
Cabinet

30 August 2016

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – Councillor Maton
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Councillor Ruane

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Connecting Communities Phase 2 - addendum

Is this a key decision?

No – although this matter affects all wards, as the proposals are for a period of consultation, the matter is not deemed to be a key decision.

Executive Summary:

Further to publication of the original report, targeted engagement has continued in relation to the outline proposals. Engagement has taken place with people and groups who have an interest in the future of the service areas directly affected by the proposed changes, including library provision, children's centres, nursery provision and youth services.

This report summarises further engagement activity and feedback received in the period since the Cabinet report was prepared (8 August 2016).

Some revisions to the figures in Appendix D (Equality and Community Analysis) have been made for accuracy, as the figures in the ECA did not reconcile to the main report. Figures in the main report are accurate.

Recommendations:

As detailed in the Cabinet report.

List of Appendices included:

None

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Connecting Communities Phase 2 - addendum

1. Context (or background)

1.1 Section 1.6 of the Cabinet report described the targeted engagement that had taken place up to 8 August 2016, following publication of the outline proposals for phase 2, and summarised some of the emerging themes of the feedback received.

1.2 Engagement activity has continued since that date and this addendum outlines engagement activity between 8 August and 24 August 2016.

1.3 Further engagement activity

1.3.1 Engagement activity between 8 August and 24 August 2016 has included:

- Engagement with young people who are members of six of the youth centres potentially affected (see 1.3.4 below), involving around 100 young people.
- 2 further staff lunchtime briefings, open to all Council staff, attended by circa 30 staff (in addition to c.85 that had attended previous briefings)
- 'Local conversation' meetings with people interested in working with us to support delivery of the library service in Aldermoor library, Allesley Park library and Earlsdon library. These were attended by a total of around 70 individuals, plus councillors and council officers.
- Initial meetings with specific stakeholders in Hillfields and Finham.

1.3.2 Note that meetings are scheduled to take place in September in Wyken (Caludon Castle), Coundon, Canley, Jubilee Crescent, Tile Hill and Cheylesmore and further conversations are being arranged in Hillfields and Finham.

1.3.3 Young people are expressing their views about their involvement in youth work and the phase 2 proposals. For example, at a flipchart session in Wood End young people were committing to making a documentary about what Youth Services do and how it has affected them. A young person in Canley started a petition, while other members there contributed their views to a 'Brick Wall of Impact' to show what outcomes have resulted from their involvement in the universal youth work they have been attending. Young people at Jubilee Youth Club in Radford and On Target Youth Centre in Spon End designed posters to show what a youth group means to them.

1.3.2 Signatures have continued to be added to the petition registered with Coventry City Council and the two further petitions registered with change.org, as described in paragraphs 1.6.4 to 1.6.8 of the Cabinet report. The current position (24 August 2016) is as follows:

- The save Coventry libraries petition, registered with the City Council, now has 17 signatures (see <https://myaccount.coventry.gov.uk/Petitions>)
- The change.org youth service petition now has 249 signatures (see <https://www.change.org/p/coventry-city-council-stop-coventry-youth-centres-from-being-closed-down-and-turned-into-family-hubs>)
- The change.org libraries service petition now has 418 signatures (see <https://www.change.org/p/coventry-city-council-save-coventry-libraries>)

1.3.3 At the end of the initial engagement period, the key themes emerging in the feedback received can be summarised as follows:

Libraries

- The valuable role that libraries play in early help for families and communities has been highlighted, with a suggestion that the library proposals should be developed in coordination with the family hubs proposals.
- There is a clear willingness from local groups and organisations to engage in conversations and explore the possibility of greater community involvement in delivery of local library services.
- Community representatives are seeking further information about what the model of community-led library provision looks like in practice and the respective responsibilities of the council and those who might deliver community-led library provision. There are doubts from some about the feasibility of community-led libraries.
- Concern has been expressed about the uneven distribution across the City of the proposed provision.

Family Hubs

- Many view the idea of bringing different services together in one place as a positive development and a common sense approach, which will improve access to services in local communities. Opportunities have been identified to connect a wide range of different services and activities in this way.
- A number of people have suggested that the age range covered by family hubs should be extended beyond 0-19, with some proposing that facilities could be made available to older people, with a wider range of community services brought together in the hubs.
- There is a view that family hubs should be community spaces, available for longer opening hours to ensure comprehensive and responsive services and that best value is achieved from the facilities.
- Questions have been asked about the proposed locations for the family hubs and whether they are in the right places. This will be explored further in the consultation period.

Youth Service

- There is some concern about reliance on volunteers to provide universal youth activities.
- Young people articulated the positive benefits of the open access youth groups they attend and the potential negatives of these not being available to them in the future. In some of the areas of highest need, young people explained the personal and social benefits they gained from attending youth clubs and voiced clear opposition to proposals to end these services. Youth centres are valued as a safe place to go for young people and some have questioned what alternatives will be available.
- The view has been expressed that youth workers are already doing early help / preventative work, and that it is important to retain the opportunity for detached youth work and outreach within the future model.

Overall

- Many suggestions have been made of groups / organisations / communities that the council should be talking to during the consultation period, and of ways in which that consultation could best be undertaken to ensure maximum reach.
- Clarification is sought regarding building ownership and responsibilities on community groups and volunteers taking on delivery of services. The council is developing its response to this, as outlined in appendix B of the Cabinet report.

- Various opportunities for drawing in other sources of funding to support the proposals have been highlighted, including from statutory and private sector organisations and drawing on fundraising expertise from within the voluntary sector.
- There are some concerns about the sustainability of volunteer-run services and the capacity within communities to provide volunteers.
- There is concern from staff and communities about the potential job losses resulting from the proposals.
- Various questions have been raised about the timescales for implementation of proposals, with some seeking clarity as to when they will be impacted and others concerned as to whether proposed timescales are realistic to achieve community delivery of local services.

1.4 Amendments to appendix D

1.4.1 Information in the main report and Appendices A, B, C and E is accurate. Since the publication of the papers the following have been identified in Appendix D (Equality and Consultation Analysis) that did not reconcile back to the main report and Appendix A. For accuracy and completeness the following revisions have been made to Appendix D (ECA).

Section of Cabinet Report	Original ECA	Revision to ECA
Question 7 (staffing information) in the ECA for 'partnership libraries' (p.52 of appendix D)		
Canley	1.89 FTE	2.03 FTE
Aldermoor	1.76 FTE	1.80 FTE
Jubilee	3.58 FTE	3.78 FTE
Allesley Park	2.13 FTE	2.30 FTE
Question 7 (staffing information) in the ECA for 'community-led libraries' (p.65 of appendix D)		
Cheylesmore	1.86 FTE	1.34 FTE
Caludon	1.74 FTE	1.98 FTE
Coundon	3.33 FTE	2.19 FTE
Finham	3.07 FTE	2.42 FTE
Earlsdon	8.07 FTE	7.07 FTE
Visitor figures for Allesley Park library in the ECA for 'partnership libraries' (page 43 of appendix D)	In 2015/16 there were 137,551 visits to Allesley Park Community Library, which was 1% down on the number of visits in 2014/15 (139,142). Allesley Park Community remains in the top ten most visited libraries in the city (ranked 3 out of 17 libraries). <i>Note: figures for another library were duplicated in error.</i>	In 2015/16 there were 33,052 visits to Allesley Park Community Library, which was 12.4% down on the number of visits in 2014/15 (37,734). Allesley Park Community Library is currently ranked 12 out of 17 libraries in the city for number of visits in 2015/16. <i>As noted above the figures in the main report and Appendix A are accurate.</i>

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

As detailed in the Cabinet report.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 The outcome of engagement to date is the subject of this addendum report.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 Public consultation on delivery of savings required for 2017/18 will begin on 12 September 2016 for a period of circa 90 days, ending on 12 December 2016.

5. Comments from Executive Director, Resources

5.1 Financial implications

The financial comments of the original report are still relevant to this addendum report.

5.2 Legal implications

The legal comments of the original report are still relevant to this addendum report.

6. Other implications

The implications outlined in the original report are still relevant to this addendum report.

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