

**BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE FURTHER
DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY HUBS**

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES (COUNCILLOR LYNDA THORNE)

AGENDA ITEM: 5

Reason for this Report

1. To agree a new approach to building resilient communities through the further development of Community Hubs.

Background

2. The Hub project has been very well received, extending and joining up council and partner services, to provide comprehensive local provision based on the needs of the area.
3. 12 hubs have been delivered, 11 community hubs and a city centre hub in Central Library. In line with the Community Hub Strategy the project focused on those areas of the city where deprivation is greater and people are in the most need of services.
4. The hubs contribute to the achievement of a number of key corporate objectives within the theme of tackling inequalities by delivering a very wide range of locally available integrated services. The project also contributes to meeting the objectives of the Transport and Clean Air green paper by enabling better access to services within walking and cycling distance.
5. With the increasing older population, and problem of isolation there is a need to bring together services in other areas of the city with a focus on wellbeing, community engagement and independent living. This report sets out proposals for the next steps in the Hub development programme focused on the West and North of the city and also the further development of Central Library Hub.
6. In November 2017 Cabinet agreed a city wide approach to community involvement and engagement, anchored in the hubs and delivered by council employed staff funded through the Welsh Government Legacy Grant. This was in response to the closure of Communities First from 31st March 2018 and the need to build on the learning from Neighbourhood

partnerships while delivering significant efficiencies. This report sets out more detail on the way forward for community involvement and engagement.

Issues

Development of Community Wellbeing Hubs

7. It is proposed to develop Community Wellbeing Hubs in the north and west of the city. The Hub principles and learning together with examples of best practice from the Library Service will be used to inform the development of services. These Community Wellbeing Hubs would offer a wide range of independent living advice; engage the community, particularly older people, in events and activities and involve partner organisations, local community groups and volunteers to enhance service provision and community engagement. They would also provide a venue for health and wellbeing activities and opportunities for social prescribing by GPs.
8. To facilitate this change it is proposed to bring the community branch libraries within the Hub structure. Core council staffing would be retained, however the roles of the staff would be developed to offer a wider range of services based on local need. Some management savings would be achieved through this change.
9. To facilitate this change a review of each area would be carried out to establish local needs. This review would include:
 - An understanding of the demographics of the area and a review of the findings of the wellbeing assessment.
 - Mapping of local services and buildings - to see if more join up can be achieved and to avoid duplication
 - Consultation with local residents about their priorities and requirements
 - Consultation with partners and stakeholders
10. Ward Members and local community groups would be fully involved in this review. Services would be developed based on the outcome of the review and focused on the needs of the area.
11. While investment in Hubs has been significant, and some community libraries have had grant funded improvement, other library buildings are in poor condition. Innovative proposals will be investigated to address building condition. Applications for grant funding will be made where appropriate, however other ways to maximise the potential of the buildings will also be considered which could include combining community use with the provision of housing.
12. Any proposal for significant change to current buildings will be subject to an equality impact assessment and will be brought forward in a separate cabinet report.

13. In addition to the specific focus on wellbeing hubs outlined in this report the learning from the hub programme more generally will be applied in the roll out of the master planning requirements for the new communities of Cardiff. A specification will be developed to assist in the provision of appropriate integrated public sector service facilities to meet the needs of our future citizens.

A New Approach to Community Engagement Anchored in the Hubs

14. In order to consider the best way forward following the closure of Communities First a public consultation exercise was carried out during September 2017. 1,596 responses were received to the survey and analysis of these responses showed potential gaps in community engagement and involvement which were summarised as follows:

- Support for community groups
- Building and maintaining local knowledge and networks
- Formal/structured volunteering/time credits
- Community events to encourage engagement
- Signposting/promotion of other organisations and services

15. In November 2017 Cabinet considered the results of this consultation and agreed to the development of a new approach to community engagement and involvement. This new approach would build on learning from Neighbourhood Partnerships and Communities First to create a new framework for participation across the city.

16. It was agreed that the service would be anchored in the Council's Hubs / Libraries/Well-being Centres and that core engagement and involvement services would be delivered by council employed staff, funded through the Welsh Government Legacy Grant. The new service would be focused on identifying local priorities and initiatives.

17. To take this work forward it is proposed that a Community Inclusion Service is developed within the Hubs to provide "hands on support" for local groups. This new service would deliver 4 key functions:

Co-ordination of engagement opportunities

- Assist with the organisation of consultation events.
- To develop a clear understanding of local priorities
- Identify gaps in services and activities in the area and work with other organisations and the third sector to fill these gaps.
- Reach out to schools and other community venues to link activities to Hubs

Building local knowledge and networks

- Develop knowledge of local services, community groups and any social opportunities
- Signpost individuals and organisations to appropriate services and activities.

- Feed local information into a city wide database to increase visibility of the activity that is taking place.

Helping to Develop “Active Citizen” opportunities

- Encourage individuals to get involved, take ownership and set up groups or activities that benefit the community and encourage social interaction – e.g. knit & natter, choirs, gardening clubs, lunch clubs
- Encourage use of the Volunteer Portal to promote volunteering opportunities
- Support community groups to become established, access funding, promote activities and access rooms in venues to meet or deliver projects
- Find services / activities that fill gaps in service provision at low cost or no cost to the citizen – e.g. art / dance classes
- Networking at a local level to share best practice and link up activities or groups with common aims

Linking with other community based services to create a virtual team

- The Community Inclusion Service would link with other community based services to create a virtual team that works together in each locality; this could include services such as Friends of Parks, Love Where You Live, Independent Living Day Opportunities Team, Tenant Participation Team, various Health and Wellbeing Projects, Homework clubs and third sector groups.
18. Each of the 4 Hub districts would have a Community Inclusion Officer to take forward this work. There would also be a central resource to co-ordinate activity and to provide more specialist assistance where needed.
 19. This new approach will provide a more hands on approach to community engagement and represents a move away from the current Neighbourhood Management model, with less focus on co-ordinating statutory partner activities, fewer formal meetings and greater involvement in developing community groups and activities. There will be a streamlined approach which will allow for the significantly reduced funding available from 2018/19.
 20. To complement the work of the Inclusion Officers it is proposed to pilot a City wide Health and Well Being Service offering accessible community based activities in partnership with the Third Sector. The service would be funded by the Welsh Government Legacy Fund for an initial pilot of 9 months with an option to extend by 1 year subject to continued Welsh Government funding.
 21. The services will include innovative approaches to engagement and service delivery and will offer a variety of health and wellbeing focussed activities. The service will have a number of agreed outputs and will consist of five key delivery strands as set out below:

1. Direct delivery of sessions including Low level Mental Health Support and Confidence Building, some of which will be evidence based interventions such as Stress Control and Mindfulness.
 2. Set up and maintain an agreed number of new befriending, self-help and peer support groups across the city linked to improving health and wellbeing
 3. Provide direct delivery and source suitable delivery partners for low level therapeutic activities such as arts or crafts, music, drama, cookery sessions, gardening, photography, sewing or knit and natter groups
 4. Provide direct delivery and source suitable delivery partners for a range of intergenerational learning and social activities that especially target older people to help avoid social isolation and loneliness
 5. Delivery of weekly homework clubs in the East and South East arc of the City, offering structured learning experiences for children and young people and volunteering opportunities for adults.
22. The provider will be expected to involve volunteers in the delivery of the programme and knowledge and awareness of other services in order to provide basic information, advice and signposting functions will also be a requirement.
23. Services provided will be planned, accessible and well publicised, with clear referrals routes and there will be opportunities for social prescribing by health professionals.
24. Two grants will be offered on competitive basis. One for a city wide health and wellbeing service and the second smaller grant for homework clubs, the aim will be to commence delivery by July 2018.

Further Development of Central Library Hub

25. Central Library Hub offers a very wide range of services and attracts a very high customer footfall. There is an opportunity, however, to further develop and integrate the Hub provision. Currently the Hub operates in two sections, with the Hub Advice Services and the Library provision being under separate management. This has prevented the efficiencies and join up that has been achieved in the other hubs.
26. To improve and better join up services it is proposed to bring Central Library Hub within the Advice Services management structure and to continue the development of the building as a fully integrated Hub. Staff roles will change to deliver a wider range of services for customers although library services will remain a core provision.
27. An improved “meet and greet service” will be put in place on the ground floor to ensure that customers can find the right service for them. Staff will be multi skilled ensuring a better customer experience and increasing resources in some key areas such as digital inclusion. Specialist staff will be on hand for more complex enquires.

28. It is anticipated that this increased join up will deliver staffing efficiencies while also improving services for customers.

A new approach to library services, building on best practice to deliver quality library services and events across the city

29. With the focus on Hubs and integrated service provision, there is need to ensure that the city continues to have a strong core library provision and that the good performance against the Library Standards is maintained. There is much good practice in the Library Service and it is proposed to build on this to provide services across the city, not only within Hubs but also directly into schools and other community buildings.
30. To achieve this it is proposed to create a new Library Strategy and Development Team. This team will use their expertise to develop and enhance the “Library Offer”. The team will work out of Dominions Way book repository and Cathays Heritage Library to develop high quality library services, events and activities.
31. The new service will be underpinned by a strong Library Strategy and action plan which will focus on 5 key themes:
- Books provision and management
 - Heritage, culture and information
 - Children’s literacy and curriculum support
 - Digital creativity
 - Community engagement and well being
32. The training of all staff delivering library services will be enhanced and the opportunity to obtain a specialist library NVQ qualification will be offered to staff across the service.

Local Member consultation

33. Local member consultation will take place during the area review stage of the Community Wellbeing Hub project.

Scrutiny Consideration

34. The Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 20 May 2018. The letter from the Chair is attached at Appendix 2.

Reason for Recommendations

35. To take forward a new approach to building resilient communities through further development of the Hubs.
36. To deliver required financial savings ahead of 2019/20 and to mitigate the impact of the end of Communities First by greater join up of services.

Financial Implications

37. The recommendations within this report are anticipated to result in efficiencies within the service through the streamlining of staffing and management structures, whilst maintaining a core library service and improved customer experience.
38. Revenue savings achieved as part of the finalised proposals will contribute towards future years' budget savings targets.
39. Where proposals involve use of future grant funding streams, this must be in line with grant terms and conditions.
40. The capital programme approved in 2018/19 allows for expansion of hub facilities in Butetown, but no other capital funding is available or deemed required by the Directorate to deliver the strategy set out in this report. In delivering the strategy and any resultant need to address maintenance to properties, alternative options such as more effective use of sites and external grant funding will be considered to make improvements.

Legal Implications

41. As indicated in the text of the Report, there will be a requirement for consultation as proposals are developed and Equality Impact Assessments will be required for specific areas of risk that are identified.

HR Implications

42. Initial consultations have taken place both with Trade Unions and with affected employees regarding the proposals outlined in this report.
43. Any alterations to structures, roles and/or responsibilities will be consulted on in detail with the Trade Unions and affected employees as these changes arise. Any changes will be carried out using the corporately agreed processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the approach to developing Community Wellbeing Hubs in the north and west of the city and delegate authority to the Director People and Communities to take this forward in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities. Any proposals that require significant change to current buildings will be the subject of a separate cabinet report.
2. Agree the proposals for the new approach to community engagement through the introduction of Community Inclusion Officers anchored in the Hubs.

3. Agree a grant programme for Health and Wellbeing and Homework Clubs as set out in the report.
4. Agree proposals to improve services and increase joined up working in Central Library Hub
5. Approve the further development of library services, building on best practice to deliver quality library services and events across the city.

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| SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER | SARAH McGill Corporate Director, People and Communities |
| | 11 May 2018 |

The following appendices are attached:

Appendix 1 – Map of current and potential Hubs

Appendix 2 – Letter from Chair of Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee

The following background papers have been taken into account

Cabinet Report - Development of a City Wide Employability Provision & a New Approach to Building Resilient Communities (November 17)

Cardiff's Transport & Clean Air Green Paper - Changing how we move around a growing city