

## **Reach's Proposal for a long term lease at Hawtonville Community Centre**

### **Context**

Reach Learning Disability (Newark) is a local organisation providing day service provision to over 100 individuals with learning disabilities. Reach Newark is part of Reach Learning disability (registered charity no. 1076318) which has its head office in Southwell and also runs day centres at Brackenhurst College (Flower Pod), Southwell, Mansfield and Flower Pod Newark (Eton Avenue).

Our vision is of a community where people with learning disabilities can make a good future for themselves – a safe, healthy and happy life filled with purpose, achievement, opportunity and friendship. Our mission is to work to achieve an enduring and positive impact by supporting all those who place their trust in us – people with learning disabilities, their families and carers. To accomplish this, we will bring together the support of extraordinary people in our community and the imagination, skills, commitment and compassion of our team.

Reach has been located at Hawtonville Community Centre, St Mary's Gardens, Newark NG24 4JQ since April 2018. Since our move to Hawtonville Community Centre we have been able to grow our day service provision in a building that is well suited to the needs of the individuals attending.

We are putting this proposal together to request a significant length lease that will make us a permanent fixture at Hawtonville Community Centre and support us to secure funding that could improve the building for the individuals who attend Reach Newark.

### **Chantelle Welshe**

#### **Group Manager – Client Services**

#### **Reach Learning Disability – Essential Needs**

- To continue to have sole use of the building from Monday to Friday (8am – 4pm) including the reception room where we monitor and control people accessing the building.
- To continue to have the reception room and two staff rooms as lockable rooms as offices for managers and staff.
- To continue undertaking the prime key-holder role.
- In order to provide a stable base for the individuals and consider applying for funding that can improve the building a 15 year lease with break clauses every 5 years.
- Reach to continue taking responsibility for the existing and new bookings.

#### **Benefits of Continued Occupation**

- The building is in constant use – apart from statutory closures e.g. bank holidays.
- The inevitable benefits to the building structure of constant occupation and regular maintenance.

- Reach have employed a local resident to undertake the role of caretaker who secures the building after community use.
- Community engagement opportunities, the most recent of these - supporting Davison's Bakery – they made packed lunches for the children that would usually be in receipt of free school meals. The Centre acted as a main pick up point for the community, whilst maintaining our Covid secure status.
- The District Council have the security and simplicity of one tenant to liaise with.
- Reduced reliance on NSDC resources, Reach will continue to pick up the typical day to day costs of the centre and maintain a community use offer.
- Recognition of continuing need to make building available as a Polling Station.
- The proposals would potentially secure investments in the building through grant funding.
- The proposal would make a sizeable contribution to the Council's Community Plan objectives primarily :-
  - Create vibrant and self-sufficient local communities where residents look out for each other and actively contribute to the local area.
  - Improve the health and wellbeing of the local residents.

### **Benefits to the community**

During the past three years Reach has built up visibility and is now recognised as an integral part of the local community, the Centre has participated in many community events such as the aforementioned pick up point for packed lunches, the Hawtonville Cleaner, Safer, Greener day of action working in partnership with NSDC and community volunteers.

The community understand that the building is available to use for community activities outside of Reach Service Delivery hours and the hire rates are extremely competitive to reflect the demographic of the community and to encourage better use.

Whilst there have been some incidents of anti-social behaviour, our presence does seem to deter this.

There are volunteering opportunities that could engage the local community and potentially further employment opportunities within our domiciliary care service.

Reach has recently extended its integration into Hawtonville by opening Flower Pod Newark (was the Eton Avenue Growers). We are continuously working hard to build up the relationships with the local residents and we have had a neighbour expressing a desire to volunteer at the Flower Pod.

### **Financial Considerations**

The running of the Centre as a community facility consistently produces a financial loss for Reach as an organisation. The high cost of utilities, maintenance and the salaries associated with reception, caretaking and management duties far outweigh the limited income available from community hires. However, provided we can continue our tenancy on a peppercorn rent we can accept this deficit as our contribution to the community and the

District Council. Prior to Reach's occupation of the centre the costs associated with providing the building were significantly higher than they are currently due to Reach being responsible for the day to day running expenses as highlighted above.

We have had problems accessing any useful data from the current shared CCTV system and we would prefer to commission our own bespoke system around the building, at our own cost, of course if the lease were to be granted.