++ 5.30pm presentation
<b>Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>6pm – 7pm</b>	Before South Area Committee	<b>St John the Evangelist Church</b> , Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 8RN	+ Report during committee

- + There will be a report on the strategy (available on the Council's website) presented during the committee meetings following the drop in session
- ++ There will be a presentation about the strategy on the centre dates at 5.30pm which will last about 10 minutes followed by questions

Surveys are available at Council managed Community Centres or by contacting:  
**[community.review@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:community.review@cambridge.gov.uk)** or **01223 457862**