



## **Communities Scrutiny Group**

**Thursday, 9 January 2020**

### **Review of Community Facilities in West Bridgford**

## **Report of the Executive Manager – Transformation**

### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1. The Council owns five community buildings in West Bridgford which provide space for a range of activities including exercise classes, community meetings, church groups and childrens' parties. This provision was last reviewed by the Community Facilities Member Group in 2012.
- 1.2. An options appraisal has been carried out on the future management/ownership of Lutterell Hall, one of the four community buildings, and a report on findings of this work will be referred to Cabinet early in 2020 to agree next steps.
- 1.3. This report and presentation will give councillors an update on the facilities, including their current usage, income and expenditure. This will enable councillors to scrutinise this information and make recommendations on their future operation.

### **2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group considers the contents of the report and presentation, and comments on the provision of community facilities in West Bridgford.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1. As the Council faces increasing financial pressures it is important to review all services to ensure that value for money is being achieved balanced against delivering community benefits.
- 3.2. The community buildings owned by the Council have been managed in the same way for a number of years and each has different levels of usage from groups and individuals from Rushcliffe and the wider area.
- 3.3. This report is intended to give an overview of all the centres compared to the same period last year. This will enable councillors to scrutinise the existing performance and consider making recommendations on the future operation of some or all of the facilities.

## **4. Supporting Information**

4.1. For this review all of the community facilities owned by the Council have been reviewed:

- Lutterell Hall is a 1920's building in the centre of West Bridgford (behind the Contact Centre). It consists of a large hall, bar, kitchen, room used by the pre-school and upstairs meeting room.
- Sir Julien Cahn is a pavilion building with a hall, bar, kitchen area and small meeting room.
- West Park Sports Pavilion is on the same site as Sir Julien Cahn and has changing rooms and a meeting room.
- Gamston Community Hall is located next to Morrisons and has a large hall and small meeting room.
- Gresham sports pavilion is not a community hall but an ancillary facility to support the outdoor pitches and includes changing rooms and a meeting room.

4.2. Data from quarters one and two in 2018/19 has been compared against data for the same period in 2019/20. This includes:

- Occupancy levels
- Booking types
- Income
- Expenditure – including budget projections for future years
- Competitor analysis (not dated)

### **Income and expenditure**

4.3. Appendix 1 shows the income and expenditure at each venue for the 6 month period. All of the facilities except Sir Julien Cahn saw an increase in income. The largest income increase in actual (not percentage) was at West Park. This is not reflected in the usage level however, as this has dropped from 227 bookings to 214. Usage at all other facilities has increased from 2018/19 to 2019/20, at an average increase rate of 22 bookings.

4.4. Two sets of income and expenditure figures have been included in the appendices, one including recharges and one excluding recharges. When we account for services, we include recharges to show the full cost of a service and this accords with professional accounting practices ie CIPFA's Service Code of Practice (SERCOP). These include the cost of caretaking, property services, human resources, finance, IT etc. We have also included the expenditure without the recharges to highlight the direct costs associated with running these facilities

4.5. In addition, the figures at Gresham show the expenditure for the sports pitch maintenance which is high but not the income from these as this was not part of this review. As this is largely an ancillary building for the sports pitches it is difficult to compare 'like for like' with the other community buildings. To highlight this point a note has been included in the appendices which states

that the income for Gresham for the whole of 2018/19 was £69,745 which includes the pitch hire (higher than any other facility that year).

4.6. The amount spent and budgeted for each facility by the Council on planned maintenance has also been reviewed and is included at Appendix 2. This figure will inevitably fluctuate from year to year depending on the results of the building surveys completed and planned maintenance. The budgeted expenditure for the next 5 years includes some more significant works required including:

- Security roller shutter upgrade at West Park - £20,000
- Main hall floor at Sir Julien Cahn - £75,000
- Floor coverings and redecoration at Gresham - £100,000
- Plant upgrade at Gamston - £50,000
- Floor upgrade and roof replacement at Lutterell Hall - £75,000 and £100,000

## Usage

4.7. The top uses for the community buildings are (see Appendix 3 for further details):

- Exercise classes
- Meetings
- Physiotherapy – this relates to one organisation booking at Gresham
- Child's class
- Church Group
- Preschool – this relates solely to the preschool based at Lutterell Hall

4.8. There were a limited number of weddings held in the venues with 8 across all facilities in each six month period. These were predominantly in Lutterell Hall, with a small number at Sir Julian Cahn. This is surprising as it would be anticipated that this would be the busier period for weddings (April to September). This is however, consistent with discussions held with West Bridgford Registrar, that the community halls will have limited appeal as a wedding venue unless they are dressed in the right way and specifically targeted for this market. This would however, impact on availability for community use and have a cost implication.

4.9. There are no buildings that are consistently empty on any day of the week, although the amount of bookings does vary across the week. The table included at Appendix 3 shows the average daily usage levels across a week. It can be seen that all the buildings have capacity as percentage occupancy (2019/20) across the week varies. Some of this variation can be explained by the nature of the facility e.g. changing rooms. Mornings and evening are the busier periods in each building.

## **Competition**

- 4.10. An analysis of local competition has also been carried out, which can be found at Appendix 4. As well as providing an overall picture, this has been split in to two different categories; large event venues and party/class venues. This will ensure, as far as possible, that venues are being compared like for like. For the large event venues, the search area was a little larger with the rationale being that for a larger event (e.g. a wedding) people are more willing to travel further and therefore, the competition area is larger. For class/party venues the search focussed on West Bridgford and the immediate surrounding area.
- 4.11. It is difficult to compare the large events venues as the type and style of venues varies significantly. There are also additional costs which were not included, such as catering which for many venues (e.g. Trent Bridge) increases the costs significantly as hirers can only use the inhouse facilities. It should also be noted, as above, that the Council facilities do not host many weddings or large events like that and therefore, a more useful comparison comes from the work done on other party/class venues.
- 4.12. The party/class venues which were included were local church and other halls e.g. scouts huts. Some may have been missed but there were a reasonable number reviewed to give a good starting point. The Council venues are generally more expensive to hire, however, the discounted rate (available to charities) brings it lower than some of the competition. It is important to consider here though that many of the other buildings will be run by volunteers and therefore, the management costs will be lower, the costs charged by the Council are not full cost recovery but are likely to be higher due to the associated staff costs.

## **Hire prices**

- 4.13. The hire prices for the facilities has increased for some uses in some of the buildings including:
- Lutterell Hall and Sir Julien Cahn: weekend celebrations, children's parties and the discount rate
  - Gamston: childrens parties and the discount rate
  - West Park: standard booking (5pm onwards) and the discount rate.

Appendix 5 gives a full breakdown of the hire costs including the percentage increases between 2017/18 and 2019/20. The recent Lutterell Hall community survey asked a question about why non-users have not hired the facility with price listed as an option. Early analysis of the results of this show that only 27 people (of 170 who answered that question) selected that option. Responses which were selected more often were:

- Did not currently need use of a community hall 105 people
- Did not know was available 45 people
- Other (analysis currently being undertaken as part of consultation) 45 people.

- 4.14. In addition, linked to detail included at 4.9 above, only 12 people said they did not use Lutterell Hall because it was not available at the time they wanted it. Whilst this survey only related to Lutterell Hall, it is a very helpful indicator of the local community's views.

### **Communication**

- 4.15. The community facilities are promoted via social media and since June the posts have made over 30,000 reach and impressions on our channels.

Specifically:

- Facebook: 12,499 people reached
- Twitter: 17,338 impressions
- Instagram: 3,145 people reached

The community venues have also featured regularly in Rushcliffe Reports.

### **Summary**

- 4.16. Aside from the above review, a table showing the provision of community venues across the Borough is included at Appendix 6. It is not part of this review, as these facilities are not managed by the Borough Council, but the list highlights the number of options for community/venue space for local residents across the Borough.
- 4.17. What the report and appendices show is that there is good provision in West Bridgford and wider Rushcliffe for community halls. The current venues are well used by different groups and individuals, but there is capacity to accommodate additional regular hirers or ad hoc use. Income and expenditure are broadly in line when recharge figures are excluded. The facilities are promoted well on the available channels but there is a lot of competition in the area both in private and community ownership.
- 4.18. There is the opportunity to consider other options for the future which could include a different operating model such as a more targeted approach to facility usage e.g. weddings, or managed by a community group with lower indirect costs (recharges). Any change will need to consider the balance between providing a facility for the community and the need for the Council to be acting more commercially. This report is intended to be an initial review of the current status of each facility and more detailed work would be required should any changes be recommended by Councillors.

## **5. Risks and Uncertainties**

- 5.1. At this stage this is a review only and so there are no associated risks.

## 6. Implications

### 6.1. Financial Implications

The current income and expenditure from the community buildings is included in this report. All of this is reflected in Council budgets and so there are no financial implications. Should any alternative options be considered the financial implications of these will need to be understood.

### 6.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### 6.3. Equalities Implications

There are none associated with this report but an Equalities Impact Assessment would be required should any changes be proposed and adopted for the management of any community buildings.

### 6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Crime and Disorder Act implications of this report.

## 7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Delivering high quality community facilities that support community events and gatherings will have a positive impact on residents quality of life.
Efficient Services	This review is intended to ensure that we are getting the best value for money from our facilities by managing them efficiently and effectively.
Sustainable Growth	
The Environment	<p>The most recent energy performance assessments were carried out on the buildings approx. 4 years ago. The national average energy efficiency score for these types of buildings is a score of D.</p> <p>Gamston, Gresham and West Park Sports Pavilion all meet or exceed this average. Lutterell Hall and Julien Cahn fall below the average mainly due to the lack of fabric thermal insulation. Improving their score would be challenging due to their design/form of construction.</p>

## 8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that Communities Scrutiny Group considers the contents of the report and presentation and comments on the provision of community facilities in West Bridgford.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Dave Mitchell Executive Manager – Communities 0115 9148267 dmitchell@rushcliffe.gov.uk
<b>Background papers available for Inspection:</b>	None.
<b>List of appendices:</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Recharges <b>Appendix 2</b> – Revenue and Capital five year prediction <b>Appendix 3</b> – Booking Types <b>Appendix 4</b> – Community Facilities in West Bridgford and Map <b>Appendix 5</b> – Community Facilities Prices 2019/20 (+% vs 2018/19) <b>Appendix 6</b> – Map of Community Facilities in Rushcliffe