

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### **Report to Leisure and Community Policy Development and Review Panel**

**Date**                    **23 July 2014**

**Report of:**            **Director of Community**

**Subject:**              **REVIEW OF COMMUNITY BUILDINGS DRAFT MASTER PLAN**

#### **SUMMARY**

This report presents the draft master plan for the review of community buildings following completion of the needs assessments for all of the Community Action Team areas.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Panel note the outcome of the review of community buildings and comment on the potential projects identified in the draft master plan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. As part of Fareham Borough Council's commitment to providing high quality community facilities across the Borough, a review of all of the Council owned community buildings was carried out in 2008.
2. In July 2008, the Council's Executive agreed a broad vision for providing high quality community facilities across the Borough. The agreed way forward being to carry out a needs assessment exercise in each of the Community Action Team (CAT's) areas and then to prepare a master plan for implementing the outcomes. The Executive agreed a phased approach to implementing this, based on the five CAT's areas –

**Phase 1 – Portchester**

**Phase 2 – Crofton**

**Phase 3 – Fareham**

**Phase 4 – Titchfield**

**Phase 5 – Western Wards**

3. All five needs assessments have now been completed and action plans have previously been approved for the Portchester, Crofton and Fareham Town CATs areas. Potential projects for inclusion in an action plan for the Titchfield and Western Wards CATs areas are presented for consideration in this report.

## **PORTCHESTER CATS AREA**

4. The action plan for the Portchester CATs area highlighted the need to address the significant deterioration to, and maintenance backlog at, both the Portchester Community Centre and the changing accommodation at the Wicor Recreation Ground.
5. Following a funding agreement with Hampshire County Council, the Council embarked on a project to construct a new purpose built community centre on the open space to the south of the existing community centre, remove the three tennis courts and basketball court which had become a location for anti-social behaviour and which were under used, demolish the former community centre, extend and resurface the car parking facilities and to landscape the area to blend all aspects of the project into a consistent appearance.
6. A new purpose built community centre was completed in December 2012 at a cost of £2m and opened in January 2013. The final stages of the project to improve the car parking and adjoining landscaping will be completed this summer. The project is now in the final stage, landscaping, which is completing the transformation of the facilities in this area.
7. The Council was successful in obtaining funding of £230,000 from the Football Foundation towards a project to demolish the changing accommodation at Wicor Recreation Ground and replacing this with purpose built facilities.
8. The new changing rooms were completed in December 2012 and following this the car park was repaired and resurfaced in January 2014.

## **CROFTON CATS AREA**

9. The second phase reviewed the Crofton CAT's area and this identified that the overall provision of community facilities in the area is good and the vast majority of needs were being achieved, In particular the sports hall provision exceeded that available elsewhere in the Borough with the exception of Fareham Leisure Centre.
10. Prior to the review of community buildings, significant improvements were undertaken to the community facilities in the Crofton CATs area. Purpose built football changing facilities together with five new pitches at the Seaford Park Recreation Ground and the Hammond Wing of the Crofton Community Centre was refurbished at a cost of £285,000 in 2009.
11. Due to the good quality of the existing facilities and the perception that the areas needs were being satisfactorily catered for, it was concluded that there was not a requirement for any significant improvement in facilities at the present time. It was further concluded that any community organisations who wished to develop their facilities should consider applying to the Community Fund for financial assistance, with all applications to be assessed on their respective merits.

## **FAREHAM TOWN CATS AREA**

12. The needs assessment for the Fareham Town CATs area highlighted that the overall provision was good and that local need was being met, but that there were some areas where action is required: the objective of achieving high quality community facilities in the area was being achieved.

### **New Community Centre**

13. The needs assessment identified a strategic demand for a community facility with ground floor accommodation in the central Fareham area.
14. An outline specification for a new community facility has been prepared and an initial assessment of potential sites concluded. Two sites identified for further consideration were the site of the X-perience youth facility which is currently leased to Hampshire County Council and the Ferneham Hall entertainment venue.
15. A members working has been established to explore options for the future operation of Ferneham Hall with the aim of reducing the trading deficit. One option to be considered within this exercise is the possible adaption of the Octagon Lounge to provide additional community facilities in the town centre. Progressing the redevelopment of the X-perience centre would require the current tenant to surrender their lease and a significant capital investment to fund the provision of a new community centre, hence this is currently seen as a longer term aspiration.

### **Bath Lane Recreation Ground**

16. The needs assessment further identified that improvements would be beneficial to some of the outdoor sporting facilities in the area. To enable this a new cricket square has been provided at Bath Lane Recreation Ground and the built facilities will be improved in 2014/15 including an extension to and refurbishment of the changing accommodation together with a new club house area, provision of a new grounds

maintenance store and demolition of the out dated club house facilities with this area being returned to public open space.

### **Fareham North West Community Centre**

17. The Fareham North West Community Centre serves the Fareham Park area. This area is a corporate priority for the Council, to tackle the underlying causes of deprivation in the area. When originally constructed in mid-1990, it was anticipated that the community centre would be developed in a two stage approach, being extended further as required, in order to meet evolving community needs.
18. It is now recognised that the neighbourhood would benefit from more accessible community provision in order to accommodate the growing needs of the area. The existing centre is limited in capacity and recent community development work, which has also attracted new funds, has seen a 62.5% increase in use of the Centre.
19. However, it is suggested that before any commitment is made to extending the current centre, existing community provision in the neighbourhood should be reviewed to identify whether other chances exist to relocate or combine community provision with other opportunities occurring in Fareham Park.
20. In addition to the other sites in the Fareham Town CATs area, the changing accommodation at the Fareham Bowls Club has been improved with a total grant award of £30k from the Community Fund.
21. Officers will also be preparing a vision for the improvement of the sports facilities at the Cams Alders Recreation Ground, which will include exploring options for a combined facility for the football and rugby club currently based at this site.
22. Whilst reviewing the sports facilities at Cams Alders Recreation Ground, it is proposed to give consideration to the provision of community facilities in the Fareham South ward as this was identified as a short fall in provision in the needs assessment.

### **TITCHFIELD CATS AREA**

23. The needs assessment for the Titchfield CATs area highlighted that the overall provision was good and that the objective of achieving high quality community facilities in the area was being achieved. The Titchfield Community Centre is successful and has benefited from significant improvements over the last two years including the replacement of the flat roofs and a replacement programme for the doors and windows.
24. The needs assessment identified a number of buildings where action is required to improve the facilities, and the following actions are proposed to address these issues:

### **Abshot Community Centre**

25. The Abshot Community Centre is a single story detached building within its own grounds. A condition survey of the building in 2008 highlighted a need for significant remedial works, principally to the roof structure, covering and associated rainwater goods. Since this time only minimal responsive maintenance has been carried out to the building. Therefore it remains in need of substantial repairs if it is to be brought up to an acceptable standard for a modern community building.

### **Hook Recreation Ground**

26. Within the open spaces improvement programme, the Executive has approved funding for a feasibility study to determine the costs and options for installing a primary and secondary drainage scheme into the site and for assessing the options for gaining optimal use of the existing changing facilities.
27. As there is limited funding available from developers contributions to allow any improvement works to be undertaken at this location, it is recommended that should it be feasible to undertake the required improvements, then the Council work in partnership with local sports clubs to seek external funding from relevant sport's National Governing Bodies and to consider supplementing this with capital funding should a viable scheme be developed.

### **WESTERN WARDS CATS AREA**

28. The provision of community facilities in the Western Wards meets the aspiration of providing high quality community facilities. The Whiteley Community Centre was constructed in 2000 and remains a well-managed and maintained facility, the Burrige Village Hall was extensively refurbished in 2008 and the sports changing rooms at Allotment Road, Osborne Road Warsash and Sarisbury Green have all been refurbished over the past three years.
29. Although the provision of community facilities in the western wards is excellent, there remain some challenges to address.
30. The main community facility in Warsash is the Victory Hall. The building is well used but is need of investment to bring it to the standards required of a modern community building. The repair and maintenance of this building is the responsibility of the trustees of the Victory Hall as the Council only holds the deeds as "Custodian Trustee".
31. To improve the facilities at the Victory Hall it is suggested that the trustees actively seek external funding and if successful apply to the Council for matched funding, with consideration to be given to providing this from the balances in the capital funding previously allocated to the review of community buildings.

### **Lockswood Community Centre**

32. The management of the Lockswood Community Centre has changed twice in the past 18 months. Brookfield Community School held the lease for operating the centre but this was handed back to Fareham Borough Council when the grant for community schools funding was withdrawn in 2012. In 2013 a new community association made up of users and volunteers has been formed to manage the building. The new community association are currently managing the centre under a Tenancy at Will arrangement pending a decision on the long term future of the Locks Heath District Centre. Until the long term future of the Locks Heath District Centre is known, there remains uncertainty over the future of the Lockswood Community Centre which requires investment to modernise the facility, in particular the heating and ventilation systems and the internal decoration.
33. It is recommend that once the long term future of the Lockswood District Centre has been resolved, then consideration be given to the funding improvements to the heating systems and to improving the internal decoration from the balances in the capital

funding previously allocated to the review of community buildings.

### **Coldeast**

34. The Council has had a long term objective to provide a swimming pool in the Western Wards of the Borough and the Executive in April 2014 approved a project and capital funding to deliver a new swimming pool together with sports pitches and changing accommodation at the site of the former Coldeast hospital.
35. Work is currently underway to bring this development to fruition and a progress report will be brought to the September meeting of the Leisure and Community Panel.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS / ACTION PLAN**

36. An existing capital budget of £438,500 is available to assist in implementing the improvements identified in the review of community buildings.
37. A capital budget of £8,000,000 (including £1m from the open spaces improvement programme) for the western wards swimming pool and community infrastructure.
38. To address the issues identified in the needs assessments for Fareham Town, Titchfield and Western Wards CATs, the following projects could be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

<b>CATs Area</b>	<b>Building</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Fareham	New	New community centre to serve the town centre area.	£2,000,000
Fareham	Fareham NW Community Centre	Extension (phase II) to the community centre.	£300,000
Titchfield	Abshot Community Centre	External refurbishment (roof covering and associated elements).  Internal improvements to improve accessibility for those with a disability.	£200,000
Titchfield	Hook Recreation Ground	Implementation of a drainage system to bring the former sports pitches into use.  Refurbishment of the former changing rooms.	£700,000
Titchfield	Locks Heath Recreation Ground.	Refurbishment of the changing rooms.	£100,000

Western Wards	Locks Heath Community Centre	Replacement heating and hot water system (excluding boilers) to serve the community centre and the library.  Internal redecoration.	£100,000
Western Wards	Victory Hall, Warsash.	Full refurbishment.	£200,000

39. As a result of actions identified during the initial review of community buildings and the subsequent needs assessments, the following expenditure has been incurred in improving community facilities:

<b>CATs Area</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Portchester CATs Area	New Portchester Community Centre	£2,000,000
	New changing rooms at car park improvements at the Wicor Changing rooms.	£750,000
Fareham CATs Area	Refurbishment of the Fareham Bowls Club	£30,000
Western Wards CATs Area	Refurbishment of the western wards sports pavilions.	£280,000
Total Expenditure		£3,060,000

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

40. The report to the Executive in July 2008 on the review of community buildings noted that there a number of community groups were finding it difficult to meet the requirements of health and safety legislation. The Executive therefore agreed that a more detailed assessment is undertaken of health and safety matters affecting community buildings with a view to identifying any direct action necessary.

41. Since 2008 significant progress has been made in relation to the management of the community buildings. An annual programme of inspections has been instigated which is an opportunity to ensure that each tenant has the required inspections, surveys and risk assessments in place and undertaking the required remedial works. This process initially identified those organisations which required assistance to reach the required level and any urgent works that were required.

42. A number of health and safety training sessions were arranged for community groups which proved successful and the vast majority of groups are now providing the required level of assurance. Where concerns are raised, officers work with the relevant groups to resolve any concerns that have arisen.
43. The backlog of essential maintenance works have now been addressed and any new issues arising are being addressed on a case by case basis.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

44. Should the maintenance backlog at the Abshot Community Centre and Victory Hall not be addressed then there is a risk of ongoing deterioration to the building fabric with the risk that this could negatively impact on the use of these facilities by the community.

### **CONCLUSION**

45. This report concludes the Borough Wide needs assessment of each of the CAT areas and outlines the results from for both the Titchfield and Western Wards needs assessment and the Panel is asked to comment on potential schemes for inclusion in an action plan to be presented to the Executive.

**Background Papers:** None

**Reference Papers:**

**Enquiries:** For further information on this report please contact Gareth Satherley, Leisure Development Manager (Ext 4476)