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**To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017**

**Subject: Connecting Communities Phase 1 - Implementation Report (February 2017)**

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## **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 This note provides Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee with an update on the implementation of Connecting Communities Phase 1 proposals. The report outlines the approach taken and progress to date.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are recommended to:

- 1) Note the implementation report on the Connecting Communities Phase 1 proposals and identify any recommendations to Cabinet.

## **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 More detailed information about the programme and each of the proposals can be found on the City Council's webpages at [www.coventry.gov.uk/connectingcommunities](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/connectingcommunities).
- 3.2 The consultation process on these Phase 1 proposals commenced on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and ended on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.

## **4 Connecting Communities Phase 1 – Implementation Report (February 2017)**

- 4.1 The Connecting Communities Programme focuses on how services might be delivered differently in the communities and neighbourhoods where there is most need, within the resources that are available.
- 4.2 Connecting Communities Phase 1 comprised of 10 key proposals for the delivery of a £1.2 million saving. The target for 2016/17, set through the original City Centre First programme for 2016/17 was £1 million but proposals made to Cabinet in November 2015, exceeded this by £0.2 million.
- 4.3 A public consultation process on the 10 proposals took place between 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.
- 4.4 Final Phase 1 proposals, approved by Cabinet, were as follows:
- 1) For the Council to stop providing play activities at Edgewick and Eagle Street Play Centres and for the Council to lease the buildings to third party operators to be used for nursery provision for two, three and four year olds instead by September 2016.
  - 2) To end delivery of library services from the Arena Park Library facility by not renewing the lease and to continue engagement with Holbrooks Community Care Association (HCCA) about the potential delivery of a reduced library service to be provided in the HCCA building by September 2016.

- 3) To end delivery of library services by not renewing the lease from the current Willenhall Library facility and to continue engagement about the potential delivery of a reduced library service to be provided in the Hagard Centre building by September 2016.
- 4) To end the mobile library service by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016.
- 5) To cut the library media fund of £658,000 to £558,000 with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.
- 6) For Central Library to continue to open seven days per week, but to close one hour earlier on weekdays – closing at 7pm instead of 8pm by September 2016.
- 7) To close Caludon Castle, Earlsdon and Foleshill libraries on Wednesdays and close Stoke and Tile Hill on Sundays by September 2016. To agree in principle that Bell Green, Earlsdon and Foleshill libraries remain open on Sundays provided that officers are satisfied as to the viability of a mix of paid staff and volunteers operating the libraries on these days. In the event officers are not satisfied the question of whether the libraries should remain open on Sundays would be referred back to the Cabinet Member for Education.
- 8) Withdraw the youth services commissioning budget effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and continue to work with the community and voluntary sector to explore the best way that youth services for young people should be delivered across Coventry.
- 9) To close six public conveniences located outside the city centre from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, keeping open the two city centre public conveniences.
- 10) To enter into a lease with each of the community associations currently managing the community centres (six) within 12 months from approval of the proposal subject to variations to the approach specifically for Radford and Foleshill Community Centres.

## **5 Implementation Overview**

- 5.1 All proposals are on track to deliver the £1.2m savings target associated with Connecting Communities (Phase 1). **Appendix A** outlines delivery progress to date for each proposal following approval from Cabinet in February 2016. An update on any Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) impacts is also provided.
- 5.2 Learning from Connecting Communities Phase 1 implementation has informed Connecting Communities Phase 2 proposals, particularly in relation to ensuring that sufficient time is allowed for implementation of any proposed changes. Good, ongoing communication is required between all parties to embed the changes that result from a different way of delivering services.

## **6 Equalities**

- 6.1 Initial Equality Consultation Analysis (ECA) documents were produced prior to the start of the Phase 1 consultation process. Each proposal will be reviewed and updated 6-12 months after the relevant implementation dates to reflect any additional information received about the potential impact of the proposals; specifically on those groups of people with protected characteristics.

## **7 Timescales for Connecting Communities Phase 1**

- **7 December 2015 to 1 February 2016** – Consultation on proposals and savings
- **23 February 2016** – Cabinet decision on final recommendations following public consultation
- **April 2016** – Commence implementation
- **October 2016 onwards** – Post implementation reviews to be carried out (6-12 months after implementation)

## **8 List of Appendices included**

Appendix A: Phase 1 Implementation Overview

## **9 Other useful background papers**

Connecting Communities - Phase 1 Outcome of Consultation, Cabinet Report, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016  
[http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/41/community\\_and\\_living/2651/connecting\\_communities/10](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/41/community_and_living/2651/connecting_communities/10)

Connecting Communities Phase 2, Cabinet Report, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016

[http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/41/community\\_and\\_living/2651/connecting\\_communities/6](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/41/community_and_living/2651/connecting_communities/6)

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# Appendix A – Phase 1 Implementation Overview

**Proposal 1 – For the Council to stop providing play activities at Edgewick and Eagle Street Play Centres and for the Council to lease the buildings to third party operators to be used for nursery provision for two, three and four year olds instead by September 2016.**

a) Implementation Overview

The decision of the Council was implemented to end the Play Centre service and for nursery provision to commence.

The Play Centre service operated by the Council ceased on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016.

The nursery provider went into occupation of both premises under licence to carry out the works required for OFSTED whilst the terms of the leases were being agreed. Final completion of the leases took place, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017. The Early Years provision became operational on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

b) Equality Analysis

A 6 month post implementation review is scheduled to take place in July 2017.

**Proposal 2 – To end delivery of library services from the Arena Park Library facility by not renewing the lease and to continue engagement with Holbrooks Community Care Association (HCCA) about the potential delivery of a reduced library service to be provided in the HCCA building by September 2016.**

a) Implementation Overview

A Transition Fund award to HCCA has been approved and capital works have been completed to enabling the delivery of a partnership library service delivered with HCCA. The new community centre and library opened at the beginning of December 2016 and we continue to work together to create a service which reflects the needs of the community.

The Arena Park Library lease was handed back to Property Service in September 2016 and the lease has been terminated.

b) Equality Impacts

A 6 month post implementation review is scheduled to take place in early 2017.

**Proposal 3 – To end delivery of library services by not renewing the lease from the current Willenhall Library facility and to continue engagement about the potential delivery of a reduced library service to be provided in the Hagard Centre building by September 2016.**

a) Implementation Overview

The former Willenhall Library facility closed and, following building works on the new library space, the new service opened at the Hagard Centre on 23<sup>rd</sup> September. The official launch took place on 24<sup>th</sup> November. An article on Beacon can be found by clicking the link below:

[http://beacon.coventry.gov.uk/news/article/5639/willenhall\\_library-early\\_signs\\_encouraging](http://beacon.coventry.gov.uk/news/article/5639/willenhall_library-early_signs_encouraging).

The Willenhall Library lease was handed back to the Landlord in September 2016.

b) Equality Impacts

A 6 month post implementation review is scheduled to take place in early 2017.

**Proposal 4 – To end the mobile library service by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016.**

a) Implementation Overview

A plan was in place at the start of implementation for communication with users to facilitate notice of ending of the service and support for appropriate users to access alternatives.

The mobile library service ceased on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2016. This was followed by a period of decant and redistribution of stock.

b) Equality Impacts

Service Users

There has been no indication in the way of complaints or petitions since the implementation of the closure to suggest that impacts have been felt by the users of the Mobile Library Service.

The opening hours across the whole Library and Information Service, including the mobile library service equated to 761.3 hours per week, before the closure of the mobile library. The Mobile library had scheduled opening hours of 38.8 hours a week (excluding driving time).

The Council continues to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service for all persons, as library provision will still be available within Coventry.

Members of the public not able to visit a static library, for example frail older people, those who have physical disabilities or who have limited mobility are able to access the Coventry Home Library Service provided in partnership with Age UK Coventry. This service has capacity to take on additional demand and approximately 10 users have moved over from the mobile library service after been signposted to this service before the closure of the mobile library. Since the closure, the issue of e-books and e-audio books has continued to increase (For April to October up from 4,299 in 2015 to 4,792 in 2016) but this seems to be part of an ongoing trend rather than something we can attribute to the ceasing of the Mobile Library Service.

A key mitigation for the closure of the library service was the creation of the Council's Library Service Contact and Connect team. The key priorities of the team are to take a strategic view on meeting the needs of diversity across the city, to work outside of library buildings connecting with hard to reach communities. Initially their priorities are working at HCCA as the library develops, making contacts in Longford Ward, and assessing any fall out from Mobile Library cessation, developing tools to deliver a programme to support the diverse needs of people using libraries from other cultures.

Staff

The ending of the mobile library service affected 4.0 FTE contracts and the staffing reductions were made from across the service. It was proposed that where possible the impact of posts being deleted would be managed through voluntary redundancy/ early retirement, ending a number of temporary posts and the deletion of several vacant posts. No compulsory redundancies were made.

**Proposal 5 – To cut the library media fund of £658,000 to £558,000 with effect from 1 April 2016.**

a) Implementation Overview

The budget was cut with immediate effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

b) Equality Impacts

To date there have been no complaints received regarding the reduction in stock purchased and the issue of e-books and e-audio books are continuing to increase (for April to October up from 4,299 in 2015 to 4,792 in 2016) but this seems to be part of an ongoing trend rather than something we can attribute to a decrease in expenditure on physical stock.

The Contact and Connect team which was created as a mitigation to the closure of the mobile library service started work on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. Further information on this team can be found under proposal 4 above.

**Proposal 6 – For Central Library to continue to open seven days per week, but to close one hour earlier on weekdays – closing at 7pm instead of 8pm by September 2016.**

a) Implementation Overview

Central Library now closes at 7pm on weekdays.

Staff consultation was undertaken to introduce new rotas and shift patterns. New shift patterns commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. All staff are aware of their new rotas.

b) Equality Impacts

A 6 month post implementation review is scheduled to take place in early 2017.

**Proposal 7 – To close Caludon Castle, Earlsdon and Foleshill libraries on Wednesdays and close Stoke and Tile Hill on Sundays by September 2016. To agree in principle that Bell Green, Earlsdon and Foleshill libraries remain open on Sundays provided that officers are satisfied as to the viability of a mix of paid staff and volunteers operating the libraries on these days. In the event officers are not satisfied the question of whether the libraries should remain open on Sundays would be referred back to the Cabinet Member for Education.**

a) Implementation Overview

Opening hours at the libraries have been changed, as described above.

Staff consultation was undertaken to introduce new rotas and shift patterns. New shift patterns commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. All staff are aware of their new rotas.

Self-service machines were installed and the first operation of 'Self Service Sundays' was on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2016. The first volunteers have been recruited and work is now underway to increase volunteer numbers for Foleshill.

b) Equality Impacts

A 6 month post implementation review is scheduled to take place in early 2017.

**Proposal 8 – Withdraw the youth services commissioning budget effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and continue to work with the community and voluntary sector to explore the best way that youth services for young people should be delivered across Coventry.**

a) Implementation Overview

The budget was cut with immediate effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

b) Equality Impacts

The main impact of the removal of Youth Commissioning Budget has been that some activities that were supported by that fund ceased and this was felt in some specific areas of the city, in particular in Foleshill where a 3 evening per week project ended when the funding was removed. There was also a reduction of activities in Stoke Heath.

Some activities that had been supported by the Youth Commissioning Budget have continued: in Hillfields activities for African Caribbean young people continued to be supported by the African Caribbean Community Organisation Limited (ACCOL) for a further 12 months; a radio station in Foleshill continues to offer workshops to young people as part of its broadcasting; and an Active Alliance has been established which brings together a range of sports and other organisations who are in the process of establishing their terms of incorporation (possibly as a Community Interest Company) in order to continue the community youth sports clubs set up through the Youth Commissioning Budget. This Alliance is also offering two training workshops in the near future on 'Working with Challenge' and 'Working with Conflict' which are aimed at giving staff and volunteers with the Active Alliance the knowledge and skills who work with challenging young people and work through conflict with young people which adds value to the outcomes from the Youth Commissioning budget.

**Proposal 9 – To close six public conveniences located outside the city centre from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, keeping open the two city centre public conveniences.**

a) Implementation Overview

The 6 public conveniences were closed on 4<sup>th</sup> April and decommissioned.

Foleshill (Edgewick) and Tile Hill (Jardine Crescent) were demolished. The public conveniences at the Canal Basin were successfully transferred back to the Canal and River Trust; as the remainder of that particular facility was used by the Canal & River Trust as a sanitary station for boaters.

b) Equality Impacts

Service users

To date, there have been no complaints received regarding the lack of suburban toilet facilities and libraries located close to the closed conveniences have seen an increase in the use of their facilities.

In line with the 1936 Public Health Act legislation, the Council has no obligation to provide public conveniences. There are alternative toilet facilities that can be used (from other providers),

although the Council can make no guarantee of these. Information about the location of alternative toilets that are available for the public to use can be found in a variety of ways including information available online or by downloading one of the relevant mobile phone applications.

### Staff

The ending of the Council providing public conveniences affected 1.0 FTE contract. No staffing reductions were made from across the service as the affected individual was redeployed onto other cleaning duties.

**Proposal 10 – To enter into a lease with each of the community associations currently managing the community centres (six) within 12 months from approval of the proposal subject to variations to the approach specifically for Radford and Foleshill Community Centres.**

#### a) Implementation Overview

Work is ongoing to enter into a lease with each of the Community Associations currently managing the Community Centres.

#### Henley Green

Moat House Community Trust (MHCT) took over the running of the centre in 2014 and officers have agreed terms with them for a 25 year lease and continue to wait for Moat House Trust to formally sign this.

#### Holbrooks Community Association

Officers are currently waiting for confirmation that the Community Association have approved the Heads of Terms issued to them, at which point the Council's Legal Services team will be asked to draft the lease.

#### Stoke Aldermoor Life Centre

Heads of Terms have been issued to the Community Centre and a draft lease is currently with their solicitors.

#### Foleshill Community Centre

The Community Centre has been under Council control for two years now following the cessation of the former Foleshill Community Association. Approval has previously been given for officers to conduct an open expression of interest for the centre to be made available to a community organisation to run it for the benefit of the whole community. This exercise has been delayed due to the occupation of the centre by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

#### Canley Community Centre

Heads of terms have been issued but changes on governance at the centre has delayed completion of a lease. Following a recent meeting, a new target date has been set for the end of this year to complete a lease.



Radford Community Centre

The current Community Association has expressed concerns to officers regarding their ongoing liability and discussions continue.

b) Equality Impacts

A 6 month post implementation review is scheduled to take place in 2017.