

Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities	Ref No: SSC7 18/19
Date 22nd January 2019	Key Decision: Yes
Community Hubs and plans for Worthing Library	Part I
Report by Executive Director Communities & Public Protection and Director of Communities	Electoral Division(s): Worthing Pier All

Summary

The current financial situation for all local authorities requires an ambitious and imaginative approach to service planning and the use of public assets to avoid arbitrary service reductions.

The County Council's aim is to support strong self-reliant communities. The West Sussex Plan recognises that to make real change happen we must empower people to help themselves. We complement this ambition with a commitment to make our services more effective. Many of our buildings and the services we provide in them do not match aspirations for our community, are not fit for the future and inhibit services being delivered holistically with customers in mind.

This report describes a proposal to develop a programme to create a number of community hubs where multi-purpose, community led services can be delivered - with our partners - to improve access to services, outcomes and overall wellbeing of our communities. Hubs can bring people together from various community groups and help them build relationships and support networks. They are also a good use of local public assets and an efficient and effective use of resources.

The Community Hub Strategy aims to combine services 'under one community roof' for the benefit of our communities, whilst making the best use of our assets to provide existing (and new) services in fewer, cost effective buildings. This report explains the framework of principles and design aims to achieve this ambition.

To test the model it is proposed to make the first hub in Worthing Library and to pilot a range of the ideas at this site to inform future phases. Community engagement in Worthing has been undertaken and a positive response received from local people.

The report seeks to confirm the delivery of the Worthing scheme and the steps needed to achieve it, to define the scope and aims of the Community Hub Strategy and the role of a Member Group that will oversee the programme.

West Sussex Plan: Policy Impact and Context

- **Best start in life** through sustaining valued services to families. Collocating these services, integrating the staff and volunteers to design even more effective support, particularly for the most vulnerable in the community
- **Independence for later life** through modernising the building's internal design allowing increased daytime activities that help reduce social isolation.

- **A strong, safe and sustainable place** is supported by making more spaces that can be used by voluntary and community groups
- **A council that works for the community** as these proposals will increase efficient use of assets and freeing some for disposal or other use.

Financial Impact.

The capital programme has £5m allocated for Community Hubs (previously labelled 21st Century Libraries).

Based on information available to date there is assurance that the proposals for Worthing can be delivered within reasonable costs and that revenue savings will result through a reduction in the corporate estate.

For the future strategy, the principle is that after allowing for capital investment/financing costs, the roll-out of community hubs will generate revenue savings and capital contributions. This principle will be developed further as an integral part of the strategy, and further roll-out of the community hubs approach will be considered as part of future budget planning processes as appropriate.

Recommendations

- 1) To approve the strategic principles underpinning the Council's approach to developing community hubs and set out in paragraphs 4.2-4.3.
- 2) To approve the implementation of the first community hub scheme to remodel Worthing Library.
- 3) To approve the relocation of services and temporary closure of Worthing Library for a period required to enable the timely delivery of the scheme
- 4) To approve the relocation of the registration service from Worthing Town Hall and the Children and Family Centre and Find It Out Centre to the newly remodelled community hub
- 5) To confirm the terms of reference of a member project board to support the development and implementation of the community hubs strategy (Appendix 1)

PROPOSAL

1. National Context

- 1.1 Across the UK it is known that a large number of libraries and children and family centres have closed or are planned for closure with others affected by reduced hours of opening. At the same time a range of social problems including reported levels of loneliness and social isolation, a lack of access to digital skills and children starting school without essential skills have increased.
- 1.2 National research has also shown that access to universal, safe and effective civic spaces that enable people to engage and participate with one another

can play a critical role in supporting the overall health and well-being of individuals and communities.

2. Local Context

- 2.1 Across West Sussex there are already vibrant, engaged and supportive communities which enhance the experience of local people and create strong, sustainable and resilient places for people to live. The County Council recognises its role in enabling the appropriate environment to support local people to be active and to give communities the space and services to thrive.
- 2.2 Libraries in West Sussex already provide space for a range of public and voluntary sector partners delivering health, information, advice and guidance, cultural and heritage services. Similarly, children's centres work with partners that deliver health, early education and parenting support activities. The County Council has maintained a network of 36 libraries and 45 children's centres despite ongoing, significant challenges to its finances.
- 2.3 The longer term sustainability of the Council's estate will be increasingly difficult to maintain, raising the prospect of a need to consider closure and reductions in service to some communities. This can be mitigated by focusing on doing more with existing buildings to safeguard and maintain essential front line services for residents.
- 2.4 This commitment includes a recognition of the breadth of support which is already offered through the libraries and children and family centres which builds greater individual and community strength. These activities including activities for people to come together to connect, the availability of access to new digital technology and skills, advice around employment and welfare support. Maintaining and enhancing these opportunities for local people is central to the Council's approach.

3. Community Hubs

- 3.1 The County Council has already committed to a transformation programme (Unlocking the Power of Community) to remodel the way the Council works to prioritise the active building of stronger communities. The programme has already introduced a crowd funding platform to support access to greater external funding for community projects and a redesigned internal resource to better support local communities.
- 3.2 In addition, the Council has reset its commitment to working with the voluntary and community sector by co-producing and agreeing a set of new 'Partnership Principles' and is introducing a transformative approach to adult social care to improve outcomes by having strength based conversations with individuals and their families which connects them to local resources.
- 3.3 The community hubs approach builds on these foundations to begin to consider how the physical buildings held by the County Council can also play their part in providing the environment to enable the active strengthening of local communities. Central to the commitment is to reimagine the space within county council buildings, such as libraries or children and family

centres to allow for a full range of front line services to be delivered under one roof and to rationalise the number of county buildings in a location.

- 3.4 This approach effectively confirms an existing direction of travel already in train by the County Council to look to combine services where possible which has been incremental over recent years. In East Grinstead and more recently Findon children and family services are already integrated within the library to improve customer access and to remove duplication. Both examples have been well received resulting in increased satisfaction for local people, higher levels of footfall and positive feedback from staff.
- 3.5 Recognising that some of the County Council's existing buildings are traditional in their design given their age of construction this new developing approach provides an opportunity to reimagine how space can be used to create greater flexibility to meet a variety of uses. The re-modelling of existing buildings could allow for greater sustainability measures to future proof these facilities, reducing running costs and carbon footprint.
- 3.6 There would be a need for an investment programme to enhance and improve the facilities available in these existing spaces. This investment would be supported by the release of redundant buildings and the associated reductions of costs in maintaining multiple facilities.
- 3.7 To support an effective framework to develop this thinking a set of high level principles has been designed to create a framework to aid implementation. This will include an ability to test the concepts to illustrate the 'art of the possible' and to build on the experience as hubs are developed.
- 3.8 Worthing Library has been identified as the first community hub and local community engagement has helped shape the services which can be offered from this location. Learning from this site will allow effective testing of the ideas and to support the development of a wider programme across West Sussex.

4. Strategic Principles

- 4.1 It is prudent to agree a set of overarching principles which will set a clear framework for the approach to community hubs which can be used to support the necessary more detailed work, adaptable for the complexity of the county's environment and the variety of communities within it. Aligned to the principles will be the learning from the first community hub in Worthing where several of the ideas will be evaluated to further support the implementation of a wider programme.
- 4.2 The following key principles set the boundaries for the Council's approach and will form the basis on which to develop the programme.
 - i) To rationalise the number of buildings we operate from by integrating existing local services under one roof where possible
 - ii) To create modern, flexible, accessible spaces that bring communities together to increase participation and build resilience

- iii) To enable services in hubs to accommodate other local, public or commercial services where practicable and appropriate
- iv) To protect services in hard to reach communities through use of satellite sites, mobile teams and other mechanisms for outreach work
- v) To reduce duplication and improve co-location and collaboration/joint working with partners
- vi) To ensure our hubs are fit for the future and environmentally sustainable.
- vii) To secure a return on capital investment by reducing net running costs ensuring the financial sustainability of community hubs

4.3 In addition a set of criteria to assess the suitability of locations across the county has been developed. These criteria are based on the following overarching factors:

- population density and deprivation factors:
- the level of current and likely future local service demand
- the proximity of County Council assets in the location
- a value for money assessment for the assets and service redesign; and
- the ease of implementation of a scheme.

4.4 These criteria will be used by the Member Project Board to ensure they are effective in supporting the future identification of sites for community hubs as the programme develops and lessons are learnt.

4.5 Member Project Board

4.6 A Member Project Board has been established to oversee the programme and its development. The Membership and Terms of Reference for the Board are attached at Appendix 1. It will be responsible for overseeing the detailed work to develop the approach. The Board will use the strategic principles and the learning from the hub in Worthing to oversee delivery of the community hubs programme.

4.7 Benefits will be tracked across the delivery phase and learning utilised to inform the programme's future development. The Board will also develop a detailed implementation plan for Worthing and the future sites as identified by the criteria to create a pipeline for future community hubs. Also central to the work of the Board will be the delivery of a robust and effective engagement strategy with local communities.

Worthing Library

Background

- 5.1 To test the community hub concept a site has selected to act as the first hub. This site will allow for the ideas contained within the potential programme to be properly evaluated to inform any wider implementation across the county. It is recognised that the Worthing site is in a large urban area and thus the solutions in this location will be defined to an extent by the nature of the surrounding community and its needs. It gives an opportunity to test some of the ideas and to showcase the 'art of the possible' to support the work to develop a wider programme.
- 5.2 The library in Worthing has thus been selected using the broad criteria described as above. The library is also located within an area adjacent to other civic buildings where significant investment and redesign is planned.

Engagement and Consultation

- 5.3 As a key component to the opportunity in Worthing Library extensive community engagement and consultation with residents has been undertaken. This engagement included face to face conversations in the 3 different locations, an online survey and events for groups held to discuss relevant issues taking place over the summer, ending on the 24th September 2018. Overwhelming support was received from local people and stakeholders, and many suggestions were made as to ways to further enhance local services through the integration into a community hub
- 5.4 Following the high level of support expressed through the engagement processes architects were commissioned to carry out an initial feasibility study on bringing together services in a modernised and refurbished library building, using feedback from the community engagement.
- 5.5 This initial feasibility proposal has then been used to conduct a more formal consultation exercise with local people and stakeholders to create a new integrated community hub by integrating services into the one building. This consultation ended on the 10th December 2018 and again evidenced strong support for the approach with 77% of those who responded supported the proposal to create a community hub in Worthing.

6. Proposal Details

- 6.1 Feasibility work has been commissioned to re-model the library building in Richmond Road, to create a community hub, to provide adequate space to re-provide activities currently undertaken at the children and family centre, registration service and find it out centre. This work confirms the space is adequate to allow for a remodelled internal layout to accommodate the additional services whilst retaining the essential areas of quiet study and community activity space already highly used within the current building.
- 6.2 Proposals also indicate that it is possible to enhance the level of service available in the space by utilising creative design to allow for a new outdoor space not currently available within the site.
- 6.3 Only initial costings have been estimated at this stage to enable a complete remodelling of the current Library building to incorporate the space of the children and family and find it out centre services appropriately within the

building and to create a new form of integrated and flexible community space to support the building of stronger communities.

- 6.4 Next steps will involve detailed work to determine the exact nature of the works required and the detailed reconfiguration of the building, to allow for a thorough implementation plan to be developed.
- 6.5 The rationalisation of 2 sites which are currently leased to the County Council, and the repurposing or disposal of a freehold property are central to the scheme alongside additional benefits in reductions in future service demand by investing in enhanced and integrated community facilities for the local community. Benefits realisation work to accurately map the prevention of future service demand through an enhanced integrated community offer is in development. These assumptions will be tested as part of the prototype assessment to inform the wider potential strategy.
- 6.6 Initial indications suggest that work to refit and remodel the Library into a community hub would require approximately 6 months temporary relocation and closure to make the optimal use of resources. This would entail the re-provision of a temporary library to serve the people of Worthing and the appropriate relocation of staff currently based in the building. Additional work to determine the detail of these arrangements is required before any work can be commissioned.
- 6.7 At this stage in the process initial indications suggest potential opening of a new library in the Spring of 2020.

7. Financial (revenue and capital) and Resource Implications

- 7.1 Co-location of services and the associated asset rationalisation/disposal of facilities present the opportunity to improve cost-effectiveness and achieve budgetary savings. The full business case will cover these. In particular, decisions are yet to be made on the operating model for the Worthing hub.
- 7.2 Alongside the detailed design, further consideration of the operating (revenue) costs needs to be undertaken, building up the budget accordingly. For the purpose of this report a simple approach has been adopted, identifying where possible, any new cost pressures and anticipated savings. These are predominantly linked to property/facilities management, i.e. rent, rates and utility savings. Additional work will cover aspects such as potential workforce savings due to co-location or business process changes and possible increase in facilities management/ maintenance and renewal / service related costs etc. relating to the new facility. These will be addressed in finalising the detailed business case, prior to the scheme progressing, to ensure sound due diligence and risk management.
- 7.3 The Capital programme contains a provision of £5m for the delivery of the Community Hubs projects. The development of a new Community Hub will follow the established capital budget process and be a subject of a future Cabinet Member decision report seeking permission to procure the required capital work once the business case is prepared.

8. Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact

- 8.1 The proposal includes the integration of staff teams currently operating separately in the different buildings to optimise the capacity available for specialist support. There is an expected reduction in overall FTE across the services involved but this will form part of the detailed design. Initial work with staff and trade unions has been scoped.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 The leases on the buildings to be released will be examined to confirm the timings necessary to align with the implementation plans for the remodelled library hub. The arrangements with Worthing Borough Council for the facilities for the Registration Service will be similarly planned

10. Risk Assessment Implications and Mitigations

Implications	Mitigation
Key delivery milestones are not achieved causing delay.	Development of high level and detailed plans; close monitoring and scrutiny of progress made; regular reporting to the project board; and routine validation of planning assumptions made.
Loss of public support	Keep local communities engaged throughout the planning and implementation stage.
Cultural barriers to new ways of working	Work with teams to raise awareness of the benefits of change and share best practice and learning on community hubs.
Insufficient resources to devote to implementation	Set out resources required in detailed implementation plan, understand other organisational priorities and resource pinch points, and ensure resource conflicts are surfaced early and appropriately funded.
Data required to demonstrate benefits realisation is not baselined or available.	Secure all relevant data at the outset, identify and plug data gaps, profile benefits and actively track these
Community hubs are too small or inflexible to deliver a wide range of services.	Establish hub requirements during planning stage, engage key internal and external stakeholders in the design and put in place appropriate approvals process.

8. Other Options Considered

- 8.1 Not remodelling the offer across our library and children services would lead to a likely reduction in buildings and opening hours in a piecemeal fashion. Given the importance the Council puts on universal front line services which

can build individual and community strength the option to redesign the way these services can be integrated and safeguarded is a preferable option.

9. Equality and Human Rights Assessment





A full assessment of the equality impact is attached at Appendix 2

10. Social Value and Sustainability Assessment

A complete social value and sustainability assessment has been completed A summary is included below

Theme/subsection	Result	Applicable Questions
Best Start in Life	Very positive	100%
Strong, Safe and Sustainable Place	Slightly positive	100%
A Healthy Place	Very positive	100%
A Safe Place	Neutral	67%
A Sustainable Environment	Neutral	67%
A Place of Culture, Heritage and Beauty	Neutral	100%
A Prosperous Place	Slightly positive	63%
A Place where businesses thrive	Neutral	33%
Infrastructure that supports a successful economy	Slightly positive	67%
A great place to live, work and visit	Very positive	100%
Independence for Later Life	Slightly positive	100%
A Council that works for the community	Slightly positive	100%

Appraisal criteria

	50% or above positive impact
	0 - 49% positive impact
	Neutral impact
	Negative impact

11. Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment

None as there is no proposed change to service delivery.

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APPENDICES

1. Member Project Board Terms of Reference
2. Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX 1

Members Project Board Terms of Reference

Executive Project Board: Community Hubs

1. Project Board Members:

Members: Kevin Boram (Chairman), Member for Shoreham South and Adviser to the Cabinet Member for Finance
Viral Parikh (Vice Chairman), Member for Bourne and Adviser to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health
Paul Marshall, Cabinet Member for Children – Start of Life
Debbie Kennard, Cabinet Member for Safer, Stronger Communities

Officers: Rachel North, Director of Communities
Hayley Connor, Head of Integrated Prevention and Earliest Help (IPEH)
Lesley Sim, Head of Libraries, Heritage and Registration
Russell Allen, Lead Manager Library Service
Elaine Sanders, Acting Head of Assets
Megan Muddell, Community Hubs Project Manager

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Project Board is to:

- Provide project oversight of the Council's Community Hubs project to provide timely and cost efficient delivery
- Confirm the aims of the project and endorse the plan for its methodology and delivery
- Provide direction and recommendations to the officers responsible for delivery
- Ensure the project objectives are clear and achievable, have an outcomes-focus and provide value for tax-payers money
- Monitor project timelines and delivery and give direction as required
- Review consultation and engagement feedback
- Have oversight of any budgetary implications (savings and costs) of the project and ensure delivery of the project is consistent with the budget
- Explore and examine the risks arising from the project and how they can be mitigated

- Ensure there are clear and appropriate communications and engagement with local members to be involved where a hub is in their division, as well as with relevant interested parties, including members of the Council and external partners
- Make recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member or other decision-maker for the delivery of the project

3. Methodology

- The Project Board will meet 6-weekly between December 2018 and March 2019, at which stage it will review the frequency of its meetings. It will also carry out work in between meetings, including briefings, visits and research.
- Other members and officers will be invited to contribute to the Project Board's work, to give evidence and attend meetings as appropriate. It will be particularly important to involve other Cabinet Members where the project affects their portfolio areas (e.g. Adult Social Care).

4. Timetable

- The Project Board will hold its first meeting in December 2018, following which a detailed timetable for its work will be developed and incorporated within this Terms of Reference.
- The first phase of its work (to March 2019) will focus on:
 - a) The implementation of the first community hub at Worthing Library; and
 - b) The development of a longer-term strategy for community hubs across the county
- It is envisaged that the Project Board will operate for the lifetime of the Community Hubs Strategy (i.e. up to implementation across the County), which may be three years.
- The purpose and terms of reference of the Project Board will be reviewed annually.

5. Support and Reporting arrangements

- Officer support for the TFG will be provided by Democratic Services. Nick Burrell, Democratic Services Senior Adviser, will be the lead officer for this until March 2019, when support arrangements will be reviewed.

APPENDIX 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Title of proposal	Worthing Community Hub
Date of implementation	
EIR completed by:	Name: Julie Robinson Tel: X 25803

1. Decide whether this report is needed and, if so, describe how you have assessed the impact of the proposal.

Whilst the fundamental services being offered will not be changing, there is potential impact on some groups through moving services into one location.

An EIR is therefore required in relation to providing services to community groups and particularly with those with mental health issues and learning difficulties. Pregnant women also reported concerns about the change to location.

Information relating to protected and other groups has been gathered through community engagement, surveys and feedback from teams working in specific areas.

From the demographic data from our public consultation, 17% considered themselves to have a disability, with 9% non responses. 5% of responders stated they have a mental health condition. No responders identified as having a learning disability.

10% of responders were pregnant or had been pregnant within the previous 26 weeks.

2. Describe any negative impact for customers or residents.

The move of location of services has the potential to create anxiety issues for those who have learning difficulties or mental health issues utilising a big, busy space, where currently services are provided in smaller, quieter locations. The impact may be that there are behavioural issues, stress and anxiety symptoms or users become disconnected from services.

Those responders who were or had been recently pregnant raised concerns regarding privacy. This may mean that they do not feel able to discuss specific issues or may not attend vital health meetings.

Implementing the construction works on this building may require the Library building to be closed for approximately six months.

The proposed mitigations or solutions to these are detailed in section 7.

3. Describe any positive effects which may offset any negative impact.

There are significant positive impacts of this project:

- Accessing a number of services all in one building will provide the opportunity for those who are accessing just one service to find out about and access other services they may not have been aware of.
- There may be less stigma attached to accessing a library than a CFC or Find It Out centre, which may open the services up to a wider audience.
- There is evidence that intergenerational mixing improves outcomes for both young and older people and a shared space will facilitate this.
- The Library is more visible than some of the smaller units and is seen in the community as a 'safe space'. This may encourage more people to access services.
- A more integrated workforce, bringing together library, children's services and health staff under one roof, plus links with community and voluntary sector staff and volunteers, is more likely to facilitate cross-agency and team working.

4. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

The library is already a safe, welcoming and neutral space, providing services for a wide range of residents, with no eligibility criteria or referral required. Integrating services for families, including pregnant mothers, young people and older people at risk of social isolation, means we can extend the principle of universal access, a key factor in reducing discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Library staff undertake a range of specialist training to enable them to meet the needs of specific groups (e.g. Dementia Friend training, training to support people with Asperger's or autistic spectrum conditions); this training can be extended to include staff from the children's services and health workforces too.

5. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Through providing all of our services in one space we are able to deliver a fair environment.

The range of services that will be available in this building will reach out to groups equally. This allows services to provide an equal and improved offer in a multifunctional unit where everybody is welcome. It will improve the opportunity for interaction

between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This building will be designed following community engagement through focus groups and the public engagement. Libraries are a renowned community space where people can feel safe. By proposing to move our services under one roof this allows the stigma that may be associated with other locations to be eradicated. It allows people to access more than one service which may not have been available in separate locations. This has been addressed in question 5

The shared space will provide significant opportunity to communicate, bring people together and educate on individuality and equality.

7. What changes were made to the proposal as a result? If none, explain why.

- **Temporary closure of the Library to allow construction work**
Services will be temporarily located in other venues to allow construction work to take place. The project includes plans to work with community groups and residents to reduce impact and ensure continuation of service provision.
- **Access to one building. Mental wellbeing of being able to go to different sites** – Designing this space with the community will be key. The space will be re-designed to ensure people feel they have their own space in the building, but also feel welcome to use any area as appropriate. This must be identified as a safe space for all our customers. The space must also be fit for purpose so people feel it is right for them to be there.
- **More people in the library-** We have worked extensively with our architect and the services providers to review the zoning in the library. The internal layout plans have been designed to provide appropriate separation of some activities (e.g. waiting area for Registration where some customers will be bereaved, separate from play space for younger children using Children & Family centre services). This will also be reviewed with focus groups following the consultation.
- **Those who are pregnant have raised concerns regarding privacy-** This is critical to involve in the re-design of the children's library. This will be reviewed with the architect and the focus groups in place to ensure this is addressed. We have previously adapted Findon library into a community hub. MILK! Is currently offered within this space and we will work with our colleagues to review how this has worked well and how we can adapt for a bigger space like Worthing.
- **This proposal does not reduce the services available however may reduce duplication-** There needs to be partnership working within this site to ensure the

services value what their colleagues provide. However through clever scheduling and partnership communication, opportunities will be identified to reduce duplication.

8. Explain how the impact will be monitored to make sure it continues to meet the equality duty owed to customers and say who will be responsible for this.

Following our consultation focus groups are being established to help us review the initial plans.

We will introduce a stakeholder panel to ensure we monitor the outcomes of this proposal.

A robust benefits profile will be developed and monitored, which will include non-financial benefits relating to community outcomes. In addition, this project is to be monitored by Members, which will include the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People and Safer, Stronger Communities. Part of their remit includes to monitor the impact of the Community Hub on residents in Worthing, including their access to services.