

LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

22 JANUARY 2019

HAWTONVILLE COMMUNITY CENTRE MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update report in respect of Hawtonville Community Centre and the progress being made following the transfer of the management of the centre to Reach Learning Disability (RLD), a local charity supporting vulnerable adults in Newark and Sherwood, through the granting of a 3 year tenancy agreement.
- 1.2 To seek Member approval for RLD to utilise the first floor rooms at the centre and the current tenancy agreement be amended to reflect this proposal.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Leisure and Environment Committee agreed at its meeting on 15 February 2018 that:-

- The principle of RLD being granted a short term tenancy/agreement for the centre, not exceeding three years, on the condition that community use as outlined in the report is protected;
- That the Director – Safety be given delegated authority in consultation with the Leisure & Environment Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman and opposition spokesperson to progress negotiations with RLD and agree the terms of the tenancy or other agreement for its occupation of the centre, including rental levels etc. and
- Officers work with RLD to develop a detailed business case and operating proposal for the centre to demonstrate greater utilisation of the community resource which can then be presented to Members at a future meeting for further consideration, including how this might impact upon the overall management of the centre by Newark and Sherwood Homes.

2.2 Furthermore at its meeting of 26 June 2018 Leisure and Environment considered an interim progress report and agreed the following recommendation:-

- That Leisure and Environment Committee receive an update report at 6 monthly intervals on the activities and services delivered to the community through the Hawtonville Community Centre in respect of its contribution to the delivery of the priorities and objectives of the Hawtonville Neighbourhood Study.

2.3 Accordingly this report provides a progress update in respect of the first 6 months of Reach's occupation of Hawtonville Community Centre.

2.4 In addition members are asked to consider a proposal to allow RLD to utilise the first floor rooms at the centre and that the current tenancy agreement be amended to reflect this proposal.

3.0 The Current Overview

- 3.1 The move to the Hawtonville Community Centre has been a huge success and the service users see the centre as their home. Transition work was undertaken with the service users which enabled the move to be as smooth as possible and included using public transport and safe routes to the centre to improve access for service users. Evaluations completed recently indicate that the individuals feel safe and supported.
- 3.2 The ground floor of the centre is now occupied by RLD Monday to Friday typically from 8.00am to 5.00pm and community access is available from 5.00pm to 10.00pm in the three communal areas during evenings and at weekends. There are two further community rooms at first floor level but use of these has been very limited to date and therefore it is proposed that these be made available to RLD as detailed in Section 4 below.
- 3.3 Currently community use of the centre remains positive with a number of community groups continuing to use the centre, including the Dance School (4 evenings each week and Saturday), Yoga and HYPE Youth Club. A new group has started to book the centre on a monthly basis and children's parties are proving popular with the local community and this type of hire is likely to grow in the future with bookings already secured for 2019. Reach has also recruited a local resident to the position of centre caretaker to open the centre for community groups and to maintain it in good order for the benefit of all users and this arrangement is working well.
- 3.4 RLD has promoted a number of events which the local community has been invited to and engaged with including the inaugural 'open day', a 'summer sports day' for service users, a 'Christmas Carol' concert, Diabetes screening, a fundraising event for a local resident of the estate and a community litter pick by the Women's Group linked to the Council's Cleaner, Safer Greener initiative. Furthermore RLD has use of the centre as the operational base for the Hawtonville 'Day of Action' in March.
- 3.5 There have been a number of issues in respect of HYPE's use of the centre where incidents have caused some nuisance and disruption to the operation of the centre. Incidents are recorded and dealt with by the Leader of HYPE and RLD and Council officers will continue to work collaboratively with HYPE to address these concerns to limit the adverse impacts on all parties.
- 3.6 In addition the building and some community users of the centre have experienced some low level anti-social behaviour from young people despite the presence of CCTV outside the centre. As a consequence the Council has initiated a multi-agency response through the Council's Community Safety Team and the Safer Neighbourhood Group to deal with the issues. This will include improved CCTV coverage of the centre specifically and more visible patrols from the neighbourhood police team with support from the Council's wardens, ASB Officer and Newark and Sherwood Homes Neighbourhood Team.
- 3.7 Notwithstanding the above, overall the project to date has been a success and the community has welcomed RLD. There have been no specific episodes of hate crime/bullying/harassment towards the individuals that use the service indeed Reach has gained some new service users from the Hawtonville estate.

3.8 Furthermore through partnership working with RLD and other community groups and organisations it is anticipated that the project will continue to thrive and become an integral part of the community where the centre will remain a local hub for engagement and demonstrate the centre's value as a well utilised community resource.

4.0 Use of First Floor Space

4.1 The current arrangements in place through the tenancy agreement between RLD and the Council is that in addition to areas of the ground floor the first floor space at the centre comprising of two small rooms is retained for community use and this is the current operating model.

4.2 However, there has been little interest in the use of the upstairs spaces by the community since RLD relocated. One of the reasons why they are not particularly attractive is that they do not have any designated welfare facilities such as running water and toilets as these are located on the ground floor and behind a safeguarding door given the vulnerabilities of the service users who attend the centre during the day.

4.3 However, Reach Care, an operating arm of the overall charity, which administers and manages service user's personal budgets, would be willing to relocate to the centre as the space would be perfect for its requirements. If this were to be agreed there would be various benefits including:-

- Better utilisation of space which is currently greatly under used,
- Improvements to the upstairs space funded by RLD such as new windows and improved ventilation,
- An occupier that is part of the RLD charity so no issues of accessing welfare facilities or safeguarding concerns as all staff are suitably cleared through the Disclosure and Barring Service,
- Improved operational connectivity through co-location of RLD and Reach Care,
- Co-location will improve the overall sustainability of RLD and enable it to support service users who are vulnerable and,
- RLD will be better placed to continue to support community access to and use of the community areas during evenings and weekends.

5.0 Proposal

5.1 That Leisure and Environment Committee note the content of the progress report detailing activities and services delivered to the community to date and give consideration to the proposal to offer RLD use of the first floor space for use by Reach Care to run conterminously with the current three year tenancy agreement.

6.0 Equalities Implications

6.1 This is primarily a progress report for update and information purposes only and has no anticipated equalities impact in respect of the various protected characteristic groups. RLD is an organisation that delivers services to disabled adults. It also offers community access

during evenings and at weekends to the wider community and it is not anticipated that the extension of the tenancy agreement will have any adverse impact in this regard.

7.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

- 7.1 Day to day operational costs including NNDR, utilities, administration and cleaning staff, minor repairs and statutory health and safety management costs are now the responsibility of RLD and this is offset by it retaining income from user groups subject to an agreed equitable share of any surplus income over expenditure as recommended by Members and as defined within the lease agreement.
- 7.2 Major repairs and renewals associated with the centre remain with the District Council as landlord and such costs will be managed appropriately and contained within the existing budget provision for the Council's neighbourhood centres.

8.0 Comments of Business Manager – Financial Services (FIN18-19/1791)

- 8.1 The agreement passports all day to day running costs of the Centre on to RLD, but also allows them to generate the income made by the centre. The impact of this on the budget is zero in terms of the forfeited income against the reduced expenditure. The Council retains liability for the major repairs and renewals for which it currently has budget provision for 2018/19.
- 8.2 There is, within the agreement, a clause relating to a split of the profits made within the facility. Any income from community use made in excess of all expenditure incurred in running the facility will be split equally between the Council and RLD.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION that:

- a) **the Committee note the content of the progress report detailing activities and services delivered to the community to date; and**
- b) **approve the proposal to offer RLD the upstairs space for use by Reach Care to run conterminously with the current three year tenancy agreement.**

Reason for Recommendations

To monitor and review the operational management and sustainability of the Hawtonville Community Centre by RLD.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Andy Hardy, Community Projects Manager, on 01636 655708.

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