

# Extension to Storeys Field Community Centre Contract For Services

**To:**

Cllr. Alex Collis, Executive Cllr for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development 19.01.2023

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:**

Newnham, Castle

Non-key Decision

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Storey's Field Centre (SFC) on the Eddington Development in the Northwest of the City, opened to the public in February 2018 and has been managed and operated by the City Council under a contract for services with the Storey's Field Centre Trust (SFCT) since June 2016.
- 1.2 At some point the intended model for operating the new centre was changed from direct management by the Trust, to a contract for services. It was agreed<sup>1</sup> that the Council would, in the first instance, enter a five-year services contract to operate the centre, partly to contribute community centre management expertise, but also to support establishment of the new centre to be able to meet the needs of a new community in a key city growth area. It was always the Council's intention for this to be a medium-term arrangement, to support the newly formed Trust until a centre manager and team had been recruited, trained and a centre programme had been established.

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<sup>1</sup> [Review of Community Provision Management Arrangements for Centres in Growth Sites.pdf \(cambridge.gov.uk\)](#)

- 1.3 At the request of SFCT the council's contract for services has been extended twice, to give the Trust time to review the future direction of the centre, and to complete a procurement process to appoint a new operator. The current contract for services is due to end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
- 1.4 SFCT undertook an open procurement process in July 2022 to seek a new operator, however, this was unsuccessful.
- 1.5 The recommendation made in this report is for the council to make a further extension to its contract for services with SFCT for 12 months until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, for the following reasons:
  - a) For SFCT to assess the first procurement process and have sufficient time to complete a second tender process if required
  - b) For SFCT to review and agree the future direction for the centre
  - c) To give the SFCT staff team greater certainty regarding their ongoing employment
- 1.6 At the end of the contract term on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, the councils Community Services team will focus on working collaboratively with SFCT and The University to ensure a joined-up programme across community facilities in the local area and that requirements in the Section 106 agreement are met.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

1. To agree to extend the councils contract for management services if required by Storey's Field Centre Trust (SFCT), until 31 March 2024
2. To note that the council's management and operation of Storey's Field Centre will end 31 March 2024 and that eight Council employed posts may then transfer under a TUPE arrangement, to a new operator

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Storey's Field Centre is in the new district of Eddington, Northwest Cambridge, and serves this new community; existing communities in Newnham and Castle wards; areas in South Cambs; and citywide audiences for some of its centre programme. The Centre is overseen

by a joint venture between the University and the City Council, known as the Storey's Field Centre Trust.

- 3.2 The University and City Council both have a 50% stake in the company and nominate 3 representatives each to sit on the Trust. Under the Section 106 agreement for the site, the University is responsible for the full cost of the Joint Venture operations for the first 12 years, after which the City Council will be responsible for 50% of the costs. The 12-year period will commence on SFCT signing a lease with the University, but this has not yet been completed, and in 2020/1 financial year SFC's net operating cost is predicted to be £222,224. It should be noted however, that the 3rd year of operation for SFC (2020-21) was significantly impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic, as were all other community centres, but in tandem with this, a slow-down in the planned construction programme for the Northwest Cambridge site, and the arrival of fewer new residents.
- 3.3 Prior to the Centre opening the Trust contracted with the City Council to manage the staff and oversee the day to day running of the Centre on its behalf and the centre opened in February 2018. All staffing and management costs are reimbursed to the Council as part of the contract.
- 3.5 Since opening, the Centre has developed a programme of activity in line with the Centre business plan which includes community activity, arts and cultural events promoted by different organisations and commercial activity including weddings and conferences. In its second year, prior to the impact of COVID, the Centre attracted over 40,000 visits in its first year and in its second financial year (Aug 19 to July 20) it had already generated over £106,000 in income from hire charges when it closed during March 20.
- 3.6 During this time, the Trust has reviewed various aspects of the Centre's operations and the legal and governance framework, to determine the most sustainable and cost-effective structure and management arrangements going forward. Given the councils eventual joint liability towards the centres running costs, officers have been working jointly with Trustees and the University to the review work.

## **4. Financial Implications**

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There are no financial implications for the Council as all staff and management costs are paid by SFCT to the Council as part of the Contract for services.

#### **a) Staffing Implications**

There are 2 full time and 6 part time posts currently employed directly by the Council as an agreement within the service contract arrangement. When the contract ends 31 March 2024, the staff may transfer under a TUPE arrangement to a new operator.

#### **b) Equality and Poverty Implications**

An EQIA has been completed to accompany this report, but no impacts have been identified.

#### **c) Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

A climate change rating tool has been completed which shows no net impact on the council's net zero carbon target.

#### **d) Procurement Implications**

There are no procurement implications for the Council.

#### **e) Community Safety Implications**

There are no community safety implications.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

The recommendations in this report have been made following discussions with the University and SFC Trustees (who include University and Council representatives).

## **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=176&MID=2791#AI14788> Strategic Review of Community Provision, and Management Arrangements for New Community Centres at Clay Farm and Storey's Field

<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/s55243/Storeys%20Field%20Centre%20Contract.pdf> Storey's Field Centre Contract for Services Extension

<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/g3971/Public%20reports%20pack%2024th-Mar-2022%2017.30%20Environment%20and%20Community%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

## **7. Appendices**

N/A

## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report, please contact please contact Allison Conder, Strategic Project Manager, tel:01223 457862, email: [allison.conder@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:allison.conder@cambridge.gov.uk)