

LEISURE & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

21 JANUARY 2020

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 & Sherwood, through the granting of a 3 year tenancy agreement.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Leisure & 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 At its meeting of 26 June 2018 Leisure & Environment considered an interim progress report and agreed the following recommendation:-

- That Leisure & 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 member update of how the relationship between RLD, its use of the building and its engagement and relationship with the community has developed after 18 months of occupation.

3.0 The Current Overview

3.1 RLD has now firmly established its operational base at the centre and is recognised as an integral part of the local community. The centre provides a safe, secure and inviting space for service users and the atmosphere at the centre during service user facing time (10.00 am to 12.00pm and 1.00pm to 3.00pm Monday to Friday) is vibrant. Friday nights are also popular with many service users regularly attending the social evenings, which run every Friday from 6.00pm to 8.30pm. This is a clear demonstration that service users see the centre as a place where they want to spend their social time. This is a real testimony to the

relationship that exists between staff and volunteers and service users but equally because the building is perfect for such activities.

- 3.2 In 2018/19 face to face service user hours for the 120 service users was 23,827 and this figure is likely to increase in 19/20 as further enquiries are received from potential service users which will further enhance the sustainability and reputation of RLD. Service users use their personal budgets and elect to attend sessions that interest them from the programme delivered by the RLD team, which are designed to teach life skills and promote independence. In addition to increasing the number of service users, current service users are increasing their engagement with the programme and attending more sessions which is also increasing the number of supported hours delivered.
- 3.3 Since relocating to the centre, two service users have moved to the Hawtonville area and a further two are actively seeking accommodation in the locality so that so that they are closer to the centre. Furthermore two new members of staff have been recruited to support the service users, one of which is local resident. This appointment is in addition to the site caretaker/cleaner who also lives on the estate.
- 3.4 The ground floor of the centre is 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. The first floor rooms are now occupied by Reach Care following improvements including the installation of air conditioning, improved security, decoration and new carpeting funded by Reach Care and this arrangement is working well, and has brought largely redundant space back in to use thereby contributing to a more sustainable operating model. It is also worth noting that Reach Care have achieved an 'Outstanding' rating as a domiciliary care provider by the Quality Care Commission (CQC) which places it in the top 3% of providers nationally.
- 3.5 Currently community use of the centre remains positive with a number of community groups continuing to use the centre, including the Dance School (2 evenings each week and Saturday) and Yoga. A fitness session will restart shortly and children's party bookings remain popular with the local community and are growing gradually. Recently the centre was the focus of a Prince's Trust community project, which involved painting some of the rooms and works to the outside area to improve the appearance of the centre and grant funding was secured from the BNA Charitable Trust to replace the stage curtains. In addition Reach has been granted a 'Right To Occupy' the allotment site on Eton Avenue as a part of its day-care offer and has plans to develop the site more fully if a longer term lease can be secured.
- 3.6 Although RLD has reported a reduction in the levels of anti-social behaviour (asb) following a change in operating procedures and improved CCTV provision there are still some challenges with a small number of young people. However, RLD will continue to monitor the situation and liaise with the Council, its partners and the community to further reduce the indents of anti-social behaviour around the centre to maintain a safer environment for all.

4.0 Proposal

4.1 That Leisure & Environment Committee note the content of the report and the progress made by RLD following its first 18 months of occupancy of the Hawtonville Community Centre following its relocation in April 2018 as part of a three-year tenancy agreement.

5.0 Equalities Implications

5.1 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 tenancy agreement will have any adverse impact in this regard.

6.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

6.1 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. As can be seen from the report community costs were greater than income generated during the first year of occupation.

6.2 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.

7.0 Financial Implications (FIN19-20/6415)

7.1 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 2019/20.

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.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

That Leisure & Environment Committee note the content of the progress report detailing activities and services delivered to the community through Reach Learning Disability's occupation and management of the Hawtonville Community Centre in 2019/20.

Reason for Recommendation

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, Health Improvement and Community Relations Manager, on 01636 655708.

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