

## **Community Centre Review – August 2012**

### **Introduction**

The Executive Member and Area Committee Chairs Group have agreed that work should be done to review community centre provision across the city. A Community Centre Review Consultative Board (CCRCB) was established to provide some steer and to comment on the work and any emerging proposals. The Board recently agreed that progress might best be made by looking in detail at the costs, users, impact and quality of centres in three areas, one for each Area Wedge.

The areas are as follows:-

- Richmond Hill & Burmantofts in East North East
- Beeston & Holbeck, and City & Hunslet in South
- Hyde Park & Woodhouse in West North West

### **Aim of the Review**

To ensure that Community Centres are safe, accessible and well-used neighbourhood assets, and that they are financially viable and make a measurable positive contribution to local priorities.

### **Objectives**

1. To accurately determine the costs of running Community Centres (CCs) in the identified areas.
2. To accurately determine the income generated and income foregone at CCs in the identified areas.
3. To demonstrate the impact of CC-user activity and its contribution to local priorities.
4. To provide Area Committees with more detailed and up to date information on the impact of CC-user activity in their areas i.e. what are the committees getting for their investment in the users?
5. To better understand the value of CCs to local groups, organisations and residents in the identified areas (may require consultation to be undertaken).
6. To determine the role and value of CCs alongside other community facilities in the identified areas.
7. To inform a revised and improved approach to funding CCs, including the charging of CC-users
8. To identify and assess new approaches to supporting Third Sector-provision and involvement in the identified areas.

### **Resources**

This initial phase of the review will require some short-term, substantial input and leadership from the following parts of the Council:-

- Area Management (AM)
- Strategy & Commissioning in E&N (S&C), including Finance colleagues in E&N
- Facilities Management (FM)
- Corporate Property Management (CPM)

- City Development (CD)

It is envisaged that much of the required information and analysis is already available, and will just need to be packaged together appropriately. However, some new work will be required over the coming weeks and may need to be prioritised in order to meet the review's tight timeframe.

### **Timeframe**

It is anticipated that this first phase of the review will be completed by mid-September 2012, although this will be dependent on the availability of resources from the above parts of the Council.

### **Key Tasks**

The following key tasks are required for each of the three areas:-

#### **Centre-specific information**

- running costs of each centre over the last 12 months (S&C)
- income at each centre over the last 12 months (S&C)
- Income foregone at each centre due to waivers/subsidies over the last 12 months (S&C)
- users at each centre (sessional and tenants – the former being groups or individuals who book space at a centre on an ad-hoc basis e.g. to run a dance class, the latter being organisations with ongoing occupation of the same space in a centre e.g. an office for a local community organisation) over the last 12 months, and the level of subsidy each receives (S&C)
- Impact/outcomes of user activity at each centre over last 12 months (AM)
- General state of repair of each centre and their current usage (S&C)

#### **Area-specific information**

- Other local community facilities in the area, including their users and impact/outcomes of users over the last 12 months (AM)
- Planned developments in the area which may result in new community facilities (CD, AM)
- Planned developments in the area which may result in major changes to the community asset infrastructure e.g. community asset transfer (CD, AM)
- Third Sector groups with a major presence in the area - based there, and/or, delivering there (AM).
- Major perceived gaps in service provision, and/or, community facilities in the area (AM).
- Specific characteristics of the area e.g. large economic migrant population (AM)
- Specific issues in the area e.g. high number of race-hate incidents (AM)
- Information about the value people place on current CC facilities and what options would they consider work best for them

The Neighbourhood Index should be able to assist with some of the above

### **Funding/Charging approach**

- Who should pay to use CCs in the area?
- In what circumstances should CC-users be charged?
- Should all CCs in the area adopt the same pricing policy, or, should it vary according to the condition / quality / popularity of the centre? (the initial steer is that Members want a simplified and consistent charging policy across all centres)
- Who should be responsible for setting and overseeing charging at CCs in the area?
- Should the decision-making process regarding subsidised or free use, and the associated budget, be delegated in full to Area Committees?
- Is it possible to identify and delegate budgets in this way?
- Should subsidised use of CCs be determined by the impact of provision, and by the legal status and financial stability of users?

### **Other Questions for Consideration**

- Could we use the CC budget to improve Third Sector assets in the area? i.e. dispose of a centre and re-invest any savings/receipts into other well-used and regarded local community assets.
- Could we financially support current CC-users to move into/use alternative local community assets?
- How can we improve the marketing of CCs in the area?
- How can we best garner local opinion on CCs in the area? i.e. user-consultation, consultation with local people and groups not using the CCs
- Should other models of operation be considered e.g. multiple asset transfer, Fresh Horizons approach?
- Is there a role for the private sector e.g. business advice/support for CC-users, CSR / Civic Enterprise agenda, maintenance and management, naming rights etc.

### **Governance/Accountability**

A Steering Group is being established to drive the review project

(Membership)

Initial outcomes of the review will be reported to the CCRCB for comments/feedback, and then to the Executive Member and Area Cttee Chairs. Any specific asset management proposals will be presented to Asset Management Board. Project updates to be shared with Third Sector Partnership Group (and Stronger Partnership Board???)