

Minutes of the Special Meeting of Acton Community Council held on Tuesday 25 September 2018 at Acton Community Resource Centre, Overton Way, Acton, Wrexham

Present:

Councillor	Kevin Roberts (Chair)	Councillor	P D Jones (Vice Chair)
	W Baldwin	"	P Lloyd
"	M Davies	"	G Lowe
"	Mrs A Evans	"	D Picken
"	R Hardy	"	B Pritchard *
"	Ms S Hope *	"	Mrs D Wallice *
"	Ms S Jarvis *	"	Ms L Williams
"	Ms P Kidd	"	1 vacancy

* Absent

Also Present:

Wrexham County Borough Council: Michael Bather and Lynn Williams
Mrs Carole Roberts, Clerk to the Council

65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sian Hope, Sharon Jarvis, Basil Pritchard and Debbie Wallice

66. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No Declarations of interest were made at this stage of the proceedings

67. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following item of business as it is likely that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960.

68. REVIEW OF THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT FOR ACTON COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

In accordance with the terms of the ten year Agreement signed by the Community Council on 30 July 2013 to March 2023, the Council conducted the third two year review of the Agreement and determined the operation of the Agreement. It also assessed the level of financial support provided by the Community Council in light of the aspiration for the Centre to become self-financing during the agreement period to March 2023. The Chair welcomed Mr Michael Bather and Mrs Lynn Williams Centre Manager to the meeting.

The Council then raised various operational matters regarding the Agreement as follows:

- Importance of planning for the future, especially in the light of any austerity measures that may be considered for the Acton Community Resource Centre(ACRC) by Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC). It was noted WCBC were seeking to make the Centre as sustainable as possible and it was a top performing Resource Centre. Additional large scale housing identified in the draft Local Development Plan would impact greatly on user demand at the ACRC and other Community Facilities in the area; this should be taken into consideration when making decisions about the capacity and future viability of the ACRC.
- The current shortfall in operating costs despite the £30,000 per annum SLA ring fenced provision from Acton Community Council (ACC) for the ACRC was being met at the year-end by WCBC. The

building was not in the ownership of ACC but ACC does make a substantial contribution to operating costs and also gives further indirect support to ACRC by funding other Community Projects that use the Centre thus providing a Community Benefit. ACC would need to give separate consideration if WCBC underwriting of the operating loss was to cease as there is no contingency provision or budget for such eventuality.

- Concerns about the downward trend apparent in recent performance indicator statistics and the health and safety aspects of evening and weekend use when ACRC was not staffed. It was noted this had been risk assessed and was being kept under review particularly if any near misses were to be reported. The as yet unreported Performance indicators would highlight a 3.2% increase on bookings. There would be a £35,000 cost in providing the required staffing for all the hours ACRC is open. WCBC Insurers are aware of the present staffing levels and risk assessments carried out for ACRC. The ability to prove value for Council Tax Payers money was paramount and ACC should receive at least an Annual detailed financial statement on the running and operating costs of the ACRC and whether there was a deficit and how that would be met and the Business planning in place to achieve self-financing.
- There was proactive advertising of all the rooms available at the Centre on various websites including DEWIS and the interview room in particular is advertised as a hot desk facility to local businesses and organisations.
- How was the ACRC management identifying the gaps in provision that residents may wish to see at ACRC? It was noted that the Licensing Act requirements were onerous and limited for occasional/event licensing at ACRC.
- The Little Sunflower Group is expected to vacate the Crèche at ACRC shortly and consideration would be given to a long term strategy for the space to bring it up to a marketable standard to ensure maximum financial benefit. There may be potential in the short term for more casual use of the Crèche spaces

RESOLVED – that

- 1) the Acton Community Resource Centre availability and room profiles be proactively advertised through DEWIS and similar websites and social media and the regular user groups be highlighted and brought to the attention of Acton Community Residents**
- 2) An annual detailed financial statement be provided to Acton Community Council at the end of each financial year on the running and operating costs of the Acton Community Resource Centre and providing information about any deficit, how that would be met and the Business plan in place to achieve the long term aim of the Resource Centre becoming self-financing.**
- 3) the Community Council continue to provide the sum of £30,000 per annum as set out in the existing Service Level Agreement over the next two years, with the fourth two year review to take place in September 2020**
- 4) the Manager of the Acton Resource Centre be asked to identify superior office space for Acton Community Council's Clerk within any reconfiguration of room space as a result of the vacation of the Crèche or any other of the rooms at the Resource centre in the future; and**
- 5) the Community Council would wish the external approaches and flower/shrub beds to be planted with low cost seasonal shrubs and plants to improve the appearance and first impressions of the Resource Centre.**

Signed as a correct record this 16th day of October 2018

Chair