

**Report of East North East Area Leader**

**Report to Assistant Chief Executive, Citizens & Communities**

**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**Subject: Rental Support request for Ebor Gardens Community Centre**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. Ebor Gardens Primary School has been delivering a wide range of parental support activities from Ebor Gardens Community Centre since January 2013. To allow the use of the centre to be viable for the school, a rental support grant was provided.
2. The sessions which the school are delivering provide skills and support for local residents to get them ready for training and / or employment. A number of other sessions are also being delivered in partnership with a variety of service providers, along with wider community activities being delivered from the centre.
3. It is felt that if this activity was not able to run from the community centre, there would be a number of unmet community needs and the support network that has been established between the school, parents and wider community would be lost. The Area Committee does not have the funding resource to be able to commission a third sector provider to deliver a similar level of activities.
4. Ward Members are keen that this work continues and support the request to extend the rental support agreement for a further 39 weeks which would run up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

**Recommendations**

1. That the rental support grant of £20,061.21 is approved for 39 weeks of lettings for Ebor Gardens Primary School until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

## 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the renewal of the rental support agreement for Ebor Gardens Primary School's use of Ebor Gardens Community Centre.

## 2. Background information

- 2.1 Ebor Gardens Community Centre is part of the Inner East Area Committees delegated community centre portfolio. Previously, Ebor Gardens had been under-utilised for many years and was highlighted by Inner East Community Centres Working Group as high priority centre which needed more use generating or the future of the facility could be in question.
- 2.2 Following the efforts of Ward Councillors and the Neighbourhood Manager, the building is well used and has a programme of activities taking place every day and most evenings. The sessions being delivered from the centre are making a real difference in the local community and delivering outcomes linked to the Neighbourhood Improvement Plan for the Burmantofts & Richmond Hill Ward.
- 2.3 A partnership was also formed with the GMB to in order to establish an IT suite at the facility. The project was jointly funded by Inner East Area Committee and the GMB and has been highlighted as a good example of partnership working by the GMB in the Yorkshire & Humber Region. The installation of the IT Suite has resulted in the establishment of a number of courses to support people to get back into work and training being delivered from the centre.

## 3. Proposals for use of Ebor Gardens C.C. by Ebor Gardens Primary School

- 3.1 Ebor Gardens Primary School commenced using the community centre in January 2013. To date, all use at the centre by the school has been supported by the provision of a rental support grant. The rental support grant was previously approved by Neil Evans, Director of Environment & Housing, as the community centres were previously vested in that Directorate. The rental support grant was awarded on the basis of the outcomes being generated through the parental support programmes being delivered.
- 3.2 The reason why the school initially approached the Council for the use of the community centre was due to the lack of space within the school to deliver a parental support service due to the number of additional sessions which the school were providing for pupils. As the centre is adjacent to the school and due to the low levels of use at that time, it was felt the community centre was the ideal location to operate the programme.
- 3.3 The work of the primary school from the community centre has expanded over the last year and now there is a regular programme of courses, activities and parental support sessions delivered over four days each week through the school term. The activities are managed by the School Liaison Officer, who is funded by the Primary School and Inner East Cluster, with the support of a team of volunteers, who are parents at the school.
- 3.4 The table below provides an overview of regular sessions run and managed by Ebor Gardens Primary School that have taken place between January 2013 and January 2014 and the number beneficiaries from each activity:

Course / Activity	Number of beneficiaries
ESOL Sessions	104
Parents & tots group	83
Coffee mornings	63
Creche	45
Volunteer training programmes	18
Zumba, Yoga and Keep Fit	43
Behaviour support groups	10
Cookery courses	31
One to one support sessions	65
Other sessions – Let's Talk Money, pamper	65

sessions, taster courses, etc.	
Seasonal and fund raising events	160
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>687</b>

- 3.5 Ebor Gardens Primary School has also worked in partnership with a number of different organisations to support activities which are being delivered from the centre. As part of the review of current activities, a number of supporting testimonies have been provided. Ward Councillors, Zest Health for Life, Hope City Church, St Vincent's Support Centre and the GMB have all been very complimentary and supportive of the work which the primary school are delivering the centre. These organisations have also stated that the connection to the activities which the school are delivering have enhanced their own service delivery.
- 3.6 In terms of future rental support requested, it is for 39 weeks per annum, term time only. This breaks down as follows:

Room	Days per week	weeks per year	Days per year	Daily rate (£)	Total amount
Main Hall	4	39	156	£87.13	£13,592.28
Kitchen	4	39	156	£9.87	£1,539.72
Crèche	4	39	156	£29.74	£4,639.44
PC Office	1	39	39	£7.43	£289.77
					<b>£20,061.21</b>

- 3.7 The majority of the activities which the school are providing would be free of charge under the normal lettings process. However, due to the number of hours which the school intend to use the building, a Market Rental Assessment (MRA) for use of the centre has been undertaken. The MRA is based on the square metre size of the rooms occupied, the running costs of the building and number of days of use. This calculation has created the figure above which would be the full market rent chargeable for occupancy of the space at Ebor Gardens.
- 3.8 The school have been asked if they could make a financial contribution towards the letting costs at the facility. The response received back from the Headteacher was that there were a number of restrictions on how their budget could be spent and it wasn't within the guidelines to cover hire costs of an additional building. School funds are also restricted to be spent on pupil related activities, not on parental support programmes. Therefore, the activity being operated at Ebor Gardens wouldn't be eligible for this funding support.
- 3.9 The presence of the primary school has generated a number of spin off activities. For example, the Inner East Cluster has now taken on a lease for a previously unoccupied room in the centre. This lease is generating income and has also created partnership working between the school and the Cluster. Similarly, a domestic violence project has also started to use the facility on a Monday and referrals are being made from the school to this project to support vulnerable parents.

### **Review of Lettings**

- 3.10 A review of the activities taking place and benefits created through the rental support grant will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. A form has been developed to capture all this detail. The school have been asked to maximise the use of the space indicated as far as possible rather than requesting any space on additional days which would prevent income generating activities taking place. Regular building user groups also take place to iron out any facilities related issues.

### **Future Proposals**

- 3.11 The primary school are constantly reviewing the activities and services which they are providing to parents and the local community. The school adapt their courses to meet the skill needs of their clients. The school are keen to deliver more courses in partnership with learning providers who are already working across the locality. The school are also keen to re-open a community café from the centre within their usage programme. The café would be managed by volunteers and would provide low cost, healthy food for the local community. This would use a similar model to the successful community café which has turned around the fortunes of Lincoln Green Community Centre.

## **4.0 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1. Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Burmantofts & Richmond Hill Ward Members have been consulted on this proposal, as part of the annual review meeting. They are very supportive of the primary school continuing to receive a rental support grant. Members feel that the activity is of value to the community and is supporting to achieve local priorities outlined in the Neighbourhood Improvement Plan for the Ward.
- 4.1.2 The local community are also supportive of the activities continuing from the centre. A wider programme of community sessions have been integrated into the parental support programme being delivered. Feedback from residents attending the events has been very positive and they have requested that they continue.
- 4.1.3 A number of organisations who have worked in partnership with Ebor Gardens Primary School to deliver activities have provided statements of support for the work and activities which are being delivered from the centre.

### **4.2. Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 There has been an equality impact assessment screening document completed to establish whether or not a full equality impact assessment needed to be undertaken. There is no requirement to undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment as there are no adverse impacts which this particular project could have for any of the equality groups, and the project is meeting an identified need within the locality.

### **4.3. Council policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 The activities which will be supported through the rental grant contributes to the City Priority of Best City for Children and Young People, through the work to reduce levels of NEETs.
- 4.3.2 Activities provided at the community centre would also contribute towards the City Priority of Best City for Communities, as activities provided contribute towards increasing a sense of belonging to build cohesive and harmonious communities.

### **4.4. Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The staffing resources to manage and oversee the community projects come from the School Liaison Officer, along with the support from the volunteers recruited as part of the project. Inner East Area Committee and Community First have previously allocated funding to support the set-up of the activities, with an expectation that the sessions are made sustainable and self-financing.

### **4.5. Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.
- 4.5.2 There is no exempt or confidential information contained in this report.
- 4.5.3 There are no key decisions associated with this report, so it is not subject to call in.

#### **4.6. Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are no major risks associated with this proposal.

#### **5.0 Conclusions**

5.1 Ebor Gardens Primary School is providing a valuable community resource to local parents and the wider community. If ENE Area Support wanted to commission activities of a similar scale for a third part to deliver, then it would cost considerably more than the amount of rental support being requested for the activities to continue.

5.2 The presence of the school at the centre has also had a positive influence on the increase on the number of lettings and income generation at the centre. It is felt that the school will continue to support the increased use of centre and additional income generation.

5.3 Partners who have been working with the school have also highlighted the added value which working with the school has provided to their activities and will continue to strengthen their service delivery.

#### **6.0 Recommendations**

6.1 The recommendations associated with the report are as follows:

- That the rental support grant of £20,061.21 is approved for 39 weeks of supported lettings until March 2015.

#### **7.0 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 Equality Impact Assessment Screening document.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.