

**Report of:** The Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager

**To:** Executive Board

**Date:** 8 January 2007

**Item No:**

**Title of Report :** Proposal for the Shotover Day Care Centre with regard to the Horspath Road Resource Centre; evaluation and results of feasibility study.

### Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of Report:** To outline the detail of the proposal resulting from the feasibility study

**Key decision:** No

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Caroline Van Zyl - Portfolio Holder Safer City

**Scrutiny Responsibility:** Community Scrutiny

**Ward(s) affected:** Lye Valley

**Report Approved by:**  
**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Van Zyl  
**Legal:** Stephen Smith  
**Finance:** Andy Collett  
**Strategic Director:** Michael Lawrence

**Policy Framework:** 'The Oxford Plan'; The Council's Vision Statement (3.1.2) "To have sound financial management"

#### **Recommendation(s)**

1. To support the approach being advocated.
2. For Lye Valley Area Committee and Community Scrutiny to consider the financial contribution contained within, and to explore the scope for delivering additional services subject to available resources.

## **Background**

- 1 Between January 2004 and January 2006 the Big Lottery Community Fund and Oxford City Council jointly funded the Horspath Road Resource Centre. A total of approximately £100k from both sources supported revenue and capital expenditure. Small amounts of additional funding sustained activities until June of this year when the lack of any further funds or support, meant the centre had to close.
- 2 A solution was therefore required that maintained the service within the financial constraints that allowed it to remain both accessible and sustainable in terms of longevity. Representatives from Oxford City Council's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, Oxfordshire County Council's Adult Learning Department, the Shotover Day Care Centre's Management team and the local community, through the Horspath Tenants Association met during the late Summer, to explore the possibility of re-locating the facility within the Shotover Day Care Centre – a distance of about 150 metres, from the previous venue. Reports for comment were taken to Cowley Area Committee, Community Scrutiny, and Executive Board during this development period.
- 3 The broad principle of the proposal received universal support from all parties but In order to best effect the transfer of services and facilities all interested groups and agencies wished to see a feasibility paper that addressed the main issues and requirements to ensure an efficient re-location. This report addresses some key transfer issues and includes staff feedback from the city and county councils, and comments from local residents, as well as the all important assessment regarding practicalities.

## **Financial Evaluation**

- 4 In order to ensure that the new resource centre offers a sustainable service that does not rely on short term or temporary funding the following factors can now be confirmed:
  - 4a) The Shotover Day Care Centre will not charge rent for any of the rooms or spaces used as part of the new resource centre facilities. In return for this major concession the Centre staff will expect that their core clients are able to access and use the services on offer such as the IT suite and access housing and any other advisory services that might locate within the centre at a later date. On-going activities will therefore be free to users. However, user groups or providers will be expected to meet any charges they incur as they provide activities or services e.g. advice agencies will subsidise or

pay for production of any information and guidance provision, and education/training providers will be expected to pay for their own equipment, staff and resources.

- 4b) There will be a need to finance the transfer of services and facilities. A sum of approximately £2,500 for IT suite disassembling, transport and re-assembly, will be needed. The Area Committee has indicated it is prepared to consider a request for this funding at its next meeting. At this stage no other transfer costs are envisaged.
- 4c) After evaluation, it is now felt that there will be no requirement to engage in any major or significant alterations or building works at the Shotover Day Care Centre as a result of the transfer of Horspath Road Resource Centres services. Access and traffic around the Centre will be the responsibility of the Shotover Day Care Centre staff, who will attempt to maximise the community use and reconcile this with the needs of Centre's core clients, to the benefit of both client groups.
- 4d) The County Council's Community Learning Support Unit have offered to try and secure additional external funding should the need for further support arise e.g. funding to pay for a part time co-ordinator to promote, develop and manage the service.
- 4e) Additionally, the Shotover Centre could be a base for raising or generating small sums to assist community use of the premises e.g. car park car boot sales.
- 4f) Further liaison between public sector partners and voluntary sector providers could provide opportunities for accessing joint resources
- 4g) Groups/individuals, who are not Oxfordshire County Council employees or not supervised by an employee, will need Public Liability Insurance of at least 5 million pounds. This can be arranged by the day centre but at a cost in the premium. It will therefore be preferable for groups/individuals to have their own Insurance.
- 4h) Any extra staff above current provision e.g. catering, administrative support and caretaking, will require additional funding.

### **Operational Evaluation**

- 5 The Shotover Day Care Centre caters for 170 clients, in a building that was a residential home for older people. The service is for physically disabled adults and physically disabled people over the age of 65. There is a large dining room with a kitchen and tea bar, a lounge, craft room, two computer rooms and a hairdressing room. The building is accessible for most people, including toilet facilities. The

current programme of scheduled activities includes games and quizzes a range of live music entertainment, computer use with volunteer tutors and organised day trips out. Current 'wider' community use is virtually non-existent.

- 6 The staff are keen to extend the role of the Shotover Day Care Centre within the local community, and are committed to the extension of these local services that will benefit and support a neighbourhood lacking in community facilities. In order to achieve this bold aim, several practical issues are being addressed, these are presented below with a note on progress of each:
  - 6a) Hours of access – The day centre operates 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., Mondays to Saturdays. Although there will be some opportunities for 'wider' community access during these core hours, there is clearly an imperative serve the core, 'daytime' client group, which might limited this scope. It is envisaged that the premises are likely to be used more widely outside of these hours, and will therefore be available from 4.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m., for 'wider' community use. This would appear to dovetail well with any after school activity
  - 6b) Access and entry will be through arrangement with the Day Care Centre Manager.
- 7 Internal traffic circulation and management is particularly relevant during the core operational hours. This will be managed by the Day Centre staff, as indeed it will be operationally necessary to require any allocations of external and internal user space to be under the same management control.
- 8 The Integration of 'wider' community and the core centre users is also relevant during these hours. This will again, be managed by the Day Centre staff and activities such as the circulation of the newsletter, the use of the daily information notice board, and the taking of refreshments together in the dining room, will all be encouraged. Community users will also be invited to any entertainment laid on for the core client group.
- 8a) Common facilities e.g. the use of and location of disabled access will require Improved signage.
- 8b) Any re-assurance required by the core clientele will be undertaken by the Day Centre staff, through a series of staff and client user group meetings. Similarly, re-assurance required by the staff will be addressed through regular Team/ Management meetings.

- 8c) Alterations – The main entrance door may need changing to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act. Funding will come from the County Council's Social & Community Services Department.
- 8d) Children i.e. those aged 11 to 18 years will be able to use space and facilities at the Shotover Day Care Centre. Space availability is likely to be restricted though and cannot, therefore, substitute as a 'quasi youth club'. It may be that additional youth facilities will still be needed in the neighbourhood, as the centre's primary use has to remain for day care service provision for the elderly.

### **Potential community uses and user feedback**

- 9 This report includes feedback from local people and their residents association – Horspath Area Residents and Tenants (HART). In addition, a wider survey via parents with children at the St Frances' Primary School is planned for some 100 families. Results from this survey will be analysed with recommendations to help ensure that the Shotover Day Care Centre's services, meet local needs and interests, and continues to grow and support these expressed aspirations.
- 10 Two well-attended meetings of HART were held in September and November. The residents welcomed the proposed move of the Resource Centre services and facilities to the Shotover Day Care Centre. The September meeting included a vote called for by the Chair on whether the move to the Shotover Day Care Centre should proceed – this resulted in a unanimous endorsement. Residents did express some concern that the move should be sustainable – this report suggests that the transfer to Shotover Day Care Centre should prove to be lasting, so far as it is possible to ever be completely definitive regarding such issues
- 11 A further six individual residents responded to a telephone consultation that addressed advisory services, IT provision, volunteering and other issues. These responses are incorporated with other feedback and summarised below:
- 11a) **Advisory services** – most people offered suggestions for information and advice sessions. The most frequently cited of which involved establishing an Advice Centre at the Shotover Day Care Centre, that involved housing advice sessions, police surgeries and particularly street warden support sessions. Other suggestions included legal advice, welfare benefits information, information leaflets on local leisure services, debt management (there is no credit union in Horspath), access to internet information and parks advice and guidance to help people with

garden improvement. Councillor surgeries could also be held at the Shotover Day Care Centre for both City and County Councillors.

- 11b) **IT** – people were concerned that the IT available should cover ‘basic’ IT needs. Courses should also be made available to help people obtain IT qualifications. Children and older people were most often referred as those most likely to benefit from local access to Internet enabled IT. It was suggested that local community groups e.g. cubs and scouts could prove useful contacts in encouraging their members to access the IT facilities. The housing office suggested that English for speakers of other languages – particularly for recently arrived east European and the more established Bangladeshi communities – could also be provided. Finally, there will be a need to collaborate closely with the City Council’s Oxford Tenants Resource Centre in the Eastern half of Horspath Road to coordinate this focus e.g. the provision of IT access.
- 11c) **Volunteers** – most people referred to the difficulties of recruiting and retaining volunteers. However, several suggestions were made for attracting volunteers including: local company sponsorship and staff support, attracting parents from the local primary school, good advertising, building activities that attracted volunteer support, and encouraging local public figures e.g. councillors to advocate with the view to encouraging volunteers.
- 11d) **Wider Issues** – The responses here were more limited but included:
- Parking, if people from outside or distant from the Shotover Day Care Centre were accessing services.
  - The cost of services or facilities e.g. fees for IT courses, having a co-ordinator or manager to ensure that the use of rooms and access to services worked efficiently, (there must be enough people to make sure that public is safe).
  - Two issues were identified locally – namely the isolation of older people and the lack of spaces to bring people and groups together. The Shotover Day Care Centre could be a focus for helping support older people living alone e.g. through ring-around networks. The Centre might also provide facilities e.g. a kitchen for community lunches, space for social events and rooms that enable residents to meet together in shared and communal activities

## Risk analysis

The following table outlines some of the risks associated with the move to the Shotover Day Care Centre with possible alternative solutions

RISK	RISK LEVEL	RESPONSE
A). Community use of the Centre puts pressure on Centre staff and alienates existing clients	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community use is limited to fixed times outside of, or after main client use</li> <li>Funding is sought for a part time co-ordinator to work with community users</li> <li>The Centre offers some use of existing staff time to help with community access</li> <li>Clients and community users are integrated and brought together to share activities and facilities</li> </ul>
B). Community use – whether high or low – is disruptive and causes problems of access and movement about the building	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Centre is rigorous about times and means of access with clear signage.</li> <li>All community users are appraised about access, <i>do's and don'ts</i> etc.</li> <li>User groups will be expected to sign up to guidelines about use of the Centre premises</li> </ul>
C). Community use exacerbates the depreciation of premises and equipment	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre and community groups share ideas for maintaining materials and equipment</li> <li>Community use is monitored for its impact on the Centre's condition</li> </ul>
D). Use of the Centre by children (11 to 18) is not protected by CRB regulations	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All those responsible for working directly with children are CRB checked</li> <li>Centre staff linking with community users are appraised of the need to protect young users</li> </ul>
E). Providers of services e.g. advice or education do not turn up as promised or keep to agreed times – causing problems for Centre staff dealing with disappointed residents	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All providers make firm agreements with Centre staff to abide by agreed services and also agree to let likely users e.g. learners know if a service is cancelled</li> <li>Persistent lateness or cancellations will result in the provider no longer accessing the Centre</li> </ul>
F). Additional usage of Centre puts pressure on parking spaces and causes overspill in local area	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre emphasises local resident use and encourages non-car based access</li> <li>Centre works closely with HART to help resolve issues that might arise from additional traffic</li> </ul>

## **Action Plan and Timescales**

- 12 Provided this feasibility study is acceptable to all key stakeholders in its recommendations then the next stage should be implementation and the gradual 'rollout' of a range of services and activities.
- 13 In order to accommodate the phased development of the Shotover Day Care Centre as a wider community resource an Action Plan could be prepared. The County Council in liaison with the main partners have offered to prepare this plan. Such a plan should be ready by the end of December to enable activities and services to begin in a manageable way from January 2007. The Action Plan should address the needs of existing community users to ensure that their presence at Shotover Centre is not undermined or threatened.
- 14 There are already a number of activities going on in the Shotover Centre involving community use and there is some existing IT capacity, which combined with the re-located computers from the old Horspath Road Resource Centre, should provide an extended IT suite. The re-located capacity will be in place by the end of 2006.
- 15 Key dates are:
- The IT transfer to the Shotover Day Care Centre by early January
  - The provision of new resource centre facilities to start in mid January 2007.

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## **Background Papers**

None