

**Question addressed to Councillor Rundle, Portfolio Holder for Stronger Communities, from Councillor Tia MacGregor**

There are considerable fears in Risinghurst that the community centre will be axed. This is a well used and valuable resource in this community. It is undeniably true that previous administrations have neglected community centres and allowed them to fall into disrepair.

The residents of Risinghurst wish to be reassured that their community centre will stay open and will receive adequate funding for maintenance and improvements

Could the Portfolio Holder please provide an assurance that the Community Centre will remain open and that it will not be closed or the activities it provides switched to another Community Centre? And would he please provide details of any planned maintenance and improvements, the budget for any such improvements and the timescale for those improvements?

**Response from Councillor David Rundle**

As Tia will remember, the issue of Risinghurst Community Centre was raised by County Councillor Roz Smith at the last North East Area Committee. Councillor Smith helpfully informed the Committee of a recent meeting in the Community Centre which I believe Tia was unable to attend. As Councillor Smith reported it, it was clear from the meeting that, though there have been capacity issues in the past, the local community is prepared to roll up its sleeves and get involved in making sure the Centre has a healthy future. At NEAC, in addition to Councillor Smith, Councillor Sinclair spoke in support of the Centre. I, in my role of Chair, summed up both the feeling of the meeting and my own position as portfolio holder: we are in the business of supporting, not closing, vibrant Community Centres and we welcome the local commitment to the centre in Risinghurst.

I know that officers are working with the committee of the Centre to help the Centre achieve VISIBLE status. In addition, though it is usually the responsibility of the tenant, officers are providing a fire alarm for the Centre. If there are other issues about the Centre residents wish to raise with me in my role as portfolio holder, I'd welcome it if Tia would put those residents in direct contact with me.