

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture & Sport
DATE	15 September 2011
DIRECTOR	Annette Bruton
TITLE OF REPORT	Update on Implementation of Budget Decision - Reduce Communities Team
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/11/062

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides a further update on the implementation of the decision to reduce the costs of the Communities team by £1.4million in 2011/12 and provisionally by a further £1million in 2012/13.

This includes an update on the reduction of the staffing provision within the service and an update on the progress towards the move of Community Learning Centres to leased centre status.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Notes the progress in relation to the appointment of staff to the new structure, and the reduction of the overall workforce.
- b) Notes the progress in relation to moving community learning centres to leased centre status, and agree recommendations in relation to the following centres:
 - I. Rosemount Community Centre – officers to report back to a future committee on negotiations with Arts Development, Arts Education, City Moves and Peacock Visual Arts about potentially being based in this building along with the Community Centre and potentially other public bodies.
 - II. Cults Primary School Community Rooms – to cease operating formally as a community centre and instead to be managed by the school for school and community use as required.
 - III. Loirston Community Wing – to cease operating formally as a community centre and instead to be managed by the school for school and community use as required.
 - IV. To agree that no further progress will be made at the current time on developing a new community youth facility on the Hillylands site, and that the site be declared surplus to Education, Culture and Sport's

requirements, and to refer this point to the Finance and Resources Committee 29 September 2011 in order that this property can be declared surplus to Council requirements and be incorporated in marketing for disposal with the adjoining former Burnside Centre to maximise value.

- V. Subject to Torry Community Learning Centre being declared surplus to requirements and once disposed of, to agree that the associated buildings costs are at be used for the delivery of youth development and adult learning within the Torry area.
- c) To approve the virement of £190,000 from this years sports budget to a communities budget to fund transitional grants for Management Committees transferring to leased centre status as set out in section 3.3 within the report.
- d) To note that the model Management Agreement complies with a decision taken at the Finance and Resources Committee on 17 June 2011, but in doing so does not comply with the Council's current Following the Public Pound requirements.
- e) To note the proposed model Lease, Constitution and Management Agreement as per appendices C, E & G, and that the responsibility for finalising these documents is delegated to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Asset Management and Head of Communities, Culture & Sport.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Budget Position

The Council decision on 10 February 2011 was to reduce the budget for an Integrated Communities team by £1.6million in 2011/12 and by £2.4million in 2012/13.

At the current time, the service is on target to deliver within the available budget for 2011/12 and projected budget for 2012/13.

3.2 Fixed building costs

Annual revenue costs, met by EC&S Revenue Budgets, for existing and proposed leased centres is approximately £1.5million per year. (This figure does not include development grants and other services costs).

3.3 Grants for leased centres

Leased centres currently receive an annual development grant of £10,565 per annum. To assist Management Committees of centres which are to become leased, the Education, Culture and Sport Committee approved a transition grant to be made available to these committees based on a pro-rata equivalent of the maximum development grant.

This fund has not been budgeted for in this financial year, however there is a projected budget underspend in a Sports Budget for this financial year of £190,000. Officers recommend that this budget is transferred to a

community's budget for the purposes of funding the agreed transition grants. As this virement is from one service budget to another (both within the Education, Culture & Sport Service), the Council's Financial Regulations require it to be approved by a service committee.

3.4 State Aid Implications

At this stage, it is considered unlikely that there will be any State Aid implications in relation to the above, however if any implications arise, these will be reported to the appropriate committee.

4. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Personnel Implications**

The budget decision has resulted in a requirement to reduce the existing staffing resource by approximately 67%. The budget available to deliver front line adult learning and youth development activities through tutors and sessional staff has been reduced by approximately 83%.

The reduction in the workforce is being delivered through the implementation of the Council's VS/ER policy and 110 applications as part of this process have been supported. 50 staff have been matched to 39 fte posts in the new team structure. At the time of writing this report, 15 individuals have been unsuccessful in being matched to a post within the new structure and have not applied for VS/ER. Work is currently ongoing to redeploy these individuals into suitable alternative employment within the Council.

The review of required tutors and sessional staff is ongoing, however is anticipated to result in further Voluntary Severance/ Early Retirements.

4.2 **Property Implications**

There are 27 community centre properties owned by Aberdeen City Council and previously managed by Community Learning and Development to deliver community learning and development activities. The budget decisions will result in these facilities, or the programmes for these facilities becoming externally managed. A breakdown of the affected properties and recommendations in relation to each is attached at appendix A.

In line with the budget decision to move all centres to leased status or equivalent, there are no staff with Head of Establishment responsibilities within the new structure. However, until leases and management agreements are signed up to by Management Committees, the legal responsibility for the operation of these buildings remains with the Council. Officers have therefore put in place temporary "Head of Establishment" arrangements during the transition period until these contractual documents are in place. It is noted that officers from within the Communities Team, and Head Teachers who have

agreed to take on these additional responsibilities have done so on a voluntary basis (i.e. they are not contractually obliged to do so).

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 Management Committees require to have a constitution in place and Council officers have prepared a model constitution to assist in this process.

4.3.2 The relationship between the Management Committees and the Council will be managed via a Lease in relation to the responsibilities in relation to the building (stand alone centres only), and a Management Agreement setting out the responsibilities in relation to the services that are being delivered from the community centre in return for the use of the premises and the development grant (for all centres.)

4.3.3 Procurement

For the Council to determine not to tender for the leasing or management of programme of community centres may require a suspension of Standing Orders. Each case would require to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4.3.4 Management Committee Funds

External legal advice has been sought in relation to the ownership of Management Committee Funds. The legal opinion is that the funds belong to the Management Committee but are held on behalf of it by the Council. These funds are currently administered through the Council's financial systems, which require extensive support of Council staff to administer. Given the reduction in staff, this support is no longer available. Officers are now in the process of making arrangements to transfer these funds to external bank accounts. To ensure appropriate governance arrangements, during the transition period, administration of these bank accounts will require the signatories of an Office Bearer of the Management Committee and a Council Officer.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

This section will highlight some of the major milestones that are being progressed in order to deliver on the budget decision.

5.1 Development and delivery of re-engineered service.

The financial decision has reduced the budgeted funding available for staff, including Community Learning & Development, Community Training and Economic Development, Schools Work Experience and Neighbourhood Community Planning Staff by approximately 67%.

A new management and operational structure has been developed and approximately 150 matching interviews took place during June 2011, to posts within the new structure. 50 staff have been matched to 39 FTE posts in the new team structure.

Staff were also given the opportunity to apply for Voluntary Severance or Early Retirement and 110 applications have been supported. This equates to 44 FTE, 97 individual staff members, 1,583 collective years of service. (Note that there were a significant number of vacancies within the Service at the start of the process.) Most of these affected staff have now left the organisation.

15 individuals who did not apply for Voluntary Severance or Early Retirement were unsuccessful in the matching process. Work is currently ongoing to redeploy these individuals into suitable alternative vacancies within the organisation.

The review of required tutors and sessional staff is ongoing, and it is anticipated that this process will result in further Voluntary Severance/ Early Retirements.

5.2 Move centres to leased centre status.

5.2.1 There are currently 51 Community Centre type facilities throughout the city, which are owned by the Council. The current routine costs for servicing these facilities amounts to some £1.5million per year. Many of these buildings will require significant repair and maintenance over the next 5 – 10 years.

5.2.2 Twenty-four of these centres already have a lease in place. These existing leases are varied, with many being beyond their initial lease term and therefore being renewed on an annual basis under tacit relocation. Once a standard lease and Management Agreement is required, these will replace the existing leases where these are ready for renewal.

5.2.3 Twenty-seven of these centres are currently classed as Community Learning Centres. An evaluation of each of these centres has taken place and recommendations for each are set out in Appendix A.

5.2.4 Torry Community Learning Centre

The Education, Culture & Sport Committee on 2 June 2011, agreed “that officers seek to locate the current groups within Torry Community Learning Centre to other suitable local facilities, in order to facilitate the closure of that facility.”

Groups have now been relocated to other suitable alternative venues. The facility has now been formally secured and there is another paper on the agenda for this committee that recommends that this facility is now declared surplus to requirements.

In the Torry area there is evidence that there is a requirement for additional learning and development opportunities:

- The latest Skills Development Scotland, School Leaver follow up data for Aberdeen City (2009/10 follow up) indicates that, 13.4% of those pupils leaving Torry Academy went into Higher education compared to a city average of 35.8% . Within the MCMC group, Torry had an average of 2.7% who were unemployed and not seeking work compared to an average of 1.3% citywide. The rate for those unemployed and seeking work was 26.8% in Torry compared to 11.1% city wide
- Figures from Job Centre Plus indicated that the claimant rate in Torry has risen from 163 in June 2010, a rate of 4.8%, to 191 in June 2011, a rate of 5.7%.
- In Tullos Hill, the claimant rate has also increased from 196 in June 2010, which was a rate of 5.9%, to 230 in June 2011, a rate of 6.9%. The Aberdeen City average is 2.4%

The closure and subsequent disposal of Torry Community Learning Centre would free up approximately £30,000 per annum that is currently spent on buildings costs (heating, lighting etc.) It is recommended that if the Finance and Resources Committee agree to dispose of this building, that once disposed of, these budgets are re-allocated to further develop targeted interventions for Young People to enable robust support at the transition from school into work. This would build upon the work already developed around the Toolkit for Progress Model, which seeks to develop the individual's employability capabilities and skills. This includes working with local employers to arrange tailored work placements and offering young people access to Scottish Qualification Awards Employability Units, which can accredit their skills in the workplace.

5.2.5 Hillylands Centre

Further to the closure of the Summerhill Centre in 2010, it had been planned that the Mastrick Young People's project would relocate to a new development at Hillylands. Since that time, recent budget decisions have resulted in a significant reduction in the number of staff available to deliver the service. It is recommended that the development of this proposed new community youth centre is not progressed for the following reasons:

- Due to the severely restricted remaining staff numbers available within the service, continuing with the development of this new facility will disproportionately negatively impact on Community Learning and Development youth work that can be carried out in other parts of the city.
- Since the closure of Summerhill, City Wardens have reported little noticeable impact in anti-social behaviour in that area of the city.
- Local residents are against the development, and have compiled a 500 name petition supporting their position.

- Mastrick Young Peoples Project has continued to operate in that local area in the absence of a dedicated centre.
- There are other local community facilities which are suitable for the provision of youth work, including Northfield Community Centre, Mastrick Community Centre, Cummings Park Flat, Sheddocksley Sports Centre, streets, local churches, etc
- The recently completed audit on Community Centres has identified that Aberdeen has significantly more Community Centres per head of population than our comparators.
- Revenue funding for this centre is not currently budgeted for.
- Asset Management are currently marketing the site of the adjacent Burnside Centre, and the potential to incorporate the Hillylands Centre site may help make this a more attractive proposition for sale.

5.2.6 Cummings Park Flat, Tilly Flat & Torry Learning Hoose

Officers have reviewed the suitability of these community flats to operate as leased centres and taken account of concerns raised by young people at Tilly Flat regarding their capacity to operate as a leased centre. The nature and size of these facilities is not suitable for income generation. At the current time, it is the recommendation of officers that leases in relation to these community flats are not progressed.

Alternatively, officers propose that Adult Learning Co-ordinators are based in the flats. This will provide a local hub for adult learning including numeracy, literacies and English for Speakers of Other Languages, as well as youth development activities and capacity building activities. Specifically the flats will provide the following:

Cummings Park Flat: This has received Fairer Scotland Funding for this financial year to employ a dedicated worker to co ordinate a range of services, which have been identified as meeting the needs of the local community. The Coordinator will be supported by an Adult Learning /Literacies co-ordinator and a youth worker. The Co-ordinator will be responsible for community Capacity building and, with the assistance of the Enterprise Officer from the Lifelong Learning team, consider how activities can be sustained and developed

Tilly Flat: It is intended that two 10 hour Adult Learning /Literacy Co-ordinators posts will be based in this flat. They will provide services including those linked to the fairer Scotland funding for literacy provision in that geographic area. A local management group has expressed an interest in running the learning programme within this flat, and officers are negotiating how this model may operate.

Torry Learning House: Two Adult Learning /Literacy co-ordinators will be based in this property to enable the delivery of the Fairer Scotland funded Literacies programmes including the Healthwise initiative.

5.2.7 Rosemount Community Centre

The Rosemount Community Centre is a particularly large and complex building. The Rosemount Management Committee are of the opinion that they could not operate the centre as a community centre without some assistance. Officers are aware that there are number of arts organisations currently looking for alternative accommodation. These include the City Council's Arts Development, Arts Education and City Moves teams, and Peacock Visual Arts. Officers have commenced very early discussions with these services/ organisations as well as the Management Committee of Rosemount Community Centre, to establish whether Rosemount may be a suitable venue for all these organisations to co-locate, and if so, how such a model may operate.

Officers would intend to report back to a future committee on the progress of these discussions.

5.2.8 Cove Primary School Community Rooms and Loirston Community Wing

There are community rooms within Cove Primary School and Loirston Primary School that currently operate as Community Centres. Due to their size, and proximity to other, more substantial community provision, it is not recommended that these rooms continue to operate as formal community centres. Alternatively, it is proposed that these rooms are available for hire, for school or community use, through the Council's bookings and lettings system.

5.3 **Transitional Period**

5.3.1 Transition Grant

At the Education, Culture & Sport Meeting on 2 June 2011, and later ratified at the Finance and Resources Meeting on 16 June 2011, it was agreed "to provide Management Committees with a Transition Grant for 2011/12".

This will be made available to Management Committees on a monthly basis in advance, and is conditional upon Management Committees actively working towards signing up to take on the responsibility for their community centre.

Bank accounts have been set up for these Management Committees, which in the transitional period will require the signature of a Council officer and an officer bearer from the Management Committee (which will ensure appropriate accountability during the period until legal arrangements are in place.) Now that legal confirmation has been received in relation to Management Funds, these will be transferred to these accounts in due course.

5.3.2 Operation of centres during transitional period

Now that there are no staff with operational responsibility for running these centres, challenges are arising in relation to access, administration etc. In addition, until Leases/ Management Agreements are in place, the Council remains responsible for all activities within the centres.

In order to ensure appropriate accountability for the centres and their activities, members of the Communities staffing team and some Head Teachers, have agreed to take on Head of Establishment role, during this transition period, on a voluntary basis. This role is in addition to their substantive posts, and is not remunerated.

Administration and other operational responsibilities are being put in place through a range of different mechanisms, involving to varying degrees, Management Committees working in partnership with the Council.

5.3.3 Janitorial Services

Currently, janitorial and cleaning provision is available in most of the centres that are due to transfer, through the Council's Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure service.

Officers are seeking to develop a Service Level Agreement, which will see core janitorial services continue in Community Schools (in a similar way to 3Rs schools.) Once leases are in place, it would not be intended that janitorial services would be provided within Stand-alone centres. It is recommended that the resultant reduction in janitorial services requirements are converted into an annual bank of hours that can be used for activities such as Elected Members Surgeries and other activities as determined by the Council, outwith core hours. This would ensure that arrangements for Community Schools and 3Rs Schools were equitable.

5.3.4 Feedback from "Transition" Management Committees

Management Committees who are progressing towards leased status have fed back a number of areas where they feel they require support. These are detailed at Appendix H. Some of these issues are being addressed by officers as follows:

- A comprehensive ongoing training programme is being rolled out for volunteers on Management Committees, and continues to be developed in light of feedback.
- A handbook of operational guidance and policies is being prepared for Management Committees to adopt, amend as they wish.
- The opportunity for procurement through the Council's Central Procurement Unit will also continue to be made available.
- Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurance is being made available through the Council's Insurance scheme at reasonable rates.

Management Committees have also asked the Council to indemnify individuals on Committees against financial risk. Other than the insurances available to these individuals, or through the form of body they choose to put in place, it is the advice of officers that there would be a high risk to the council to put in place such a liability cover.

5.4 **Model Lease, Management Agreement and Constitution**

There has been a significant piece of work over the last few years to develop a standard lease and management agreement for all leased centres that meets the requirements of the Council and is acceptable to Management Committees. A standard set of agreements is required in order to deal with the current situation whereby different types of arrangement have led to an inequitable situation between centres.

At the Education, Culture & Sport Meeting on 2 June 2011, it was agreed “to delegate responsibility for finalising [the Citywide model lease, management agreement and constitution] to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Asset Management and Head of Communities, Culture & Sport.” It was further agreed that “once approved, all Community Centres will be subject to the Management Agreement and Constitution and that all standalone centres will be subject to the agreed lease.”

5.4.1 Model Lease

The proposed model lease is attached at Appendix C.

5.4.2 Model Constitution

The proposed model constitution is attached at Appendix G.

5.4.3 Management Agreement

The proposed model Management Agreement is attached at Appendix E.

It is highlighted to elected members that this agreement implements the decision at the Finance and Resources Committee on 17 June 2011:

1. To confirm that it will be a requirement of Inchgarth Management Committee to agree the following:
 - To provide the Council with Monthly Accounts
 - To provide minutes of its meetings to the Council liaison officer
 - To provide quarterly attendance figures
 - To provide an annual independently verified copy of its accounts as per the terms of its constitution
 - That the Council liaison officer may attend any management committee meeting of their choice
2. That this provides the basis for negotiations with management committees for 3Rs buildings.

However in doing so, the Management Agreement for 3Rs buildings does not comply with the Council’s Following the Public Pound Code of Practice, for those assets cost more than £75,000 per annum. The Council’s policy and procedures for Following the Public Pound are currently under review.

The Management Agreement incorporates recommendations from the recent Audit inspection of Community Centres. (Note: This report will be considered at the Audit and Risk Committee on 20 September. It is anticipated that the audit report will be referred to this committee in due course.)

The Management Agreement requires Management Committees to run a varied Recreational Programme that meets the needs of the local community within Community Centres; however it does not require them to deliver Community Learning and Development Programmes. Instead, the Management Agreement identifies a set number of hours per centre, for Community Learning and Development Activities. Council officers will review the learning offering within each community to ensure appropriate lifelong learning pathways are in place to meet the needs of individuals within communities. The learning provision, delivered by partners (which may include Management Committees), the Council or other organisations, will take place within Community Centres during these set hours (as well as in other suitable venues and locations in the community.)

Members should note that some of the sections within the Management Agreement are required by the Council's Standing Orders. To remove any of these sections would require Committee approval for the Standing Order to be dis-applied.

5.4.4 Checklist of Responsibilities

The signed legal documents have to be legally robust and detailed. However in order to assist Management Committees in understanding their obligations and the obligations of the Council, officers intend to develop a short checklist. Proposed Checklists in respect of the lease and Management Agreement are attached at Appendices D & F.

5.5 Community Learning and Development Activities

The reduction in budget and staffing has necessitated a comprehensive review of activities supported and delivered through the service. This review and priority assessment is still ongoing. The key priority for this financial year will be supporting the transition arrangements in relation to community centres moving to leased centre status, and building capacity within Management Committees and volunteers. Resultantly, the capacity for the development of Youth Development and Adult learning and literacies work will be minimal over the coming months. There will be the capacity to maintain key services including those related to schools Work Experience and the Curriculum for Excellence and those funded via the other sources including the NHS and Fairer Scotland fund

An initial indication of the activities that have been stopped at the current time is attached at appendix B.

Into the future, a key work priority for the service will be the evaluation of learning and development opportunities provided by a range of partners and organisations within particular communities, with a view to identifying overlaps and gaps for pathways through, and closing the gap within, the learning community. Where there are overlaps, officers will seek to encourage partners and providers to re-direct their resource. Where there are gaps, officers will work with partners and providers to fill these gaps, including delivering specific learning and development opportunities to children, youths, families, adults and vulnerable learners.

5.5.1 HMIE

There is a Follow Up inspection taking place in the Harlaw Area from 14 – 16 September. This inspection will be the first inspection to take place since the changes in structure have been implemented.

6. **IMPACT**

This report relates to the Combined Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement as follows:

- People of all ages take an active part in their own learning to achieve their full potential Learning and training is appropriate and accessible to learner's needs
- Children and young people access positive learning environments and develop their skills, confidence and self esteem to the fullest potential
- Children, young people and their families/carers are involved in decisions that affect them. Their voices heard and they play an active and responsible role in their communities
- Educational attainment in Aberdeen is continuously sustained and improved
- School leavers enter positive destination of employment, training or further and higher education with a focus on and support for young people who require More Choices and More Chances
- Children and young people actively participate in their communities and have optimum involvement in decision making
- All children, young people and their families have access to high quality services when required and services provide timely, proportionate and appropriate response that meeting the needs of children and young people within Getting it Right for Every Child, (GIRFEC) requirements
- Improve the quality of life in our most deprived areas
- Citizens are increasingly more active in their communities regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, where they live, disability or faith/religion/belief and contribute to 'active citizenship'
- Develop pathways to participation which enhance the diversity of local representation at and engagement with regional, national and international arts, heritage and sporting events
- Our public services are consistently high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

Public – This report will be of interest to the public, as the recommendations will impact on services delivered throughout the city.

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been completed in respect of this budget decision.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

17/6/11 Finance & Resources Committee, [check title of report]

2/6/11 Education, Culture & Sport Committee, Update on Implementation of Budget Decision - Reduce Communities Team

24/3/11 Education, Culture & Sport Committee, Implementation of Budget Decision – Reduce Communities Team

8. **REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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APPENDICES – THESE APPENDICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW IN THE MEMBERS LOUNGE

Appendix A: Community Learning Centres, transition arrangements and longer term recommendations

Appendix B: Ceased Community Learning & Development work

Appendix C: Model Lease

Appendix D: Lease Checklist of Responsibilities

Appendix E: Model Management Agreement

Appendix F: Management Agreement Checklist of Responsibilities

Appendix G: Model Constitution

Appendix H: Issues raised by Transition Management Committees

Appendix J: Feedback from Management Committees on proposed Model Lease