

## **Community Services Committee 5 June 2013**

### **3 HUTTON COMMUNITY CENTRE**

(Appendix 2)

**Report of:** *Head of Localism and Partnership*

**Author:** *Brian Partridge*

**Telephone Number:** *01277 312689*

**Email:**

*brian.partridge@brentwood.gov.uk*

**Wards Affected:** *Hutton North*

#### **1. Executive Summary**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on events at the Hutton Community Centre since the decision of the Asset, Infrastructure and Localism Panel on 21<sup>st</sup> November and to agree a phased approach to the re-opening of the Centre.

#### **2. Recommendation(s)**

2.1 That the phased approach to the re-opening of Hutton Community Centre as set out in section 4.1 be agreed

2.2 That the progress made by the working group be endorsed (as set out in section 4.3) and that a report be brought back to the next meeting of this committee upon the proposals for the Centre (which will have first been consulted upon at the public meeting)

2.3 That opportunities for external funding for the Centre continue to be explored

#### **3. Background**

3.1 This matter was considered by the Asset panel in November 2012 when authority was sought to recover the lease of the building from the Hutton Community Association. The recommendation was to take formal action to recover the lease and it was resolved unanimously that, if necessary, formal action should be commenced to recover the lease for Hutton Community Centre. This was not necessary as the lease was surrendered to the Council.

3.2 Once the surrender of the lease had been affected internal discussions took place about the future of the building. It was agreed to set up a

stakeholders meeting to discuss with interested parties the possibility of reinvigorating the building as a thriving community hub. The aim was to talk to people interested in joining with the Council to take a part in the future management of the centre as well as potential users of the building. The first meeting took place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 9.30am at Brentwood Town Hall with the Leader of the Council, the Chair of the Asset panel and Officers. Following that a public meeting took place, a subsequent stakeholders meeting was held, and a working group has been established to take matters forward. See section 4 below.

#### **4. Context**

4.1 As mentioned in 3.2 above a working group has been established to work with the Council in overseeing the re-opening of the Centre. This is inclusive and has generated significant community involvement in the project. The membership and terms of reference of the group are set out in Appendix 2. The purpose of the group is to support and to provide direction to the Council in delivering a phased approach to the re-opening and running of Hutton Community Centre. Decisions will be taken by the Council as required by Committee or under delegated powers whilst the building is under the operation of the Council, with advice and support from the working group. The phases are proposed as:

- Phase 1 – Building repaired/rebuilt (if a cheaper and better option), open and being run by the Council
- Phase 2 – Development of a community based organisation to run the Centre
- Phase 3 – Lease of the Centre to an independent organisation

4.2 Criteria for the future usage of the Centre have been discussed including:

- a) That the primary usage will be a balance between community and sports use
- b) That there should also be a balance between fee paying and drop in use (to be looked at as part of the process of developing the business case)
- c) A café will be provided and space will be made available to provide a limited bar facility but the public's views will be sought on this
- d) The centre needs to be sustainable in each phase
- e) Facilities management arrangements will need to be put in place, and
- f) That the Council will look after the structure and exterior of the building whilst it is running the Centre

**4.3 Some of the issues the working group has been addressing to date have included:**

- a) Proposed usage and users of the Centre and any impact this will have upon the final specification for repairs to the building. It should be noted that the boxing club have now found alternative accommodation**
- b) The desire for this to be a community run facility and a thriving community hub. (The Essex Boys and Girls Club are part of the group but expressed a desire to take a lease of the whole building or to purchase the freehold. This has not been pursued at this stage as the working group wants to see this run as a community facility. It has been suggested that they would be able to commit funding to the building but they have confirmed in writing that they would be unable to commit to a figure at this stage).**
- c) The specification for the works (and as part of this a Mechanical and Electrical survey is being commissioned to identify the extent of those works required and likely costs)**
- d) Preparation of a brief for the building and the commissioning of architects to take this forward. Two options are being considered – bringing the building as it is back into repair and an option which would divide the building into two with shared internal community facilities. The costs of the architect are being funded through the asset management revenue budget (cost £2250 plus VAT). These proposals will be developed and costed (along with an outline cost for a rebuild) and will be consulted on at the public meeting. A report on the outcome of this will be presented to the next meeting of this committee.**
- e) Establishment of a Community action day (taking place on 8<sup>th</sup> June) which will be supported by the depot at a minimal cost to be met through the asset management revenue budget**
- f) Management of the gates following completion of the fencing contract**
- g) Facilities management and the possibility of bidding for funding to enable this to occur**
- h) Ability to attract external funding into the Centre – both the boxing club and the football club had been exploring opportunities for this and in addition there are other potential opportunities being explored such as the Sport England Improvement Fund and the County Community Builders programme**
- i) Communications including proposals for a further public meeting to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> June**
- j) Business case for the Centre**
- k) Ability to use volunteer labour to support the main contractor (subject to appropriate checks, risk assessment, insurance, supervision etc)**
- l) Family Fun Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> August to be geared around the Centre and proposals for its future**

- m) Exploring how other centres have organized and run e.g. at Hannakins farm
- n) Possibility for an extension although as the boxing club have found alternative accommodation and may not need space in the building in the future, this is less pressing
- o) Hutton FC are very keen to move ahead with the refurbishment of the changing rooms as these are ideally required for the next football season. It is proposed that these works will be the first phase of the wider refurbishment programme.

**4.4 Whilst good progress is being made on the Centre and we are engaging well with the local community, the project does have a number of risks and in particular that:**

- a) The budget allocation may not be sufficient given that additional vandalism has occurred at the Centre since the original survey. This will only become clear once the specifications have been completed, tenders obtained and we are clear whether voluntary work can assist the centre. There has also been an insurance claim in respect of some of the damage. A report will be brought back to this committee should this risk occur.
- b) Use of volunteer labour is in itself a risk and something which is being considered with the working group
- c) Whether the business plan can demonstrate the viability and sustainability of the Centre – this needs to be established alongside any tendering procedures and before any major works are commissioned
- d) Security of the site – given the significant vandalism which has occurred at the Centre

**4.5 The working group has not spent a significant time at this stage as regards the setting up of a new association as this comes in Phase 2 but Members should be aware that emerging from the working group are proposals for a new Hutton Community partnership, which could possibly be a future tenant for the Centre. Any proposal for leasing the building will go to the Performance and Resources Committee for approval.**

## **5. Financial Implications – Comment from S151 Officer**

**5.1 A budget provision of £165,000 has been included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2013/14. If the costs cannot be contained within this budget, a further report will need to be compiled detailing the source of additional funding.**

## **6. Implications and References to Corporate Plan**

**6.1 The Hutton CC project fits well with the Councils localism priority through working closely with local community partners, supporting local communities to run local services and developing new approaches to the use of community assets. The project is also identified in the Asset Management plan.**

**6.2 Headline risks are already identified in the report. The project will also have implications on staff time in supporting the project and will have asset and legal implications in assisting with the setting up of a new association and leasing the building to them.**

## **7. Background Papers**

**None**

