

Report of the Chief Officer, Customer Access

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture)

Date: 9th September 2014

Subject: Community Hub role within the Asset Rationalisation Programme

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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

1.0 Summary of main issues

- 1.1 The concept of having Community Hubs across the city is for them to provide the right mix of council and partner services each community needs in the most efficient manner. This involves a more integrated approach to service delivery and maximises the use of the assets and service points that already exist across the city e.g. joint service centres, one stop centres, housing management offices, libraries, children's centres etc.
- 1.2 Progress has been made at the three pathfinder sites since they went live on 1st April 2014. Key service changes and improvements have been made at each of the three pathfinder sites.
- 1.3 The programme of work has not delivered major asset savings in the form of building closures to date. However the ongoing programme of work with partners internal and external to the council to co-locate relevant front line services together in communities is already delivering a more efficient use of the assets in use.
- 1.4 Longer term the domino effect of maximising use of space within Hubs for front line staff along with incorporating new ways of working (CITW) will lead to a number of properties around the city being made available for release.

2.0 Purpose of this Report

- 2.1 The council's medium term financial strategy and the Best Council Plan both highlight the need for the council to reduce its property portfolio and the associated running costs significantly, in order to help achieve the financial savings required over the next few years.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to update Scrutiny Board on the work done to-date in delivering the initiatives detailed in the November 2013 Executive Board Report around delivering Accessible and Integrated Services for the citizens of Leeds with regards to the creation of Community Hubs. The report also outlines the activities that are proposed to take place from 2014/15 with regards to potential asset rationalisation to deliver the cost benefits associated with this piece of work.

3.0 Background Information and Main Issues

- 3.1 The concept of having **Community hubs** across the city is for them to provide the right mix of council and partner services each community needs in the most efficient manner. This involves a more integrated approach to service delivery and maximises the use of the assets and service points that already exist across the city e.g. joint service centres, one stop centres, housing management offices, libraries, children's centres etc.
- 3.2 The Community Hubs also support the delivery of pop-up and are looking to support mobile provision to ensure that we can reach all priority communities across the city in the most cost effective way.
- 3.3 A report to the November Executive Board agreed to the establishment of three community hub pathfinders to develop our thinking and identify the best form of provision for delivering truly integrated face-to-face services. The three Pathfinder sites are the Compton Centre in Harehills, the St George's Centre in Middleton and the One Stop Centre in Armley, all of which have now been operational Community Hubs since 1st April 2014.
- 3.4 Progress at the three pathfinder sites has been significant since they went live on 1st April 2014. Key service changes and improvements have been made at each of the three pathfinder sites.

Service Improvements

- 3.5 Effective from the 1st April 2014, the three existing teams from Customer Services, Library and Information Services and Employment and Skills services have come together as one team under the leadership and management of a Community Hub Manager and Assistant Manager within Customer Services.
- 3.6 The establishment of a single team at each of the pathfinder sites has led to improvements in the existing services provided previously by the three separate teams. Improvements include a single reception point, standardised opening hours across all three services and increased staff flexibility. A good example of this is at St Georges Centre, Middleton where the previously part-time library is now open 8am – 6pm during weekdays. Outside of the part time hours the Library service is now available as a self-service option, with support from Customer Services staff, as required.

Cross Council Working Leading to Cost Savings

- 3.7 There have been some good examples of cross-council working since the Hubs went live in April, specifically with Children's Services and Housing Leeds where all opportunities for more integrated working are being explored and where possible implemented.
- 3.8 One example of this at the Compton Centre, Harehills where closer working with the Children's Centre next door has led to services such as ESOL courses for adults and families, antenatal support group, Citizens Advice Bureau and the social justice team for asylum seekers and travellers being delivered from the Community Hub rather than – as previously – the Children's Centre.
- 3.9 By moving these services and creating one 'community campus', the Children's Centre has freed up space for 80 additional under 2 free nursery places. Initially the Children's Centre had intended to spend £100k on portable cabins to accommodate the nursery places, but instead the Centre has spent £12k on refurbishment so that the spaces can be provided in the Children's Centre itself, saving £88k. There are a number of examples where this could be replicated across the city.

Co-Location of External Partners

- 3.10 Some excellent work with partners outside of the Council has also been delivered since April. Specifically this has been with West Yorkshire Police who are co-locating their Neighbourhood Policing Teams in the Pathfinder sites so as to ensure closer working with council services and increase their presence in local neighbourhoods.
- 3.11 This co-location is currently live at St George's Centre, Middleton where the Police launched the local neighbourhood policing strategy in early April. At Middleton both Police Officers and PCSOs are now working from and out of the building and the St George's Community Hub team are providing a 'front of house' service for the Police and taking referrals on their behalf. This means that the Council's customer services Team are now the front of house for the Council, the NHS and the Police and further work to develop this model will be taken forward. Work is also currently ongoing to co-locate neighbourhood policing teams at Armley Community Hub and Compton Centre Community Hub, Harehills. These are likely to be operational by the end of September.

Increased Community Support & Usage

- 3.12 A key objective of the Community Hubs is provide relevant support for people who need to access our services and if appropriate provided a 'Pop-up' service where those people congregate if they are not currently accessing our services. Good progress has been made in this area since April.
- 3.13 One early example of where Community Hub staff provide 'pop-up' services is at Stocks Hill Day Centre in Armley. This has proved very popular with the service users as Armley Community Hub staff have been able to assist with a range of issues for them including general advice regarding bidding for a property, re-housing and anti-social behaviour and property repairs requests. The "pop-up" has seen the council dealing with enquiries from new customers who were not using the Community Hub already. We have seen customers who have come to the pop-up who have then had the confidence to come into the Community hub with other

enquiries. The locations of pop-up city-wide is being developed – this will be in both council and non-council buildings.

- 3.14 Another key objective of the Community Hubs is to ensure they are used by the community they support such that local people truly see the Community Hubs as community assets. To this end a number of good examples across all three pathfinder sites have delivered on this objective. One good example is at Armley Community Hub where a Caring Dads service is now being provided. Classes start at 6pm and run until 8.15pm (extending the opening hours of the Centre) to cater for working fathers who want to build a (previously broken) relationship with their children.

Looking Ahead

- 3.15 With regard to actions identified for 2014/15 to develop and embed the Community Hub approach across the city. To do this the following actions have been identified.
- 3.16 Create a city-wide infrastructure of Community Hubs and deliver a sustainable resourcing model. This is the key next step in embedding the Community Hub model across the city as the demand for closer integration is already increasing with both internal and external partners at other sites across the city.
- 3.17 Whilst the close working between the community hubs and the Police and Children's Services will continue to develop, the teams focus will also encompass more practical implementations of integrated working with both Housing Leeds and the NHS. A working list of integration options for housing management services has already been agreed and work is ongoing to identify the prioritised list for implementation.
- 3.18 Likewise where co-location already exists between the Council and the NHS, work is ongoing to develop relationships and identify opportunities for more integrated working. An example of where this is at an early stage is at St George's Centre Middleton where meetings have been held with the manager of the NHS Musculoskeletal Team to identify roles that may be provided by the hub reception staff. It is expected that the team could receive patients, log their arrival and rebook appointments. If this works, it is expected that other NHS teams who work in the building will follow.
- 3.19 The programme of work has not delivered major asset savings in the form of building closures to date. This is because the three pathfinder sites already had co-located services and the assets had already been rationalised around these three centres. However the ongoing programme of work with partners internal and external to the council to co-locate relevant front line services together in communities is already delivering a more efficient use of the assets in use. Other opportunities are currently being worked through that will lead to asset rationalisation as further Community Hubs are created.
- 3.20 Work has begun with the NHS and police looking at assets in use and assets that could be freed up across the three partners by the development of community Hubs.
- 3.21 Longer term the domino effect of maximising use of space within Hubs for front line staff along with incorporating new ways of working (CITW) will lead to a number of properties around the city being made available for release.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members of the Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) are asked to receive an update on the Community Hub programme of work to date and provide appropriate comment and or recommendations in regards to its role in the Asset Rationalisation Programme.

Background papers¹

Executive Board Report - November 2013 - Delivering Accessible and Integrated Services for the Citizens of Leeds with regards to the creation of Community Hubs

¹ 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.