

Report of Head of Scrutiny & Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services)

Date: 26 January 2015

Subject: Community Lettings

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Killingbeck & Seacroft, Burmantofts & Richmond Hill, Gipton & Harehills, Chapel Allerton, Wetherby, Alwoodley, Middleton Park, Beeston & Holbeck, City & Hunslet, Rothwell, Ardsley & Robin Hood, Morley North, Morley South, Kippax & Methley, Cross Gates & Whinmoor, Garforth & Swillington, Kirkstall, Hyde Park & Woodhouse, Weetwood, Otley & Yeadon, Bramley & Stanningley, Armley, Calverley & Farsley, Pudsey, Farnley & Wortley		
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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 Members will recall past discussion at the board which considered

- The complicated and bureaucratic arrangements in place for the use of community centres;
- The numerous charging rates and their complicated application; and
- The need for continued involvement of Community Committees in the process.

1.2 The board also noted the transfer of the community centre portfolio to Citizens and Communities as of 1st October 2013 and the arrangements in place to address the identified failings in the current process.

1.3 Members have asked for an update on the current letting arrangements.

2 Main issues

2.1 The Community centre service has been moved to Citizens and communities directorate for a number of reasons

- Closer links with localities, the area teams and local councillors on Community Committees are important stakeholders;
- To focus the work of community centres alongside the citizens@leeds brand supporting the work to tackle poverty;
- To contribute to local community development and regeneration in the poorest areas.

2.2 Lettings

2.2.1 The Scrutiny Board has made clear in the past the concerns which members have with the lettings service, with examples of poor customer experience. These issues have been discussed with the Head of Facilities and these are our conclusions:

2.2.2 The lettings team being organisationally part of the Civic Enterprise Leeds arrangements offers benefits which we are wary of losing. There is close connection with the other parts of the facilities management service which are crucial to the operational success of the community centres. In particular, caretaking, key holding, cleaning and security.

2.2.3 With the overall service based in the Civic Hall in Citizens and Communities, and lettings in the same building as part of the facilities management service it was recommended to the Board in 2014 that there are no further structural changes, rather the services work together to improve processes to achieve the outcomes which are required. This was endorsed by this Scrutiny Board.

2.2.4 Scrutiny Board now wish to receive an update on the initiatives taken to improve these processes. Officer will be in attendance to provide full details to Board Members.

3 Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to receive an update and make comment as appropriate.