

Scrutiny Committee 9 Dec 2015

Agenda item 3 : Community Centres Strategy

Proposed amendments for clarification from Cllr Dick Wolff

1 : Clarity about dealing with the maintenance backlog

Scrutiny papers p.23 (CCS p.3), paragraph beginning “Many of the buildings” replace the sentence beginning “While there is a commitment” with :

Under this Strategy, the Council will see that the backlog maintenance is done and the buildings brought up to standard, subject to a satisfactory lease being agreed.

2. Removing an accountancy obfuscation

para 5, Scrutiny papers p.26 (CCS p.6), para beginning “The c£1m that . . .”

Rewrite paragraph either deleting the sentence from the word “additional” or including only money actually spent on ‘Council officer time’, but excluding ‘opportunity costs’.

3. Clarity about ongoing support

Scrutiny papers p.31, CSS p.11 after the opening paragraph of the section ‘Objective 2 – improved management’, insert paragraph to read :

In terms of the ongoing management and maintenance of community centres (once the maintenance backlog and planned improvements have been dealt with), all centres will be expected to be financially self-sufficient. One post will be created to provide officer support and advice from the Council to the seventeen unstaffed centres.

third paragraph on [Scrutiny papers p.23 (CCS p.3)] beginning “Many of the buildings”, add a sentence at the end to read :

Once the maintenance backlog and necessary improvements have been achieved the Strategy does not propose ongoing financial support to centres, which will be expected to be financially self-supporting.

This paragraph having been amended twice would now read :

Many of the buildings are old and require increasing levels of maintenance. Across the centres there is around £1.7 million of backlog maintenance, although this figure reduces with Rose Hill being replaced and other potential developments. Under this Strategy, the Council will

see that the backlog maintenance is done and the buildings brought up to standard, subject to a satisfactory lease being agreed. The strategy explains what changes we need to make to prevent an inevitable decline in community centres and to support the valuable work they provide in a changing and ever demanding world. Once the maintenance backlog and necessary improvements have been achieved the Strategy does not propose ongoing financial support to centres, which will be expected to be financially self-supporting.

4. Two further confusions

(a) p.31 of Scrutiny papers : “Council managed centres”

suggested amendment for clarification :

The Council’s preferred position is that robust, sustainable community organisations manage the centres. . . . (Trust) . . . There may also be benefits from such a model for ~~Association managed~~ ‘Tier 1’ centres as they could choose to buy services such as caretaking, cleaning, ICT system or bid writing. These benefits are not exclusive to a trust model and we will explore various options to see if there is a better way to ensure the ‘Tier 1’ centres currently managed by the Council can meet the needs of the communities they serve secure the support they need to manage themselves effectively.

(b) Table 3 on Scrutiny papers p.30 (CSS p.10) re West Oxford

To ‘maintain’ is not to ‘improve’. It suggests that, alone of all the centres, West Oxford will continue to receive ongoing financial support for routine maintenance.

Suggest remove and replace with ‘none needed’