



Revisions to Governance Arrangements and an Extension to the Contract for Services for Storeys Field Centre

To:

Cllr. Rachel Wade, Executive Cllr for Communities 18.01.2024

Report by:

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Wards affected:

Newnham, Castle

Non-key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following a S106 agreement made on 11th Sep 2013, the University of Cambridge and Council established a trust to run Storey's Field Community Centre.
- 1.2 The centre opened to the public in February 2018, and the operating model was originally intended to be direct management by Storey's Field Community Trust. Since June 2016, however, the Council has operated the centre under a contract for services with the Trust. It was always the Council's intention that this would be a medium-term arrangement, to support Trustees in the process of recruiting suitable staff, and establishing the centre programme.
- 1.3 At the request of Storey's Field Community Trust, the council's contract for services has been extended several times since 2016, to enable the Trust to undertake a review of the centres future direction, and to complete an open procurement process to appoint a new operator. The tender process was completed in July 2022, but was not successful.

- 1.4 With the centre team and programme now successfully established, Cambridge University and the Council consider that there is potential for efficiencies in operations and decision making, and the future strategic success of the centre, by revising the current governance model.
- 1.5 Options appraisal work has been completed by Cambridge University and the Council as part of developing a jointly agreed proposal for future governance, and this has identified a preferred position for both organisations. This involves dissolving the Trust and removing the Council from the governance of the centre. Cambridge University, as the building owner, would then assume full responsibility for future investment and the strategy for overseeing management and operation of the centre within the Estates Division, and under the purview of the Property Board. This may be direct management or contracting this service out.
- 1.6 The Council's current contract for services ends 31st March 2024, and a further extension is required until 31st March 2025, to give sufficient time to complete the legal steps required to dissolve the Trust and to ensure a smooth transition to the new governance arrangements. Specifically, a new Community Use Agreement will be needed to replace the existing Trust documentation and set out the long-term commitment of Cambridge University to the delivery of community development activity at Storey's Field Centre.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- To agree to extend the council's contract for management services with Storey's Field Community Trust, until 31 March 2025, if required.
- To agree to simplify existing governance arrangements by dissolving and winding-up Storey's Field Community Trust, working jointly to do so with Cambridge University. Cambridge University may need to retain the trust for tax purposes in which case they will assume complete responsibilities for any governance structure.
- To agree to Cambridge University assuming responsibility for management, oversight and meeting any operational deficit for Storey's Field Centre, following dissolution of Storey's Field Community Trust.

- To delegate responsibility to the Director of Communities, in consultation with the Chair and Spokes of Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee, to approve an updated Community Use Agreement that reflects the revised governance arrangements.
- To delegate responsibility to the Director of Communities to ensure a smooth transition and handover of management of the centre to Cambridge University.

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 established on 11th Sep 2013 between the University and the City Council, known as the Storey's Field Community 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, Cambridge 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 commenced on the signing of leases and, in 2022/3 financial year, the net operating subsidy for Storey's Field Centre's was £145,000.
- 3.3 Prior to the community centre opening, the Trust contracted with the Council to employ and manage the staff, and oversee the day to day running of the Centre on its behalf. The centre then opened to the public in February 2018. All staffing and management costs are reimbursed to the Council as part of the contract.
- 3.4 Since it opened, Storey's Field Centre has successfully negotiated the challenges posed by the Covid crisis in 2019-20, and has become ever more active, supporting a local community of more than 1,000 residents, as well as acting as a venue for events including weddings and performance arts, all of which reflect substantial achievements by the trustee body.

4. Financial Implications

Page: 4

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 4.45 FTE posts currently employed directly by the Council within the service contract arrangement. When the contract ends 31 March 2025, these staff may transfer under a TUPE arrangement to Cambridge University, or 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 Cambridge University and Storey's Field Community Trustees (who are representatives of Cambridge University and the Council).

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/g3971/Public%20reports%20pack%2024th-Mar-2022%2017.30%20Environment%20and%20Community%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

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

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