



**Report Reference Number:** S/19/27

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**To:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 12 March 2019  
**Ward(s) Affected:** All  
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**Lead Executive Member:** Cllr Chris Pearson (Lead Member for Housing, Health and Culture)  
**Lead Officer:** June Rothwell (Head of Operational Services)

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**Title: Review of Community Centres**

**Summary:**

This report provides a brief introduction to the Council's Community Centres and previous work completed. It asks the Committee to establish a Task and Finish Group, working with our Tenant Scrutiny Panel, to complete a review of the centres. The report also details the proposed scope and methodology of the review, which intends to understand how Community Centres are used currently and how they could be used in the future.

**Recommendation:**

The Committee are asked to agree the scope and methodology of the review and establish a Task and Finish Group, in partnership with the Council's Tenant Scrutiny Panel; to help facilitate a review of Community Centres which will include a district-wide consultation.

**Reasons for recommendation:**

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funded Community Centres and their sustainability remains a key issue for members and residents alike. In order to move forward, we must first understand their current position in the community and how tenants and residents use them now and might wish to use them in future.

**1 Introduction and background**

- 1.1** Previous reviews have taken place in regards to Community Centres. Most notably in 2010, following a report to the Social Board, the decision was made to sell the poorly used centre at Womersley and convert the centre at

Kellington into a residential unit. This left the Council with the 10 centres it has today:

- Anne Sharpe Centre, St Edwards Close, Byram
- Westfield Court Centre, Westfield Court, Eggborough
- Coultish Centre, Charles Street, Selby
- Cunliffe Centre, Petre Avenue, Selby
- Harold Mills House, North Crescent, Sherburn-in-Elmet
- Lady Popplewell Centre, Beechwood Close, Sherburn-in-Elmet
- Grove House, Grove Crescent, South Milford
- Calcaria House, Windmill Rise, Tadcaster
- Kelcbar, Kelcbar Close, Tadcaster
- Rosemary House, Rosemary Court

**1.2** Reviewing the Community Centres was suggested as a piece of work in June 2015, following a proposal from Councillor Buckle. Primary concerns were raised around the poor use of the centres, running costs and lack of community engagement. Considerable discussions took place between the Committee and Lead Officer for Community Support, but it was not felt a Task and Finish Group was required at that stage. It was however agreed that work would be undertaken to try and address the issues raised by Committee as to the use of the centres.

**1.3** Since then, public WIFI has been installed into almost every centre, and a new booking system created and managed by the Customer Contact Centre, in the hopes of garnering new community and private sector interest in the centres. An investment of £78,000 over two years was also agreed in 2017 to facilitate security and access improvements.

**1.4** However, whilst these improvements are acknowledged, the same concerns regarding community usage and value for money remain present; and it is therefore important that this work be revisited and progressed, and that a review is undertaken to inform a way forward.

## **2 Proposed Review**

### Defining the review and its scope

**2.1** This review is intended to consider how Community Centres are currently being used and how we can make better use of them in the future.

**2.2** We propose that the scope of the review will:

- Determine current level of use and public satisfaction with the centres.
- Look at current management models at each centre.
- Confirm the cost of providing the centres to the HRA.
- Explore potential alternative delivery models.
- Explore whether the current service offer meets the future needs of tenants and residents; and if not, what future model may best achieve this.

### Proposed Methodology

**2.3** We propose that the review is completed over a 6 month period and includes the following:

- Scrutiny to decide Task and Finish group members.
- Officers to provide base line information (costs, condition, level of usage, current management arrangements and constitutions) to support initial fact finding work.
- Co-operative between Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panel to generate a consultation survey.
- Tenant Participation Officer to oversee tenant and resident consultation.
- Site visits to the Community Centres to help understand the usage.
- Benchmark against other local authority practices in relation to Community Centres, with the potential for site visits.

**2.4** The Tenant Scrutiny Panel work to analyse and provide recommendations in relation to specific areas of the Council's housing service. Completing the review in this way provides an opportunity for closer working relationships between Council members and our tenants, providing an innovative approach to the review process. Having first-hand experience, tenants can also offer a great insight into the consultation process and everyday use of the centres.

**2.5** It is also important to state that different solutions may be appropriate for each centre and a wide range of options should be considered. Of central importance is therefore the views of the local community and it is proposed that a resident-wide consultation take place to best assess and inform the review and options for future use and management of each centre.

## **3. Implications**

### **3.1 Legal Implications**

All Council landlords are required to meet the four consumer standards, as set by the Regulator for Social Housing. The 'Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard,' requires landlords to consult with their tenants and *'ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved.'*

Any further legal implications arising from future proposals in respect of individual Community Centres will be addressed as part of those proposals.

### **3.2 Financial Implications**

Any financial implications arising from future proposals in respect of individual Community Centres will be addressed as part of those proposals.

### **3.3 Policy and Risk Implications**

The report's recommendation provides a number of opportunities to develop a co-operative approach between Council members and tenants, as to the provision and management of the Community Centres. In regards to partnership working arrangements, roles and responsibilities need to be clearly identified in order to mitigate risk as much as possible.

### **3.4 Corporate Plan Implications**

This report links to Priority 3 of the Corporate Plan (2015-2020): To make a difference. It focuses on empowering and involving people in decisions about their area and their services.

### **3.5 Resource Implications**

Any resources required as part of a Task and Finish Group will be identified in the attached Scoping Document – Appendix A.

### **3.6 Equalities Impact Assessment**

All Selby District Council tenants will be eligible for the proposed consultation and every effort will be made to engage as many tenants as possible in this process.

## **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1** In order to ensure that Community Centres are achieving their financial and community benefit potential, we propose a review of the centres take place. To do this, we recommend a Task and Finish Group be established by the Scrutiny Committee and Tenant Scrutiny Panel. This review will include a district-wide consultation and provide recommendations for future use of the centres.

## **5. Background Documents**

N/A

## **6. Appendices**

Appendix A – Scoping document

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### Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group Review

<b>Task and Finish Group Title:</b>	Review of Community Centres
<b>What the Review would achieve</b>	Identify how the Community Centres are currently used and how we can make better use of them in the future.
<b>Reasons for Review</b>	<p><b>Criteria for selecting item:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified by Members as key issue for public.</li> <li>• Positively impact on the delivery of services.</li> <li>• Engage the public and partner organisations.</li> <li>• Is the service cost/effective/value for money?</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential criteria for rejecting items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Possible areas to be covered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current level of use and public satisfaction with the centres.</li> <li>• The cost of the Community Centres to the Housing Revenue Account</li> <li>• Exploration of potential alternative models</li> <li>• The current Community Centre management model</li> <li>• Exploration of whether the current service offered meets the future needs of tenants and residents and if not, what future model may best achieve this for the centres.</li> </ul>
<b>Methodology/Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the Task and Finish Group</li> <li>• Officers to provide base line information to support initial fact finding work which could also include visits to the Community Centres to help understand the usage</li> <li>• The Scrutiny Committee and the Tenant Scrutiny Panel will work together to generate a consultation survey.</li> <li>• Tenant Participation Officer to oversee tenant consultation.</li> <li>• Benchmark against other local authorities</li> </ul>

	practices in relation to Community Centres including potential site visits
<b>Indicators of Success</b>	A report will be produced with recommendations on how we can make better use of the centres.
<b>Barriers/dangers/risks</b>	Tenants and service users do not engage in the review.
<b>Length of Review</b>	6 Months
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Council member time</li> <li>• Tenant Scrutiny time</li> <li>• Community Centre Committee members time</li> <li>• Tenants and residents time</li> </ul>