



To: Executive Councillor for Communities:
Councillor Richard Johnson

Report by: Head of Community Services, Debbie Kaye

Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee 29/6/17

Wards affected: Abbey: Arbury: Castle: Cherry Hinton: Coleridge:
East Chesterton: King's Hedges: Market: Newnham:
Petersfield: Queen Edith's: Romsey: Trumpington:
West Chesterton:

STRATEGIC REVIEW OF COMMUNITY PROVISION - BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES: COMMUNITY CENTRES STRATEGY

Key decision

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. A full review was undertaken, including: an audit of existing facilities provided by a wide range of organisations; mapping of access to facilities across the city and analysis of where the greatest needs for community support exist.
- 1.2 In January 2017, the Executive Councillor for Communities approved a draft community centres strategy for consultation with stakeholders and the wider community on the draft proposals. This strategy set out to deliver a programme of support with the overarching theme of 'Building Stronger Communities.'
- 1.3 This report considers the results of that consultation exercise. 72% of respondents were in support of the Council's vision, with strong support for recommendations to replace out-dated centres and to investigate community use. Proposals relating to six centres are recommended for adoption in the final version of the strategy.
- 1.4 Replacement of the Meadows with a new community hub was supported, but the redevelopment of Buchan Street for housing was not supported at this time. As these proposals are inter-linked, further exploration of options and engagement of the community to consider them is needed.

- 1.5 The report sets out actions to be carried out in pursuit of the strategy.
- 1.6 The Council will use the Building Stronger Communities Strategy and the data collected throughout this review, to inform future considerations for Section 106 / CIL funding.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Adopt the proposals relating to six centres as set out in the draft strategy, as follows:
 - 2.1.1 **Ross Street Community Centre** – seek to lease the centre to a voluntary organisation, with an agreement to safeguard community use. If a suitable organisation cannot be found the Council will retain management of the centre. In order to deliver this proposal a delegation is proposed at 2.4.
 - 2.1.2 **Nun’s Way Pavilion** – explore options for a suitable alternative community space, keeping the centre operational in the meantime. Once alternative space is found options for leasing the pavilion to a voluntary organisation will be explored. If none are viable, then the pavilion could be used for sports use only.
 - 2.1.3 **37 Lawrence Way** - explore options for a suitable alternative community space, keeping the centre operational in the meantime. Once alternative community space is found the premises will be returned to Council housing stock.
 - 2.1.4 **82 Akeman Street** - replace the community space as part of the proposed new housing project in this location in consultation with the community.
 - 2.1.5 **Brownsfield Youth & Community Centre** - retain as a Council managed community centre, ensuring community access.
 - 2.1.6 **Trumpington Pavilion** - continue to work with Trumpington Resident’s Association towards greater sustainability and independence.
- 2.2 Modify the proposals set out in the draft strategy for two centres, as follows:
 - 2.2.1 **The Meadows Community Centre and Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre** – approve the completion of a full feasibility study for both centres, to explore with local groups, partners and centre users whether it is possible to deliver the community hub at the Meadows and to

further explore options for Buchan Street. This feasibility work will need to consider:

- practical development constraints, planning issues and financial feasibility;
- detailed analysis of current uses of both centres and potential future partnership arrangements.

2.3 Adopt the proposals as originally outlined in relation to meeting identified needs where there are gaps in provision

2.3.1 **Abbey** - continue to support County Council led work on redevelopment of a new centre on the East Barnwell Community Centre site.

2.3.2 **Queen Edith's** - explore opportunities to work with existing facility providers in the north of the ward.

2.3.3 **East Chesterton** - explore opportunities in the north of the ward for new facility provision through growth.

2.3.4 **Cherry Hinton** - support the development of a community hub in Cherry Hinton Library with local partners, with the proviso that the County Council continue library services there and a sustainable management solution is found.

2.4 Delegate the authority to deliver the proposals as required.

2.4.1 **Ross Street:** Approve delegated authority to the Strategic Director following consultation with the Executive Councillor, Chair and Spokes to approve the selection process for a voluntary organisation to take on the management of Ross Street Community Centre (including community use requirements) and to approve the selection of a voluntary organisation in accordance with this process.

2.5 Report back to the Committee on progress with delivering the strategy, as described in the actions set out in Section 5.

3. Background

3.1 Community centres meet a wide range of community needs across the city, including providing spaces for a range of local groups and individuals to meet; facilities for children, young people and families, and for advice services and community development work. Whilst the Council owns a number of community centres, residents also benefit from buildings owned and/or managed by a range of organisations.

- 3.2 The Council currently owns eight community centres¹, 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).
- 3.3 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 as a joint enterprise with the 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 the Council via a joint venture, the Storey's Field Community Trust.
 - Darwin Green will be new facility provision for the NIAB North West Cambridge growth area. The building start date is not yet confirmed.
- 3.4 There are many other independent organisations providing a wide range of valuable community facilities across the city, some of which have been supported through Section 106 developer contributions to mitigate the impact of development. The Council has committed to publishing information about centres identified during the review to encourage wider community use.
- 3.5 The review brief was an evidenced-based, strategic assessment of community provision to achieve the following outcomes:
- Stronger communities (e.g. inclusive, connected, resilient, vibrant, good places to live).
 - Council resources are targeted to known need.
 - Savings - with a focus on reducing net cost by opportunity for further efficiency and generating increased income with the possibility of redirecting resources.
- 3.6 A comprehensive programme of work has been undertaken to date to enable the development of the draft Community Centres strategy. Key tasks are listed below and links to appropriate reports are available in Section 7 of this report:
- Community Facilities Audit, Mapping and Analysis
 - Expressions of interest in voluntary sector management of Council centres
 - Geographic, demographic and stakeholder risk assessment
 - Consideration of wider corporate priorities
 - Categorisation of core, transitional and independent centres

¹ Arbury Community Centre is owned by the Council and leased to Arbury Community Association, a local charity and so has not been included as a Council venue for the purpose of this review.

- Partnership discussions around joined-up services and co-location

4. Consultation

4.1 Following the approval of the draft strategy, a 12 week public consultation to enable feedback on the draft proposals ran from the 13th February to 5th May 2017 and consisted of:

- Online survey (344 received)
- Drop-ins (28.5 hours of face to face public engagement)
- Reports to all Area Committees (4)
- Focus group work with equality groups (voluntary sector led)
- Partner engagement
- Group meetings on request

4.2 The Vision

72% (159 responses) supported the overall vision the Council is seeking to achieve through the review, that:

- a.) 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
- b.) The Council has successful partnership arrangements in place with the voluntary sector and other agencies that meet the needs of local communities
- c.) Council community development resource and activities are flexible to meet changing needs of the city

4.3 The Meadows & Buchan Street Community Centres

- 58% (130 responses) supported the proposal to build a new community hub on the Meadows site to include services currently offered by the Meadows and nearby Buchan Street and consider opportunities for housing
- 69% (135 responses) supported voluntary sector management of Buchan Street Neighbourhood centre
- 31% (60 responses) supported the development of the Buchan Street site for housing

Council Comment and Analysis of Consultation Feedback: The consultation indicates that there is support for the Council to develop a new hub to replace the Meadows Community Centre and consider housing on the site. It also showed support for retaining the Buchan Street building as an opportunity for the voluntary sector to deliver services. Detailed feasibility work is required to explore what it is possible to deliver.

4.4 **37 Lawrence Way & Nun's Way Pavilion**

- 79% (124 responses) supported voluntary sector management of Nun's Way Pavilion and finding suitable alternative community space
- 83% (135 responses) supported finding suitable alternative community space and returning 37 Lawrence Way to Council housing stock

Council Comment and Analysis of Consultation Feedback: The consultation supports the Council's aspiration to provide accessible community space in King's Hedges. Both facilities will remain operational until suitable alternative provision is found.

4.5 **Ross Street Community Centre**

- 68% (125 responses) supported voluntary sector management of Ross Street Community Centre

Council Comment and Analysis of Consultation Feedback: The consultation supports the Council's aspiration to lease the centre to a voluntary organisation in order to build the capacity and sustainability of the voluntary sector. A community use agreement will safeguard use for the local community.

4.6 **Brown's Field Community Centre**

- 96% (174 responses) supported the Council managing Brown's Field Youth and Community Centre

Council Comment and Analysis of Consultation Feedback: The consultation supports the Council's proposal to retain the management of this important and valued community centre serving East Chesterton.

4.7 **Gaps in provision identified**

- 87% (167 responses) supported the gaps in provision identified in Cherry Hinton, Abbey and areas of East Chesterton and Queen Edith's wards.

Council Comment and Analysis of Consultation Feedback: The consultation supported the need to address the gaps in provision identified by the review evidence base.

- #### 4.8 **Partners and stakeholders** – organisations have appreciated early engagement with the review proposals, and because of synergies with other reviews being completed post-election, the County Council want to continue close dialogue so that we maximise joint working opportunities particularly in relation to 'Community Hubs'; future provision of Library Services; public health services and wider community development activities.

- 4.9 **Equalities focus groups** – in general feedback was very supportive of the review proposals with some useful information collected to inform more detailed developments as the work progresses. Several expressions of interest have been received regarding the management of our centres from voluntary sector organisations.
- 4.10 Consultees raised a number of individual questions and concerns to which the Council has provided responses in Appendix A. The final proposals are also underpinned by the following key principles:
- a.) They will provide the Council with a clear corporate steer now and for the future
 - b.) They are supported by robust evidence to target resources at known need in the city
 - c.) They will support change from current provision to the future vision in a supportive way
 - d.) They have been developed in a way which will seek to avoid creating instability for the local community as changes are implemented

5. Proposed Next Steps

Subject to the approval of the recommendations in Section 2 of this report, the following work plan is proposed:

5.1 During 2017/18

5.1.1 Meadows & Buchan Street Community Centres – detailed feasibility work to be completed and reported back to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

5.1.2 Ross Street Community Centre – design and implement an asset transfer process to explore the leasing of the centre to a voluntary sector organisation.

5.1.3 Akeman Street – engage the community in the design and development process for the replacement of this community space.

5.1.4 Review Neighbourhood Community Projects and report back to committee in January 2018.

5.1.5 Trumpington Pavilion - work with Trumpington Residents' Association towards greater sustainability and complementary activity programming.

5.1.6 New community centres – implementation of Clay Farm, Storey's Field and Darwin Green.

5.1.7 Publish information about community spaces identified during the review with an initial list on Council's website by August 2017, followed by more detailed exploration of the best way to make this information accessible to promote use of citywide community facilities.

5.2 2018 – 2021

5.2.1 Nun's Way & Lawrence Way – explore suitable alternative community space and continue with current arrangements in the interim.

5.2.2 Further discussions regarding opportunities for the co-location of services and development of multiagency community hubs

5.2.3 Implement any proposals for change approved for The Meadows and Buchan Street

5.2.4 Continue to support the voluntary sector to build capacity to deliver their aspirations to take on the management of further community facilities in future

5.2.5 Gaps in provision – follow up work as identified, with timescales to be agreed for each separately

6. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

- Initial analysis indicates that reconfiguring community centre provision should release funding from facilities management and maintenance which could be reinvested in community work. More detail will emerge through the detailed feasibility studies.

(b) Staffing Implications

- The Council will continue to deliver community development services in accordance with the requirements of the Building Stronger Communities Strategy. Some proposals will affect staff, but are not planned to be implemented immediately. Full consultation will be undertaken with staff affected by any changes within corporate policy.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

- The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken earlier in this project has been updated to reflect the consultation findings, and is attached as Appendix B. Key points include:
 - i) Alternative community space in King's Hedges to replace Nun's Way and Lawrence Way will improve accessibility

- ii) Loss of provision at Buchan Street would increase travel distance to the Meadows for some, but residents would remain within the 15 minute travel time used for assessing provision across the city
- iii) Local equalities groups will be consulted about the development of future provision
- iv) Inform S106 investment to improve accessibility and provision at other facilities

(d) **Environmental Implications**

- There are no implications at this stage, however as part of the detailed feasibility work, the potential for reducing energy usage and carbon emissions will be considered and will inform final recommendations.

(e) **Procurement**

- There are no procurement implications at this stage. Any future implications will be undertaken within corporate procedures.

(f) **Consultation and Communication**

- The consultation and communication plan will be updated following approval of the Community Centres Strategy.
- Further consultation will take place with the tenants of the retail units at Buchan Street, as options develop.

(g) **Community Safety**

- There are no implications at this stage.

7. Background papers

Previous reports to this committee have informed this report:

19th January 2017

<http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=176&MIId=3078&Ver=4>

30th June 2016

<http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=176&MIId=3076&Ver=4>

14th January 2016

<http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=176&MIId=2792&Ver=4>

8th October 2015

<http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=176&MIId=2791&Ver=4>

8. Appendices

- Appendix A – Consultation and Feasibility Findings and Analysis
- Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

9. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers please follow the appropriate link or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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