



TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 October 2013

Subject Heading:

Community Halls Managed by Culture and Leisure

CMT Lead:

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Policy context:

Providing economic, social and cultural activity in thriving towns and villages.

Valuing and enhancing the lives of residents.

Delivering high customer satisfaction and a stable council tax.

SUMMARY

Cabinet agreed a report at their meeting on 26 October 2011 regarding community halls managed by Culture and Leisure Services. There were a number of actions arising from the report, as contained in the report recommendations that Culture and Leisure has progressed.

This report provides an update with progress on these recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to review the report and note its content.

REPORT DETAIL

Cabinet at their meeting on 26 October 2011 agreed a number of recommendations regarding Community Halls managed by Culture and Leisure Services. The recommendations are listed below, with an update provided at the bottom of each one.

Members at Cabinet agreed the following:

1. To the closure of Dukes Hall, as from April 1st 2012 and to delegate to the Lead Member for Value and the Lead Member for Culture, Towns and Communities authority to agree terms for its disposal.

Update: Dukes Hall remained open until the end of July 2012 to specifically cater for a pre-school playgroup to ensure the children benefited from a complete 'academic' year. A majority of the regular hirers at Dukes Hall were helped with finding alternative venues. There were very few of the regular hirers that, despite our offers of assistance, did not let us know whether they found an alternative venue or otherwise. Dukes Hall has now been disposed of, with the purchasers of the site being Weston Homes plc.

2. To agree to demolish Old Windmill Hall now, to be initially funded from Capital Contingency, which will be reimbursed from the Dukes Hall receipt.

Update: Old Windmill Hall was demolished in Autumn 2012.

3. In principle to a proportion of the capital receipt arising from the disposal of Dukes Hall being utilised to deal with urgent repair and maintenance issues at the New Windmill Hall and Tweed Way Hall, assuming that these two halls transfer to a community organisation under a lease agreement. To delegate the decision on the level of capital spend from the Dukes Hall receipt on alternative community halls managed by Culture and Leisure Services, to the Lead Member for Value and the Lead Member for Culture, Towns and Communities.

Update: Both New Windmill Hall and Tweed Way Hall were successfully transferred to two community organisations under a Lease Agreement. An Executive Decision report (72/12) was signed on 17 April 2012 to agree that up to £100k could be spent on essential work that was highlighted within condition surveys for both New Windmill Hall and Tweed Way Hall. This sum was match funded with a £90k grant from Veolia, providing an overall investment of £190k. This was split with £136k investment at New Windmill Hall and £54k investment at Tweed Way Hall, in line with the urgent works required at each hall as set out in the respective condition surveys. The full allocation of funds will be spent addressing the essential items in the condition surveys.

The works at New Windmill Hall are almost complete, and are progressing well at Tweed Way Hall, with further works underway at the time of writing this report. New Windmill Hall has had the following works: roof/masonry repairs, cleaning of the heating ducts, a new kitchen, refurbished toilets, re-wiring and re-decoration. Tweed Way Hall has had the following works: New

windows, refurbished toilets, re-decoration and general building works to the annexe. The works to replace the kitchen are being planned for currently.

4. In principle to the transfer of the management of the New Windmill Hall to a community group or, in the event of this not proving possible, bring a further report back to Cabinet for consideration of subsequent options.

Update: A new Community Association has been formed comprising of users of New Windmill Hall. The New Windmill Hall Community Association was granted a lease on 6 August 2012 and is successfully managing the Hall. The Charity Commission formally registered the Association as a charity on 8 February 2013 (Reg. No. 1150748).

5. In principle to the transfer of the management of the Tweed Way Hall to a community group or, in the event of this not proving possible, bring a further report back to Cabinet for consideration of subsequent options.

Update: A new Community Association has been formed comprising of users of Tweed Way Hall. The Tweed Way Hall Community Association was granted separate leases for the Hall and an adjoining Storage Shed on 8 November 2012 and is successfully managing the Hall & Shed. An application for the Association to be formally registered with the Charity Commission as a charity is just about to be submitted.

6. To delegate decisions on all property matters associated with the transfer of New Windmill Hall and/or Tweed Way Hall, including the criteria for selecting the preferred voluntary group if more than one group expresses an interest in managing one of the halls, the selection of the preferred community group(s) and finalising lease terms, to the Lead Member for Value and the Lead Member for Culture, Towns and Communities.

Update: The existing users of both New Windmill Hall and Tweed Way Hall agreed to set up new Community Associations to run and manage their respective halls. Two Executive Decisions have been signed agreeing the lease terms on 13 July 2012 for New Windmill Hall (75/12) and 8 October 2012 for Tweed Way Hall (120/12).

7. In principle to protecting existing bookings at those community halls that transfer to a community group, to be set out in relevant agreements.

Update: All groups who decided that they wanted to continue their bookings at each of the halls were able to do so. Given that many of the regular hirers were represented on the Committee of the Community Associations, they are well placed to represent their particular group's interests.

8. To the demolition of the Old Windmill Hall building given the danger it poses to people who might try to enter the site, subject to the Dukes Hall site being disposed of and to be funded from the associated capital receipt.

Update: Old Windmill Hall was demolished in Autumn 2012.

9. To receive a further report on the option of disposing of the Old Windmill Hall site and adjoining land, to secure further investment in the New Windmill Hall facility for the purposes of leasing the building to a community group and surrounding facilities, in the context of improving the local environment and taking account of the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Update: Reports regarding the disposal of the Old Windmill Hall site and adjoining land were considered by Cabinet on 13 February 2013 and the 14 August 2013. The first Cabinet report was confirmed by the Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 March 2013. The second Cabinet report was also requisitioned and considered at this Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2013. The Cabinet decision was confirmed at their meeting. As set out earlier in the report the works to address urgent items at New Windmill Hall have almost been completed.

10. In principle to Cottons Hall being re-opened when a Lease can be agreed with a suitable community organisation or, if this does not prove possible, to receive a further report on the future of the site.

Update: No community organisation has yet been found to manage the Hall and take on a Lease. There was an initial interest from a sports club based at the site, but after a number of meetings and consideration by the club, there appears to be no further interest. The Council are still awaiting written confirmation that the sports club have no interest in the Hall. This club are considered to be the most suitable occupants of the Hall given that they also occupy the changing rooms and showers that sit on the ground floor, with the Hall located above on the first floor. The Hall remains closed at this time and is secured whilst the changing rooms on the ground floor continue to be used.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

This report outlines the level of investment made by the Council in both New Windmill Hall and Tweed Way Hall. The capital receipt from the sale of Dukes Hall has now been realised by the Council. There is no other specific financial comment.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no HR implications arising directly as a result of this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Council has worked with hirers of the halls, particularly at Dukes Hall, to secure alternative venues, where needed. This has been successful with a majority of users relocated at other venues. Service users with specific needs have been offered assistance and help upon request.

The leases for both Halls stipulate that the Community Associations are required to adhere to Council's Equality policies and comply with the Equalities Act 2010.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Cabinet 26 October 2011 – Agenda Item 11 – Community Halls Managed by Culture and Leisure Services.

Report to Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 14 November 2011 – Agenda Item 4 – Requisition of Cabinet Decision 26 October 2011 (Requisition not upheld).

Cabinet Meeting 16 November 2011 – The Minutes confirm that the Requisition taken to Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 November 2011 was not upheld.

Non-Key Member Decision on Investment at the New Windmill and Tweed Way Halls 72/12, 17 April 2012.

Non-Key Member Decision 75/12 on New Windmill Hall – Heads of Terms, 18 July 2012

Non-Key Member Decision 120/12 on Tweed Way Hall – Heads of Terms, 16 October 2012

Cabinet Meeting 13 February 2013 – Future Strategy in Respect of The Site of the Old Windmill Hall and Adjoining Land

Value Overview and Scrutiny Meeting 12 March 2013 – Requisition of Cabinet Decision 13 February 2013

Cabinet Meeting 14 August 2013 - Appropriation of Land for Planning Purposes & Open Space Processes relating to the site of the Old Windmill Hall and the Adjacent Car Park

Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 3 September 2013 – Requisition of Cabinet Decision 14 August 2013