



# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET 8 JULY 2009

Report Title	REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 (PARTNERSHIPS, REGENERATION, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ENGAGEMENT)  PRE DECISION SCRUTINY: COMMUNITY CENTRES
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**Agenda Status: PUBLIC**

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To submit a report to Cabinet detailing the Committee's conclusions and recommendations following the pre-decision Scrutiny of Community Centres that took place on Wednesday 24 June 2009.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet be formally notified of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (Partnerships, Regeneration, Community Safety and Engagement)'s conclusion and recommendations following the pre decision scrutiny of the Community Centres issue on 24 June 2009.

**Resolved:** That Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (Partnerships, Regeneration, Community Safety and Engagement) inform Cabinet that: -

- 1) Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 is concerned whether the identified saving of £190,000 from the Community Centre budget will be achieved.
- 2) The Community Centre Strategy should not be driven by the identified budget savings.
- 3) There is insufficient information available for the Committee to determine the basis of the Review of Community Centres, and it requests Cabinet to provide this information to its meeting on 12 October 2009.
- 4) Sufficient time be given to the Review of Community Centres to ensure that it is carried out thoroughly.

### **3. Background and Issues**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 1 April 2009, a member of the public addressed the Committee on the Forward Plan in relation to the subject Community Centres. Following debate of this issue the Committee agreed that there was a need for it to undertake some pre decision scrutiny into the Community Centres Strategy – future management of Community Centres.

#### **4 Pre Decision Scrutiny**

- 4.1 At the scheduled meeting of the Committee held on 24 June 2009, pre decision scrutiny on Community Centres was undertaken.
- 4.2 A presentation was given by the Head of Policy and Community Engagement that included:
- - The Reasons to review Community Centres
  - Communities and their Centres
  - Value for Money
  - Active Management
  - Emerging Proposals
- 4.3 Following the presentation the Committee debated the proposed Review, conveying its concerns and queries.

#### **4 Findings and Conclusions**

- 4.1 The Committee welcomes the Review of Community Centres but realises that it will involve a long, complicated consultation process, it is an important issue to the town and considerable budget savings are expected to be made by 1 April 2010. The Review process should not be hurried in order to meet the required budget savings by the end of the financial year. Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 is concerned whether the identified saving of £190,000 from the Community Centre budget will be achieved but is aware that this has already been identified as a key risk.
- 4.2 Income and expenditure budget head figures will become available during consultation with the individual Community Centres and all principles of Community Asset Transfer explored. Individual meetings have taken place with the Chairs of Community Centre Management Committees and pre consultation with the Management Committees.
- 4.3 The Committee requires further information on the Review, such as income and expenditure figures, and requests that this be provided to its next meeting on 12 October 2009.
- 4.4 In discussing its work programme at a later agenda item, the Committee included a Review of the Community Centres Strategy to its Work Programme 2009/2010, proposing that it commences late autumn 2009. Prior to the commencement of the Task and Finish Group Review, Councillors Portia Wilson, Tony Clarke and David Palethorpe will meet with the Head of Policy and Community Engagement in respect of the information currently available for the proposed Review of Community Centres and report back their findings to the October meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1.

## **5. Options**

5.1 Not applicable.

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

### **6.1 Policy**

6.1.1 The work of Overview and Scrutiny plays a major part in the development of the Council's policy framework through its work programme.

### **6.2 Resources and Risk**

6.2.1 Not applicable.

### **6.3 Legal**

6.3.1 The duties to undertake Overview and Scrutiny are set out in the Local Government Act 2000.

### **6.4 Equality**

6.4.1 Not applicable.

## **7 Consultees (Internal and External)**

7.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (Partnerships, Regeneration, Community Engagement and Safety) undertook pre decision scrutiny of Community Centres.

7.2 The Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Policy and Community Engagement provided evidence to the Committee.

7.3 The Deputy Leader provided evidence to the Committee.

7.4 The meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 held on 24 June 2009 was published through the Council's normal channels and was attended by 3 members of the public.

## **8. Background Papers**

The key papers are;

- Presentation – Community Centres – Update to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1
- Minutes of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 of 1 April 2009 – Item 11 – Forward Plan

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