



Report of the East North East Area Manager

Inner North East Area Committee

Date: 1st February 2010

Subject: Community Centres Report

Electoral Wards Affected:

Chapel Allerton
Moortown
Roundhay

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity
Community Cohesion
Narrowing the Gap

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 outlines three strands of community centres work within Inner East Leeds which require consideration by the Area Committee. The report updates the Area Committee on the review of the Pricing & Letting Policy for Inner North East Leeds and seeks approval for implementation of the revised Discount Schedule.

Purpose Of This Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Area Committee on the review of the Pricing & Letting Policy for Inner North East Leeds and seeks approval for implementation of the revised Discount Schedule.

Background Information

2. Since 1st July 2006 the Area Management Teams have had responsibilities for the community centres vested with the Environment & Neighbourhoods Directorate. The centres in Inner North East Leeds are: Mandela Community Centre, Palace Community Centre, 53 Louis Street.
3. The Area Committee role in relation to the community centre portfolio include overseeing revenue budgets, operational arrangements and the use of the centres, agreeing and implementing a schedule of charges and discounts for directly managed centres and making asset management and investment proposals to ensure the portfolio is sustainable and meets local needs.
4. Since the last report to the Inner North East Area Committee about Community Centres, three areas have arisen that require committee consideration. These are detailed below.

Main Issues

Pricings & Lettings Policy – Approval of Revised Discounts Schedule

5. In October 2004, the Council's Executive Board agreed a draft lettings and pricing policy for all community buildings which key objectives included:
 - Lettings arrangements and the prices charged for the use of the community centres should be transparent and be consistently applied across all centres;
 - Prices charged for the use of the facilities should make a significant contribution to the costs of overall service provision and there should be no hidden subsidies;
 - Lettings and pricing arrangements should encourage access to community facilities for everyone.
6. Following on from these themes, East North East Area Management conducted a consultation exercise between October and December 2008 within the Inner North East electoral wards. The primary focus of the consultation was to communicate the latest draft pricing schedule and to gain feedback from community centre stakeholders. The reviewed Pricing and Lettings Policy was widely accepted and it was agreed to implement the new policy and discounts schedule from October 2010.
7. However, during preparations to roll the new policy out, it became clear that it unfairly penalized many voluntary and community groups, with much larger bills than they had previously paid. Given this went against the aim to promote access to community facilities for everyone, it was agreed to put implementation on hold while an in depth review of the discounts schedule was undertaken.

8. This review has now taken place and a revised Discounts Schedule has been produced (Appendix A). It is felt that the new schedule now addresses the majority of concerns raised, while still meeting the aims of producing a fair, consistent and transparent Pricing & Letting Policy.
9. The Area Committee are therefore asked to consider and approve the revised Discounts Schedule, for implementation within those directly managed community centres that it is responsible for.

Implications For Council Policy And Governance

Any new community centre policy will become a policy of the Council. It will contribute to the transparency of use and the quality of the governance.

Legal And Resource Implications

There are no legal implications beyond those associated with a policy change.

Recommendations

The Area Committee are requested to note the contents of this report and consider and approve the revised discounts schedule for implementation.

Background Documents

The background documents used in this report were:

- A committee report from 13th June 2007 – “Community Centres – Development of Area Committee Charging Policy”
- A committee report from 24th October 2007 – “Community Centres – Pricing and Discounts Policy”.
- A committee report from 11th September 2008 – “Update on Community Centre Pricings and Lettings Policy Consultation”
- A committee report from 5th February 2009 “Community Centres Update Report”