



Report of the Director of Environments & Neighbourhoods Directorate

South Leeds (Outer) Area Committee

Date: Monday 5th November 2007

Subject: Outer South Community Centre Issues

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| Electoral Wards Affected: Ardsley & Robin Hood Morley North Morley South Rothwell |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ward Members consulted (referred to in report) |

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| Specific Implications For: |
| Equality and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Community Cohesion <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Narrowing the Gap <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Council Function

Delegated Executive Function available for Call In

Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

Executive Summary

This report provides the Area Committee with an overview of current developments and prevalent issues at some community centres in the Outer South Area.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the current position with various Council community centres and comment on a number of proposals relating to the buildings.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 In July 2006, five community facilities were transferred to the responsibility of Area Committees as part of the annual delegation of functions – the centres were Blackburn Hall, Churwell Community Centre, East Ardsley CC, Peel Street CC and West East Ardsley CC. Of these centres, three were leased and two were directly managed by the Council.

2.2 There were a number of responsibilities that also transferred for the Area Management Team to carry out on behalf of the Area Committee, these responsibilities were:-

- Liaise with users, user groups, local members and management committees on issues related to centres in their area
- Develop proposals for re-shaping the community centre portfolio in the area
- Develop capital schemes and funding packages

- Monitor the service level agreement with City Services for centres in their area and monitor capital and revenue budgets
- Ensure that leases and licences are in place and reviewed periodically
- Develop, implement and oversee the administration of a new schedule of pricing and discounts for centre usage

2.3 Following a decision by Executive Board, it was decided that there would be a further delegation of community centres to Area Committees. This will mean that a further six buildings will be transferred to the Outer South Area Committees Community Centre portfolio in early 2008. The buildings still to transfer are:- Gildersome Youth Club, Lewisham Park CC, four community rooms at Morley Town Hall, St Gabriel's YC, Tingley Y&C Centre and Windmill YC.

2.4 At the present time, it is very much a transitional period for the above six buildings due to the transfer of facilities between the former Learning and Leisure Department to the Environments and Neighbourhoods Directorate. While the centres are not yet the full responsibility of the Area Committee, South Area Management Team are picking up numerous issues which need resolving urgently as they have required attention for a number of years.

2.5 Since the last report to Area Committee, the Community Centres Sub Committee has met once and has a further meeting scheduled for December. The main topics for discussion have been the key issues highlighted below, as well as the consultation process for the pricing and lettings policy.

3.0 Key community centre issues in Outer South Leeds

3.1 There are a number of community centres issues in the Outer South area. The section below details the most pressing issues and asks the Area Committee to consider.

3.2 St Gabriel's Community Centre

3.2.1 St Gabriel's Community Centre is a facility that is highlighted as a priority due to high backlog maintenance, £37,265 at the last condition survey undertaken on the property, and running costs, on average it costs around £30,000 per annum to operate the facility, with low usage. A number of measures are already being explored to reduce running costs here, such re-aligning caretaking hours.

3.2.2 Another reason that the facility has been put on the high priority list is that the building is leased in by the Council from the Diocese and that lease is due to expire in April 2008. As yet there have been no discussions with the Diocese and Council with regards to any future lease.

3.2.3 St Gabriel's is situated on Fall Lane, East Ardsley. A number of other community facilities are located in the area – East Ardsley Community Centre and Thorpe Community Centre, as well as St Michael's Church which also provides an number of community activities.

- 3.2.4 At present, two youth club sessions take place each week at St Gabriel's, with other occasional meetings held on an ad-hoc basis. Youth Service has been asked to look into the options for youth provision in the area including possible alternatives. Part of the building is also used by the Diocese for church services, but this is separated off from the main hall and caretaking charges are only incurred if use of the kitchen is required, as representatives of the church don't have permissions to access that part of the building.
- 3.2.5 It is requested that the Area Committee supports the proposal to undertake a consultation exercise with the local community to seek their thoughts about community facilities and youth provision in the area. Once the results of this consultation are gathered, a firmer decision can then be made on how to take forward the management of the facility. To coincide with this, further discussions will take place with the Youth Service with regards to their plans for provision at the facility and in the area as a whole. A report will be presented at the February Area Committee to outline the results of the consultation with details of the proposed next steps.

3.3 Peel Street Centre

- 3.3.1 Following a site visit to Peel Street Centre to meet one of the user groups, it is felt that further work needs to be undertaken to assess the future viability of this centre. After a recent visit by a surveyor, there is currently £26,500 of backlog maintenance on the building. This figure does not cover DDA works that also need to be carried out at the premises. The building is also costing approximately £34,000 to operate per annum with only £500 income being generated through lettings by Joseph Priestley College.
- 3.3.2 At present, the five main user groups provide activities for older people in the form of luncheon or social clubs. All the groups have free usage and would not be required to make a contribution towards lettings payments under the draft new pricing and lettings policy. There are currently spaces within the bookings diary at Morley Town Hall and Lewisham Park CC that could accommodate these sessions. Joseph Priestley College do operate some classes at the facility but there are no courses currently booked. The centre is used on an average of 18 hours per week.
- 3.3.3 The Area Committee is asked to support the proposal to explore options for this centre. It is proposed that an approach to be made Joseph Priestley College to ask if they'd like to take on the building - either through a lease or sale of the site to them. Users groups would be then decanted to Morley Town Hall or Lewisham Park CC.
- 3.3.4 At present, only one user group has been consulted regarding these proposals. The remaining four user groups will be written to, informing them of this report. This will be followed up by a series of meetings with these users to discuss implications with each of them.

3.4 Churwell Community Centre & Stanhope Memorial Hall

- 3.4.1 Following a decision to close Stanhope Memorial Hall in January 2006, the disposal of this facility is still being progressed by City Development. Issues have arisen as the hall is not owned by the Council and was gifted by a set of trustees to provide space for the provision of activities for older people in the Churwell area.

- 3.4.2 City Development has been asked to continue with the disposal of the facility – if the families of the deceased trustees cannot be traced, a request will be put forward to the Charities Commission for any capital receipt that comes from the sale of the facility be invested into Churwell Community Centre. This could, however, mean that the name of the centre may need to change to the Churwell & Stanhope Community Centre, to ensure that the name of Stanhope, who gifted the hall to the Council, lives on in the community.
- 3.4.3 When final confirmation has been received with regards to how we can progress with the disposal of Stanhope, a further update report will be presented to the Area Committee.

3.5 West Ardsley Community Centre

- 3.5.1 West Ardsley Community Centre is currently leased to Kaleidoscope childcare provider who runs before and after school sessions. The Council currently has a six year lease with Kaleidoscope, which has a three year stepped rent - £3,000 in year one, £6,000 in year two and £8,900 in years three to six.
- 3.5.2 We are currently in year two of the agreement and Kaleidoscope has asked if the Council would review the rental payments. They have requested a reduction to £3,000 for year two. Account information has been provided and reviewed by South Area Management Team who is supportive of this request. It is suggested that an annual rent review is carried out for this facility in order for Kaleidoscope to continue managing the premises.
- 3.5.3 Kaleidoscope has successfully managed to turn the facility into a well used building and is felt that support should be given to ensure this continues. If Kaleidoscope had to relinquish the building back to the Council, the future viability of the facility might be put in jeopardy, as there isn't sufficient budgetary provision for the building to be directly managed by the Council.

4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

- 4.1 There are no direct implications for the above as a result of this report.

5.0 Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.
- 5.2 There are various resource implications associated with this report. More officer time will need to be allocated to community facilities in Outer South Leeds to ensure that the current issues highlighted above are dealt with as soon as possible.
- 5.3 Once these issues are dealt with, then budget pressures associated with some of the facilities outlined above will be alleviated and efficiency saving targets will be met. Any budgetary savings on facilities can be re-invested into the remaining buildings in the portfolio.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 All the proposals outlined above are key pieces of work which need to be undertaken to ensure that the community centres portfolio is sustainable and providing the community with the best local provision within budgets.
- 6.2 If Members have any specific issues which they require to be addressed on any other facilities not mentioned above, these should be fed through by the relevant ward representative on the Outer Community Centres Sub Committee to be discussed at the meeting on 12th December.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 The recommendations associated with this report are:-
- Area Committee members note the content of this report
 - A consultation exercise is agreed for community facilities and youth provision in East Ardsley
 - Negotiations with various user groups at Peel Street Centre are supported
 - For a rent reduction to be given to Kalidoscope for West Ardsley Community Centre in 2007/08 and for a yearly review process to be built in every year there after