

MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

SAVING PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT

DIRECTORATE: Economy & Environment

SERVICE AREA: Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

SAVING PROPOSAL TITLE: 50% reduction in Community Centre Caretaking Support tapered over 3 years

BUDGET AREA: Community Centres

TOTAL BUDGET FOR THIS AREA: £404,646

% OF TOTAL BUDGET IN SAVINGS PROPOSAL: 25.45%

TOTAL SAVING: £103,000 (£17,167 in 23/24 followed by £34,334k in 24/25 and 25/26 and £17,167 in 26/27)

Please provide a brief description of how the saving will be achieved:

At present each facility is provided with a caretaker for 12 hours per week. 11 hours are funded by CCBC with the additional 1 hour funded by the individual Community Centre. This proposal is to reduce the caretaker hours funded by CCBC from 11 hours to 7 hours over 3 years, i.e. reducing by 1 hour 20 minutes in each of the 3 years.

The proposal sets out to reduce the level of caretaker support provided to each Community Centre by 36.36% over 3 years. The proposal has been altered as a result of the budget consultation and the effect of this is to lessen the reduction in the 11 hours per week funded by CCBC to 7 hours funded by CCBC per week rather than 5.5 as originally proposed. The other change is to taper the reduction over 3 years, rather than 1 year, commencing from 1st October 2023.

Any caretaker that works over the contracted hours per week will be funded directly by the individual Community Centre. The reduction in the funding will be tapered realising a saving of £17,167 in 2023/2024, £34,334 over the subsequent 2 years and £17,167 in 2025/2026; a total saving of £103,000

2. PUBLIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING COULD IMPACT UPON THE PUBLIC:

Consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, *long-term* implications for future generations and *preventative services*. Recognising that savings now may be needed to secure future provision, or may secure provision in another area.

Long-term guidance: Consider the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs.

CCBC currently supports a large network of community centres situated geographically across the county borough. These facilities provide a broad range of services, activities, programmes and aspects of improving community cohesion.

Each facility is provided a caretaker for a contracted period of 12 hours per week (11 hours funded by CCBC and 1 hour funded directly by the community centre) that undertakes a range of duties that include, but not limited to, opening and closing the building, ensuring the building is safe to use, ensuring that both statutory and reactive maintenance requirements are complied with, that the building is clean and safe for use. The caretaker also acts as a point of contact between the Community Centre Service Manager and the management committee.

The proposal suggests a reduction in the amount of CCBC subsidised caretaker support by 36.36%. However, the proposal has been amended to bring this change in over a 3-year period. As a result of the proposal the options that are available to each community centre will be - **1)** absorb the cost increase, **2)** absorb part of the increase, **3)** reduce operating hours accordingly, **4)** undertake the work themselves on a volunteer basis, **5)** potentially close.

The options presented and given the operating history and current structure to support these facilities could result in a reduction in the community centre service across the county borough, with a range of programmes and activities either reduced or removed from the offer. In response to consultation the effect has been tapered to allow Community Centres time to absorb the reduction in subsidy.

Prevention guidance: Consider whether the proposed saving is affecting a preventative area that reduces future burdens and supports well-being.

A broad range of programmes are delivered across the community centre network by a range of both internal and external partners and agencies.

It is likely that a number of these will either be reduced and removed from the offer should the individual community centre not be in a position to absorb the additional costs associated with maintaining the current caretaker support

DOES THE PROPOSAL HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPACT MORE GREATLY ON PEOPLE WITH PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS? (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)

* Yes ☐ No ☒

DOES THE PROPOSAL IMPACT ON PEOPLE WHO FACE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE?
(low income/income poverty, low wealth/or no wealth, material deprivation, area deprivation, socio-economic background, cumulative impact – information on [Policy Portal](#))

* Yes ☐ No ☒

DOES THE PROPOSAL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE? (opportunities to use the language, promote the language and/or treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language)

* Yes ☐ No ☒

NB * If **YES** to any of the above, please complete an [Integrated Impact Assessment](#) (IIA). For further advice and guidance please see the [Policy Portal](#). A Saving Proposal Template or an IIA, if relevant, must be submitted to be included as hyperlinks to all decision reports related to the proposed savings. IIAs are not required for nil impact proposals.

PLEASE DETAIL ANY CONSULTATION THAT HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN IN CONSIDERING THIS PROPOSAL. Summarise any feedback received.

Consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, *involvement*.

Involvement: Consultation was undertaken as part of the Council's budget setting process. As a result of the feedback received the proposed cut has been tapered over 3 years. A large number of respondents to the survey disagreed with the proposed cut, the highest level of responses to any proposal. The face-to-face engagement supported this view.

IS FURTHER CONSULTATION REQUIRED BEFORE THIS PROPOSAL CAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

Yes ☐ No ☒

NB* Please seek guidance from Corporate Policy, who can advise on whether a formal consultation is required and adherence to the Gunning Principles.

Consultation will be undertaken as part of the Council's budget setting process.

TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE AND THE IMPACT RATING DEFINITIONS, PLEASE INDICATE THE PUBLIC IMPACT RATING APPLICABLE TO THIS SAVING PROPOSAL (please tick):

Nil ☐ Minor ☐ Moderate ☐ Significant ☒ Critical ☐

3. ORGANISATION IMPACT ANALYSIS

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING COULD IMPACT UPON THE ORGANISATION:

Community Centres provide a valued service to the communities they support, delivering a broad and varied range of programmes, activities and support. Examples include Flying Start, Employment based initiatives, Health & Wellbeing based programmes.

As a result of the proposal, it is anticipated that the availability of these programmes will be significantly impacted if Community Centres are not available as venues potentially resulting in increased pressure on other council services

The reputational damage that any facility closures will have upon the council should also be acknowledged

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING WILL IMPACT UPON MEMBERS OF STAFF:

Each staff member is currently employed on a 12 hour per week contract. CCBC subsidise 11 hours and the individual Community Centre 1hour. Any hours over and above the contracted 12 hours are funded directly by the individual community centre

The proposal is to reduce the CCBC subsidy by 36.36%, but tapered over 3 years. This could result in some facilities possibly closing and others not being in a financial position to absorb the additional cost. As a result the caretaker will either:

- See a reduction in total hours per week
- See the community centre close and be redeployed
- See no change

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) STAFF IN BUDGET AREA AFFECTED:

NUMBER OF POSTS AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED SAVING: 35

PLEASE SPECIFY HOW THIS WILL BE MANAGED: This will depend on the decision taken by each Community Centre

HOW MANY POST(S)(please state)

- ALREADY VACANT:
- VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE:
- RETIREMENT:
- REDEPLOYMENT:
- REDUNDANCY:

PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF WHEN THIS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED:

Discussions with Community Centre Management Committees would begin following any approval of this proposal; given the potential HR implications the reduction in CCBC funded caretaker support would be implemented from 1st October 2023

Community Centre Caretaking staff who possibly would have a reduction in their contracted 12 hours could seek alternative employment.

WILL THE PROPOSED SAVING HAVE AN IMPACT ON ANOTHER DIRECTORATE, SERVICE AREA OR TEAM WITHIN THE COUNCIL? (please tick)

Yes ☒ No ☐

Flying Start – The Flying Start is presently situated in Gelligaer Community Centre (as the primary user) but are also exploring other facilities.

An option should be considered to explore a Community Asset Transfer to reflect the position at Gelligaer Community Centre.

CCBC Youth Service – The service is delivered in a number of locations and continued delivery may be impacted should the proposal be adopted

CCBC Electoral Services - A number of facilities are used to support local, national and UK elections. Should the proposal be approved consideration may need to be given to the location of these facilities to support the electoral process.

WILL THE PROPOSED SAVING HAVE AN IMPACT ON ANOTHER PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNER, OR VOLUNTARY SECTOR PARTNER? (please tick)

Yes ☒ No ☐

If **yes**, please consider the 5 ways of working, in particular *integration*.

DESCRIBE:

- THE AREA(S) AFFECTED; AND
- HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING WILL IMPACT

Integration guidance: Consider how the proposal will impact on other service areas, or partners, and their ability to meet their objectives.

The impact of the proposal may impact upon external organisations that hire a particular community centre to continue in the current format, however there are a number of facilities that are geographically located closely together, along with a portfolio of community centres (approx. 12 - 14) that could support the continuation – albeit in a different location.

As stated, Community Centre Management Committees consist of volunteers who do not receive any payment for their commitment, their only agenda is to improve their community. New Volunteers throughout the borough are not forthcoming, and the majority of volunteers are 60 years plus. If these existing volunteers became disillusioned and more asked of them, then a possible resignation of a significant number may occur throughout the Community Centre network.

HAVE ANY OPTIONS BEEN CONSIDERED TO MITIGATE ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT?

PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF ANY MITIGATION (e.g. gradual reduction in service, income generation, transferrable skills of staff, commercialisation of the service etc.)

In addition, consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, acting in *collaboration* with other service areas or partners.

The proposal suggests a 4 hour reduction in the caretaker support provided by CCBC, tapered over 3 years. Other options could include:

- A per hour reduction e.g.: 1, 2 or 3hrs per week per community centre
- Targeted reductions in certain community centres
- Closure of underutilised facilities
- Geographical review of provision e.g.: Rhymney
- Closer links with private and voluntary sector partners to deliver existing services e.g.: Abertridwr & Aber Valley YMCA

TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE AND THE IMPACT RATING DEFINITIONS, PLEASE INDICATE THE ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT RATING APPLICABLE TO THIS SAVING PROPOSAL (please tick):

Nil ☐ Minor ☐ Moderate ☒ Significant ☐ Critical ☐

4. LINKS TO POLICY AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

DOES THE SAVINGS PROPOSAL LINK TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

If so, please specify and state what the implication may be.

POLICY AREA: Sport & Active Recreation Strategy (SARS)

CORPORATE PLAN and WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES (please state which objectives)

WHAT IS THE LINK?

The SARS is explicit in the role of local organisations and facilities to support the delivery of sport and active recreation. Community Centres play a key and essential role in this regard and a reduction or removal of provision will have a potentially significant impact

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?

Community Centres provide cost effective and flexible access to facilities to support local engagement and participation in and with sport and active recreation. Further, community centres are often viewed as 'safe' local spaces for those who are, or maybe uncomfortable with attending larger facilities.

A reduction in service or potential closures will result in a number of people not engaging in activities that support active, healthy lifestyles and the broad range of associated benefits that this derives.

POLICY AREA:

STATUTORY DUTIES (including the requirement to provide services in Welsh)

WHAT IS THE LINK?

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?

POLICY AREA:

WELSH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE or STRATEGY

WHAT IS THE LINK?

WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?

5. OTHER RISK(S) AND SENSITIVITIES

HAVE ANY OTHER RISKS BEEN IDENTIFIED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS SAVING PROPOSAL?

Yes ☒ No ☐

IF YES, PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW:

Community Centres are managed on a day to day basis by volunteer management committee members who undertake the general roles of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, etc., along with engaging with and encouraging new users. Caretakers provide essential support in this regard and act as a vital link back to the council.

Encouraging volunteers is particularly challenging and any perceived lack of support from the council will likely make this even more difficult – again this will result in either a significant reduction in service or possibly facility closures

PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW ANY OTHER MITIGATION:

Not all risks can be mitigated. Some may need to be tolerated in the context of budget pressures.

Volunteers are an essential component of effectively managing and delivering community centre provision.

Mitigating the risks associated with a lack of engagement is challenging, however work is being explored to potentially 'link' community centres together to assist and share expertise – as an example of this approach is the potential for The Twyn Community Centre (Caerphilly Town Centre) and The Van Community Centre (Lansbury Park) to work closely together.

6. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

PLEASE USE THIS SECTION TO PROVIDE ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION WHICH YOU FEEL HAS NOT BEEN CAPTURED.

The majority of Community Centres do not pay their Caretaker regular excess hours, only the very busy Centres may such as The Twyn Community Centre. All additional excess hours paid are agreed with the Community Centre's Management Committee and Caretaker – no involvement from CCBC i.e., Centres operate quite easily and efficiently with the 12 hours Caretaker allocation. There are Community Centres that are presently allocated 12 hours caretaker support, but the usage figures do not warrant this allocation due to their low or very low usage figures –e.g., Tirphil Village Hall, for example, could very easily operate efficiently with 6hrs as there is 1 hirer with 4 bookings per week.

Also, there is currently a portfolio of approximately 14 Community Centres that are not managed or supported by the council and are delivered / operated on an independent basis. The potential exists to engage with the buildings to support relocation of services should community centres within the council portfolio offer a reduced service or possibly close

HEAD OF SERVICE: Rob Hartshorn

DATE OF COMPLETION: 14.2.23