

Cabinet – 24 April 2013

Community Hubs Pilot Evaluation Report

Portfolio: Councillor Shires, Community Engagement and Voluntary Sector

Related portfolios: All

Service: Communities and Partnerships

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1 Summary of report

- 1.1 The report sets out the evaluation of the initial pilot work for the two Community Hubs in Moxley and Ryecroft, together with the learning that has been identified during the pilot work and subsequent changes that were made.
- 1.2 The pilot has identified that an amended model was required than the model detailed in the Cabinet report of 25 July 2012 to develop a broader partnership approach rather than a single organisation lead. This was due to the size of the organisations and the organisational development that would be needed to achieve the original Community Hubs objectives.
- 1.3 Use of the revised model has begun in the two pilot areas. This report details the financial investments required during 2013-15 to allow the pilot activities to be fully implemented.
- 1.4 During the continuation of the pilot activities, a full evaluation of the Community Hubs project will be completed to demonstrate cost savings and impact on residents.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet notes the evaluation of the initial pilot activities of the Community Hubs project in Moxley and Ryecroft.
- 2.2 Cabinet approves the amended model for delivering Community Hubs which meets the original objectives more effectively.
- 2.3 Cabinet approves the financial allocation of grant funding for Moxley for the proposed activities outlined in **Appendix A** – £147k in 2013/14 and £129k in 2014/15.

- 2.4 Cabinet approves a financial allocation of grant funding for Ryecroft of £100k for 2013/14 and £100k for 2014/15.
- 2.5 Cabinet agrees to receive a future report on the development of an evaluation framework to monitor progress of the Community Hubs project.

3 Report Detail

3.1 Context

- 3.1.1 As Walsall Council (and other partners) face substantial reductions in financial resources over the coming years, it also faces the challenge of increasing the effectiveness of services to reduce inequalities across the borough. While the Working Smarter programme is helping to drive out wasteful activities, there also needs a step change in how local services are delivered, particularly services that are delivered in local neighbourhoods engaging with residents.
- 3.1.2 Future service delivery is going to have to demonstrate an increased effectiveness by:
- Better targeting of resources against local needs.
 - Creative engagement of organisations and individuals to help prioritise and co-ordinate local services, better utilizing local assets.
 - A close dialogue with residents and front line services to identify improvements to services.

3.2 Proposed Community Hubs model

- 3.2.1 The Cabinet meeting on 25th July 2012 agreed to develop two Community Hubs pilot projects in Moxley and Ryecroft. The agreed model aimed to support two community-based organisations to deliver their services through multi-purpose centres. These activities would be expected to support delivery of their services such as youth provision, health and family support, social care and exercise. The activities should enable people to lead more independent and self-sufficient lives in order to reduce dependency on, and resource needs, of Walsall Council, NHS and other statutory service delivery.
- 3.2.2 The model was based on existing community organisations that provide a range of services, such as the Collingwood Centre, that are well used and appreciated by residents.
- 3.2.3 The process agreed for the two pilot areas identified Moxley Peoples Centre and Ryecroft Neighbourhood Resource Centre (NRC) as the leads for the project, requiring them to develop business cases for a new approach to support service delivery through a grant funding mechanism which encourages a partnership approach. The business cases would be expected to show how a different approach to services could be undertaken in each area and how independent living and self-sufficiency would be increased, particularly showing how volunteer activity and social engagement would increase.

3.3 Evaluation of the proposed model

- 3.3.1 Although both organisations have worked closely with the Council for a number of years, the pilot process started with a 'health check' of each organisation to understand their existing strengths and weaknesses. This was followed by a structured discussion with centre managers and some board members on their future aspirations and constraints.
- 3.3.2 These identified that both organisations are good, competent organisations that deliver valued local services. However, it also showed that the organisations were small (less than £100k turnover) with limited opportunities to grow. These constraints included a number of issues such as:
- Limited reserves or staff time to spend on developing new activities.
 - Skills limited to their existing core activities, making it difficult to expand into new areas such as health.
 - Some building issues, such as the lack of long-term leases to allow them to access external resources or the necessary room available to deliver new services.
- 3.3.3 The proposed model would be expected to operate on a substantial scale in order to make an impact on the delivery of local services. This would require the co-ordination of a number of service providers in the voluntary sector and public sector. The local impact of not delivering the project well could have a negative effect on services, using more Council resources rather than less.
- 3.3.4 It became apparent that while the proposed model would suit certain organisations that currently facilitate a large range of activities, it would not suit Moxley Peoples Centre and Ryecroft NRC without substantial organisational development. This would require substantial investment and delay the start of the pilot activity.
- 3.3.5 As such, the proposed model was unlikely to achieve the original objectives of building capacity in local communities, strengthening the role of local community organisations and reducing dependency on public services.

3.4 Development of an alternative Community Hubs model

- 3.4.1 Discussing these issues with the local elected members involved with each project suggested that a broader partnership of organisations might be more effective, spreading risk across a number of organisations as well as incorporating a broader range of skills. This 'federated partnership' approach was agreed with the Portfolio Holder at a meeting in January.
- 3.4.2 This revised approach was initially developed for Moxley. The Ryecroft model was delayed due to the uncertainty of the location of Ryecroft NRC. This issue has now been resolved.
- 3.4.3 Following the revision of the approach to the lead organisation, an analysis of key data in Moxley showed poor indicators in health, jobs, skill levels and children and family support. Key strategic data (such as the Area Profiles)

enabled the pilots to clearly see where existing activity was not reducing inequalities in the areas. Meeting delivery organisations to discuss the priorities provided additional information, including the impact of reductions in local services.

3.4.4 The combination of strategic profiles together with local information has enabled the Moxley pilot to develop proposals that will address the original objectives of the Community Hubs project by better targeting local resources as well as engaging local organisations in delivery of the activities. The priorities selected for Moxley are:

- Health inequalities.
- Jobs and training.
- Children and young people.
- Environment.

3.4.5 Two projects were started in 2013 to contribute to meeting these priorities. Moxley Medical Centre developed activities to tackle obesity, isolated residents, support for 0-5 year olds and the re-establishment of a chiropody service. The Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust has developed a series of activities for the centre in Moorcroft Wood.

3.5 *Moving the pilot forward*

3.5.1 This report has provided information on the development of the pilot activities for the Community Hubs undertaken to date. Revising the model has meant more activities will need to be undertaken before a final appraisal of the model and activities can be completed.

3.5.2 To continue this work, the Community Hubs project has three priorities to develop for 2013/14:

1. Funding for 2013-15.
2. Development of year 2 activities.
3. Development of an evaluation framework.

3.5.3 Funding for 2013-15

The initial pilot project in Moxley was funded from existing resources and cost around £24k in 2012/13. Grant funding to all of the delivery organisations for 2013-2015 has been costed at £276k (estimated to be £147k in 2013/14 and £129k in 2014/15).

3.5.4 An indicative total budget of £100k for 2013/14 and £100k for 2014/15 is requested for Ryecroft.

3.5.5 Development of year 2 activities

The programme in Moxley is ready for approval subject to the financial resources being approved. This will allow continuation of the activities started at the end of 2012/13 as well as the new activities across all four Moxley priorities. The proposed activities are outlined in **Appendix A**.

3.5.6 The Ryecroft priorities will be developed through two resident consultation events planned for late April. A programme of activities will then be developed depending upon the priorities selected.

3.5.7 **Development of an evaluation framework**

The Community Hubs project needs to ensure it is able to meet the original objectives of improving service delivery with reducing dependency on public resources. An evaluation framework is being developed that will monitor three key areas:

1. Outcome improvements – ability to show improvements in service delivery performance data leading to reduced inequalities across the borough.
2. Resource improvements – actual cost savings generated.
3. Process improvements – changes in service delivery that can lead to increased effectiveness of activities.

3.5.8 The framework will be developed and reported back to Cabinet for approval. There will be no roll-out of the Community Hubs project to other potential centres until the evaluation framework has demonstrated that the model can make significant cost savings.

4 **Council Priorities**

4.1 The proposed approach offers the potential to make a major contribution towards each of the council's priorities of:

- **Communities and Neighbourhoods** – Community Hubs are local models run by local people and organisations. This will provide greater access and responsiveness to the needs and requirements of local communities.
- **The Economy** – community venues could offer more advice, learning opportunities and other facilities to help individuals find and keep employment.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – the Community Hubs will be expected to provide services and activities that will assist residents lead more self sufficient and independent lives. Crucially this will require greater emphasis on health and well-being to avoid alternative and costly demands on the health and social care systems.

4.2 The Community Hubs project directly supports the Marmot Principles through the following activity:

- Give every child the best start in life – 'children and young people' is a priority in the Moxley hub with activities being developed between the primary school, medical centre and Sure Start.
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives – delivered through the 'children and young people' priority
- Create fair employment and good work for all – 'jobs and training' is an identified priority to ensure local residents can access jobs

- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all – the hubs' priorities will ensure that health and quality of life are improved
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities – the role of volunteering and community cohesion are important elements of the Community Hub project
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention – 'reducing health inequalities' is a priority in the Moxley Hub and likely to be a priority in the Ryecroft Hub.

5 Risk Management

- 5.1 A risk assessment of proposed activity through the Community Hubs project will be undertaken.

6 Financial

- 6.1 The anticipated budget for the Moxley Community Hub has been identified as £300k over 2012-15. Approximately £24k was spent in 2012/13 requiring approval of the remainder (£276k) for the period 2013-15.
- 6.2 The financial requirements for the Ryecroft Community Hub will be quantified following the selection of priorities and activities taking place in late April 2013. An indicative budget of £100k for 2013/14 and £100k for 2014/15 is requested.
- 6.3 To date, there is a total funding agreement of £200k for Community Hubs. This report is requesting a total programme spend of £300k for Moxley and £200k for Ryecroft, so a total of £500k. To meet the budgetary requirements laid out in this report, a further £300k of funding will need to be allocated from reserves.
- 6.4 Where any activity is delivered through a third party, the Council's existing grant agreement process will be used to administer and manage the funds.

7 Legal

- 7.1 Legal need to be involved to draft the grant agreements.

8 Property Implications

- 8.1 Both Moxley Peoples Centre and Ryecroft NRC operate from Council-owned properties without a lease. This situation is unsatisfactory for all parties and Property Services is currently developing a model lease for use with community organisations. Both Moxley Peoples Centre and Ryecroft NRC have expressed their wish to secure a long-term lease from the Council.

9 Staffing Implications

- 9.1 There are no key matters at this stage relating to human resources. However, this work may later inform future decisions on the delivery of services with potential implications for employees.

10 Equalities Implications

- 10.1 An impact assessment has not been carried out as yet on the concept of Community Hubs. This will be done as part of the development of the pilot work in Moxley and Ryecroft.
- 10.2 The proposed approach is for locally responsive and resident-driven organisations to take the lead in developing local services. Typically these organisations will be better placed to engage traditionally hard to reach groups such as minority ethnic communities, faith-based communities, disabled groups and individuals, young people and people on low incomes.

11 Consultation

- 11.1 The development of the pilot has involved substantial consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including the local community, customers of Council services, service providers, partner organisations and potential funders.

Background Papers

Cabinet report 25 July 2012 – Strengthening Community-based Services

Author

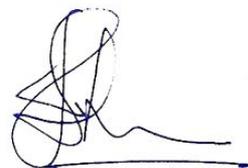
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17 April 2013

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17 April 2013

Proposed programme in Moxley 2013-2015

Activities as identified on 3rd April 2013 expected to be funded through Community Hub resources:

Moxley Medical Centre – increased 0-5 year old support (together with Moorcroft Wood Primary School and Sure Start), obesity reduction, support for isolated residents, chiropody service

Moorcroft Wood Primary School – after school activities, holiday activities, improvements to school library

Moxley Peoples Centre – physical activities and yoga, computer sessions and drop-in, breakfast club, healthy eating activities

Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust – volunteering activities, physical improvements to Moorcroft Wood and canal network, health walks and activities, re-establishment of Moorcroft Wood Centre

Other activities are being developed with organisations using existing funding or attracting external resources. Discussions are planned or have been held with:

- Darlaston Sure Start
- Darlaston JET
- Grace Academy
- Public Health
- CaldmoreAccord
- IYPSS
- Old Hall Peoples Partnership
- Job Centre Plus
- Economic Regeneration
- WACC
- Walsall College
- whg