

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning & Skills Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 25th March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities

PORTFOLIO: Neighbourhood, Leisure & Sport

SUBJECT: Community Centres

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an annual report on the Community Centres for the operating period 2011/12.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) the report be noted;
- ii) Members comment on service delivery and future developments and challenges for the community centres service.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Community Centres service consists of five buildings, Castlefields, Ditton, Grangeway, Murdishaw and Upton. The centres have programmes of community activities, varying models of community café's and service outlets, i.e children's centre, youth centre, day services. These centres provide a community hub, a central point at the heart of these communities for residents to enjoy chosen activities and receive services in their neighbourhoods. They are based in the most severely deprived wards in the Borough and are well utilised. Churchill Hall also receives grant funding to support community use.

3.2 Community centres contribute to a whole area approach to health and wellbeing. They provide a nucleus to support community activity and access to services in neighbourhoods. The activity supports the Council's key priorities.

- 3.3 Community centres are safe, accessible facilities located in the heart of our communities. They serve both the local and wider community and promote participation, inclusion and cohesion. All centres are designated Emergency Rest and Hate Crime Reporting Centres.
- 3.4 The Community Centres service demonstrates continuous improvement through its performance monitoring and has made significant contributions to the Council's efficiency programme. Income generation is a key area of focus to support the sustainability of the service.
- 3.5 The Community Centres are benchmarked as part of APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) against other Civic, Cultural and Community Venues owned and run by other local authorities. This provides performance data but also trend information over a number of years. Halton's community centres have progressed positively overall on their indicators earning awards for Ditton & Upton as most improved centres and nominations for Grangeway and Murdishaw in recent years.
- 3.6 Annual usage of the community centres increased steadily in 2009/10 and 2010/11 however this dipped in our last full operating year:-
- 2009/10 307,633 Attendances
 - 2010/11 309,952 Attendances
 - 2011/12 271,264 Attendances
- During 2010/11 Adult Day Services and Youth Services reduced their delivery from community centres impacting significantly on the overall usage figures. Added to this, Castlefields was moving to a new community centre as part of the regeneration programme. Once the local centre had been demolished the old community centre's physical location was isolated which had a negative impact on usage. The move to the new community centre has generated increased usage and it is anticipated usage figures will recover in the operating year 2012/13.
- 3.7 A new building management system developed internally in collaboration with IT Services was introduced during this operating year. This will create efficiency in the administration tasks for the centres i.e bookings, invoices and provide more robust data capture to support the performance management indicators.

4.0 COMMUNITY CENTRE PROFILES 2011/12

4.1 Castlefields Community Centre

4.1.1 This was a centre that was going through a transitional period, usage declined and user groups were looking forward to moving into the new centre. Much of the second half of the year was spent in planning meetings to discuss the transition from old to new in order to minimise disruption to centre users. A genuine feeling of optimism was clear and numerous service providers came forward to express an interest in making use of the centre. Children's services and health providers identified Castlefields as a key area of focus and service level agreements for future usage at the new centre were negotiated. The last pensioners Christmas party supported and funded by Plus Dane and LHT provided attendees with an opportunity to reminisce about their experiences and share memories of the centre and the new town development since its inception.

4.1.2 Castlefields had a significant drop in usage in this operating year, attendance was 21,316 compared to 28,000 in the previous year representing a 24% reduction. This significant drop in usage is explained by the centre's physical decline and lack of investment coupled with the national state of the economy. The complete withdrawal of youth services sessions similarly had an impact. In addition it is felt that data capture submission may be inconsistent, the introduction of the new building Management system developed internally with ICT services will eliminate the discrepancies in the future and lead to reliable data.

Total annual opening hours	3300
Total aggregate hours main room hired	750
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	145
Total attendance main room	8844
Total attendance other rooms	3724
Total other attendance	8748
Total attendance	21316

4.1.3 Category of usage is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	426
Lifelong Learning	2537
Health & Healthy Living	3947
Arts Development	1426
Sports Development	1426
Other community use	11554
Total	21316

Health related attendances are high, in the main this is due to regular bookings by Smoking Cessation, Weight Watchers and Shape-up. Two health events for flu vaccinations and health and well-being engagement days were well attended. 'Other community use', is the highest category this includes parties, events, the community café and meetings such as residents groups, planning meetings and consultation to support the Castlefields Regeneration Programme.

4.1.4 **Castlefields Capacity Analysis**

Castlefields had average bookings for 68 hours per week in 2011/12. The capacity analysis provides a breakdown of actual usage:-

Room	Usage Per Week
Hall	26 hrs 38%
Café	42 hrs 61%
Room 1	30 hrs 44%
Room 2	6 hrs 9%
Room 3	3hrs 4%

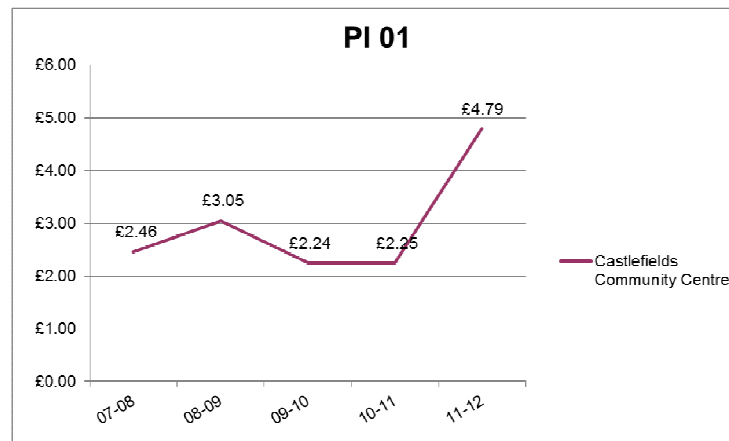
During this period Castlefields experienced particularly low levels of usage in the centre's Main Hall at 38%. Similarly the centre shows low levels of usage in group rooms with the exception of Room 1 which is the Day Services base room. The move to the new community centre has seen a significant increase in usage in the main hall and reversed this trend at Castlefields with usage up by 12 % at mid-year.

4.1.5 Castlefields Direction of Travel Indicators

The following graphs are extracts from the APSE performance data suite and demonstrate the direction of travel on performance. The key performance indicators illustrate centre performance over a five year period, these are used to determine how a centre is performing against other facilities owned and run by local authorities.

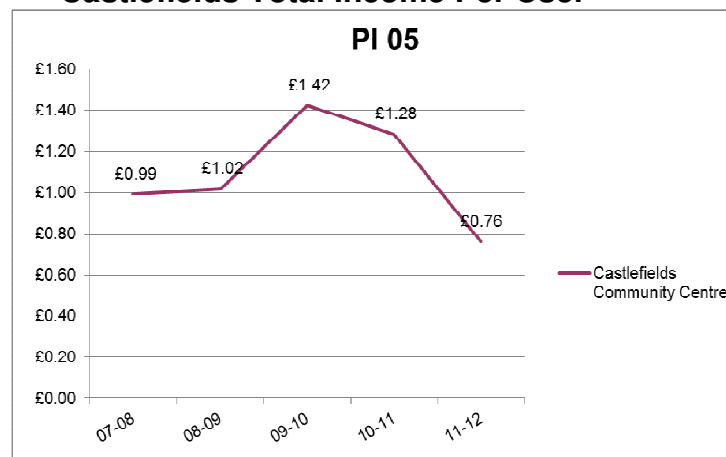
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- **Castlefields Net Cost Per User**



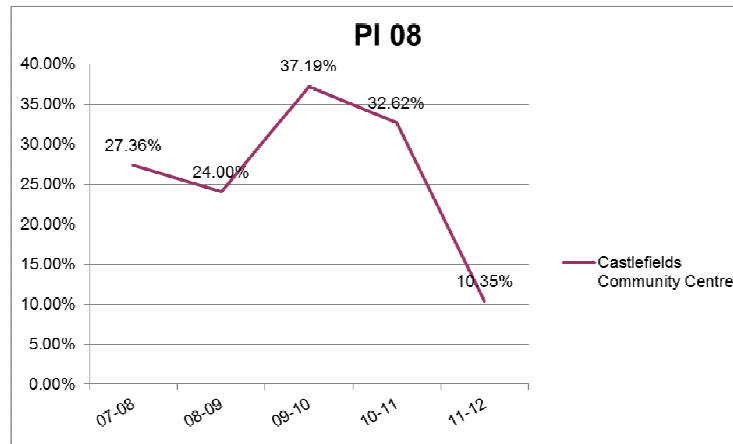
The cost to run Castlefields has not increased, the upward spike across the financial year is due to the drop in attendances pushing up the cost for the individual user.

- **Castlefields Total Income Per User**



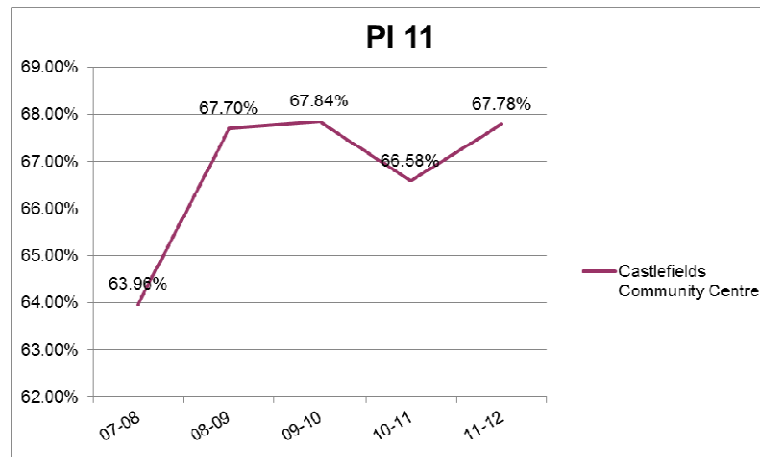
This diagram has a similar picture demonstrating that a fall in usage and a drop in income can have a dramatic impact on a centre's performance in this case the total income per user. Despite the fall in this operating year there are clear signs of recovery.

- **Castlefields Operational Recovery**



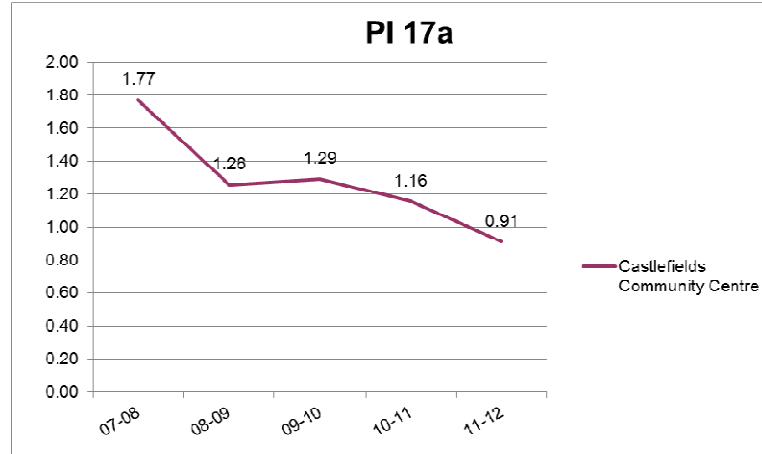
Castlefields operational recovery dipped to the lowest position in a five year period, this is symptomatic of low levels of income. As previously noted fortunes have reversed this financial year and we would expect to see operational recovery levels to eclipse the previous high of 37.19%.

- **Castlefields Staffing Cost as a Percentage of Total Cost**



There is very little variation over a five year period, this is typical of a small team where attendance levels are constant and overtime is closely managed, this is unlikely to fluctuate in the future. The increase over the period is attributed to bringing down cost in other areas notably around energy usage which in turn pushes up the staff cost as a percentage of total cost.

- **Castlefields Visits Per Household (Catchment Area)**



This has dropped as attendances have dropped at the centre.

4.1.6 Castlefields new community centre opened in March 2012, performance for the 2012/13 operating year demonstrates usage and income has increased. The centre has Service Level Agreements with Adult Day Services, Children’s Services and Corporate Training. There is a community library, community café and a job club operating at the new centre, all contribute to increased usage and a more vibrant feel.

4.2 Ditton Community Centre

4.2.1 Ditton has maintained usage with only a slight dip, attendances dropped by 928 from the year before. The community café operated by Country Garden was withdrawn and youth services reduced their outreach delivery from Ditton both of which have impacted on usage figures.

Total annual opening hours	4050
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1954
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	1149
Total attendance main room	31820
Total attendance other rooms	58648
Total attendance	90468

4.2.2 **Category of usage** at Ditton Community Centre is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	19856
Lifelong Learning	2620
Health & Healthy Living	19604
Arts Development	33413
Sports Development	4756
Statutory Agencies	2500
Other community use	7719
Total	90468

The highest category of usage at Ditton is art development, this in the main is due to regular hire by three dance schools; Katie Glover, G-school and Tanza. They generate large and regular footfall as well as being the biggest source of income from enhanced weekend charges.

Youth and children not surprisingly have the second largest attendance due to the co-location of Children's Centre. The centre was awarded excellent status by OFSTED and the relationship between the Community Centre and Children's Centre was highlighted as being particularly strong and mutually beneficial.

Health and healthy living attendance's is just short of youth and children due to high numbers attending Pulmonary Rehab, Recharge, Happy Hearts the Alzheimer's Society and Weight Watchers.

4.2.3 **Ditton Capacity Analysis**

Ditton had average bookings for 75.5 hours per week in 2011/12. The capacity analysis provides a breakdown of actual usage:-

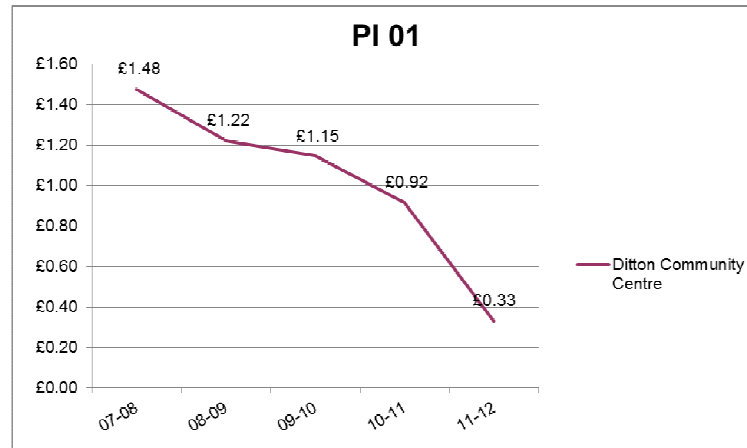
Room	Usage Per Week
Hall	41 hrs 54%
Café	43 hrs 56%
Room 1&2	28 hrs 37%
Room 3	22 hrs 29%
Youth Hall	29.5hrs 39%
ITC Suite	12 hrs 16%
Youth Café	25hrs 33%

Levels of usage in the centres two halls are positive. Other rooms exist within Ditton Community Centre (not included above) and are occupied by Children's Services, there is a Service Level Agreement in place for this usage.

Investment in the ICT suite in 2013 should see levels increase for drop in sessions and adult learner courses thereby increasing attendances in the category of life-long learning.

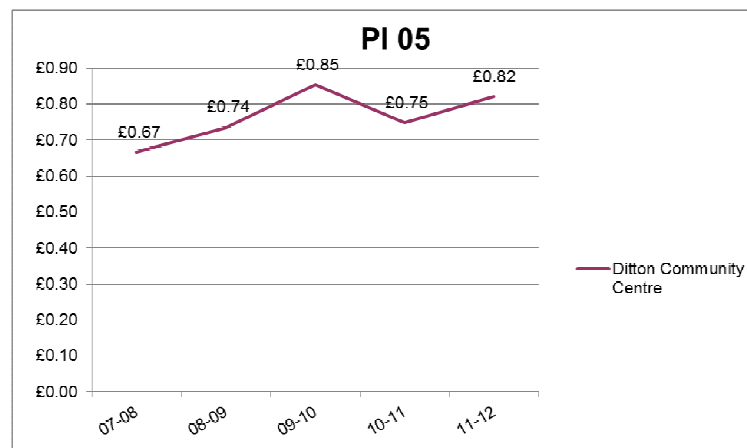
4.2.4 Ditton Direction of Travel Indicators

- **Ditton Net Cost Per User**



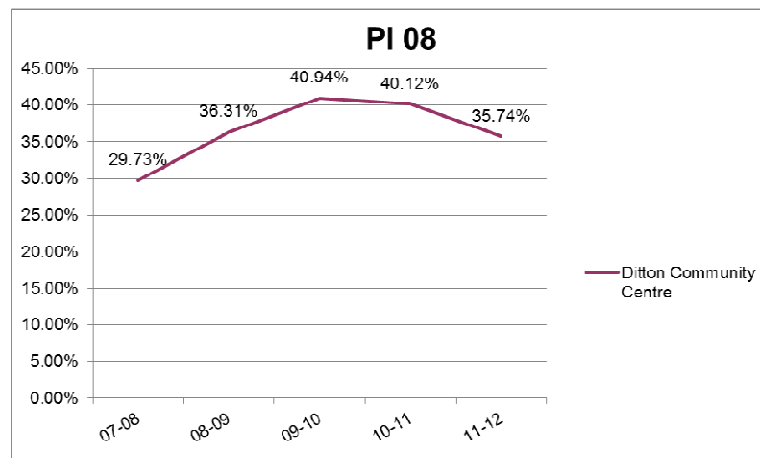
This is showing a very positive direction of travel due to year on year success in increasing income and a consistent footfall. Ditton has overachieved on income target positively impacting against this indicator.

- **Ditton Total Income Per User**



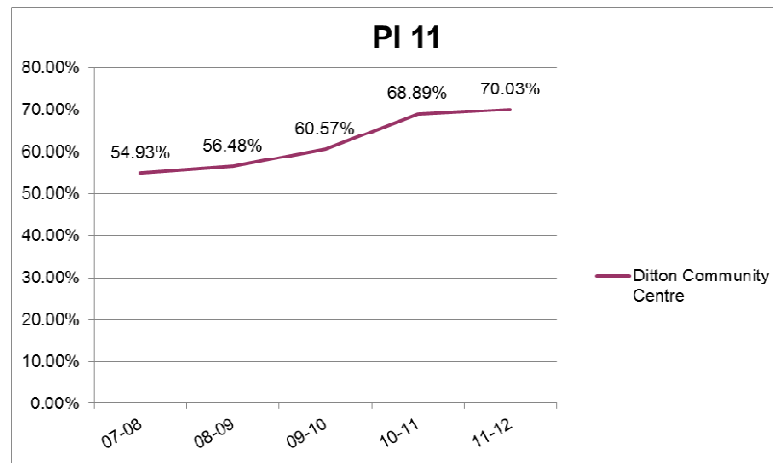
A five pence increase on income per user acknowledges the over achievement on income to the previous year and overall there is a healthy upward direction of travel for the centre. Income per user is all primary income i.e that coming from fees and charge.

- **Ditton Operational Recovery**



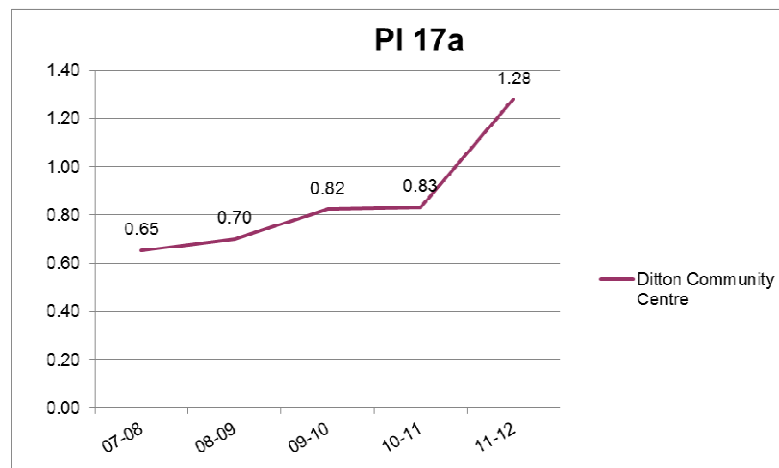
There is an unexpected drop in operational recovery given the increase in income and relatively fixed costs, this is due to how the information is collated. The actual operational recovery at Ditton is 71.46%.

- **Ditton Staffing Cost as a Percentage of Total Cost**



Staffing costs as a percentage of total cost has gone up steadily over a five year period, this is a culmination of staff increments and additional hours to cover for absenteeism allied to costs coming down in other areas notably around energy management particularly since replacing oil fired heating with gas boilers in 2010/11.

- **Ditton Visits per Household- Catchment Area.**



This has risen steadily for four years in line with rising attendances. The result of the postcode evaluation shows a high volume of centre users are from the local area.

4.3 Grangeway Community Centre

4.3.1 Grangeway Community Centre has two distinct areas of activity, the community centre and the Hub which is occupied by Catch 22, Young Addiction and Barnardos are co-located here. Grangeway Community Centre is known across Cheshire for its popular Wrestling events which are well attended by the wider community, In addition to the events the club train at the centre. The Main Hall at Grangeway is a popular venue for dancing and pensioner groups and a successful area forum grant and some core centre funding enabled us to refurbish the stage in order to bring it up to the required standard to promote shows.

The Grangeway Community Centre Forum was established this year and a group that is supported by the HBC area Community Development Officer who is located at the centre. The group were successful in gaining planning permission for lighting for the Centre's multi use games area and a subsequent submission of a bid to Wren for the supply and installation of flood lights was successful.

4.3.2 Attendances at Grangeway in 2011/12 fell by 10% on the previous year it is felt that this in the main is due to both karate and zumba ceasing at the centre as well as a fall in numbers attending some sessions such as years ahead, sequence dancing etc. Similarly Adult Day Service's withdrew from using the centre hence a low figure in the statutory agency category.

Total annual opening hours	3106
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1987
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	7437
Total attendance main room	31908
Total attendance other rooms	29401
Total attendance	61309

4.3.3 **Category of usage** at Grangeway Community Centre is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	1104
Lifelong Learning	7755
Health & Healthy Living	12752
Arts Development	14530
Sports Development	14837
Statutory Agencies	31
Other community use	10300
Total	61309

There is a good cross section of usage by category and percentage utilisation, in addition Grangeway recovers the largest amount of income against relatively low levels of expenditure placing it as Halton's optimum performing community centre.

4.3.4 **Grangeway Capacity Analysis**

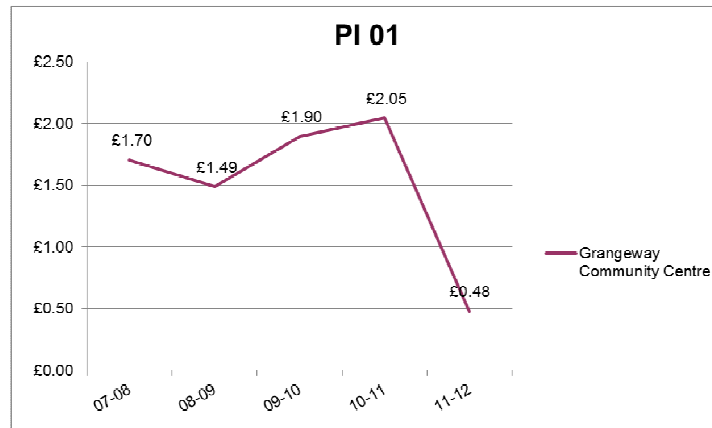
Grangeway had average bookings for 78 hours per week in 2011/12. The capacity analysis provides a breakdown of actual usage and income against potential:-

Room	Usage Per Week
Hall	39 hrs 50%
Café	33.75 hrs 43%
Lounge	11 hrs 14%
Room 1	40 hrs 51.5%
Room 2	15hrs 19%
Room 3	40 hrs 51.5%

Rooms 1, 2 and 3 are occupied by Sure Start to Later Life and Community Bridge Builders, there is a Service Level Agreement in place for this usage.

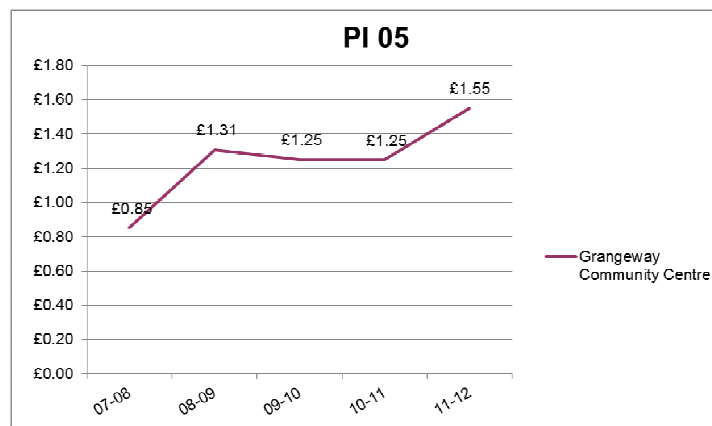
4.3.5 Grangeway Direction of Travel Indicators

- **Grangeway Net Cost Per User**



Net cost per user has dropped dramatically this financial year due to overall expenditure costs reducing by £63,097 from the previous operating year. This is in the main due to efficiency savings however, good energy housekeeping and a reduction in supplies and services budget has also contributed. Allied to this drop in expenditure is the increased income from the previous year of around £10,000 to deliver a vastly improved net position. This improvement in centre performance has led to Grangeway Community Centre being shortlisted in the Association of Public service excellence (APSE) Civic Cultural and Community Venues performance networks as best nationally.

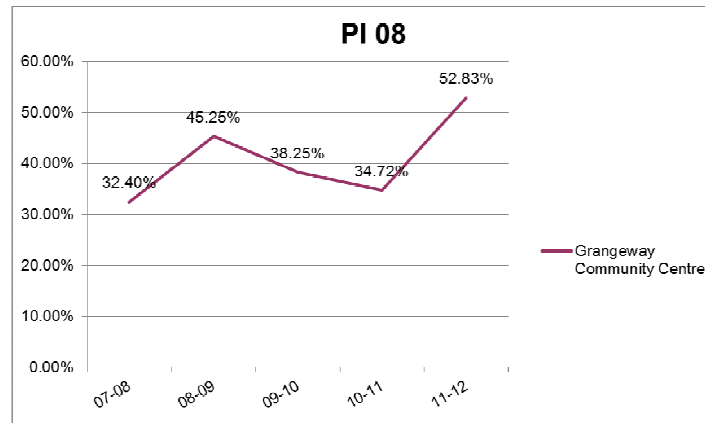
- **Grangeway Total Income Per User**



Grangeway has experienced a positive upward trend and direction

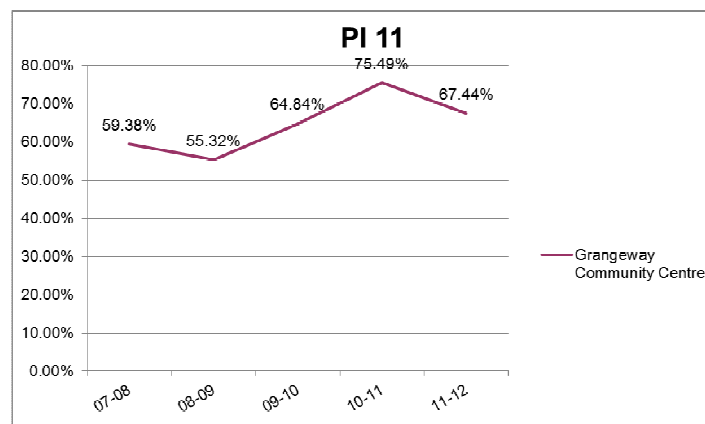
of travel over a five year period. Income has increased by co-locating service providers whilst maintaining levels of community usage.

- **Grangeway Operational Recovery**



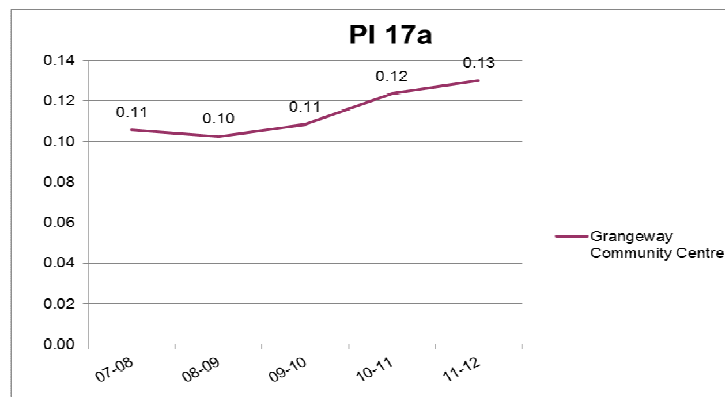
Grangeway is the first Halton Community Centre to achieve over a 50% operational recovery which was a target identified last year but over a three year period this is a fantastic achievement. It demonstrates centres can be more financially viable and there is still income capacity to be achieved. A review of the centre's community café, a mechanism for secondary spend in the centre may provide further scope for increasing income.

- **Grangeway Staffing Cost a Percentage of Total Cost**



As previously reported, the staffing cost as a percentage of total cost has reduced by approximately 8%.

- **Grangeway Visits Per Household –Catchment Area**



Visits per household in the catchment area has risen steadily, the varied programme of events and activities particularly other community use which pertains to events, the community café, meetings and forums which tend to have local participation is key to this. This category has risen from 5590 in 2010/11 to 10300 in 2011/12.

4.4 **Murdishaw Community Centre**

4.4.1 Murdishaw Community centre has a reputation for running successful annual events throughout the year. The centre benefits from having a Board of Directors (including four Local Councillors) and an active Project Group. This year members of both the Directors, Project Group, Housing Providers and HBC joined together to hold a planning event to identify key priorities and medium and long term planning for the centre. Health engagement is a prominent feature of the centre and this year a new bookings pain management session were established. A successful gardening course was run this year with 12 participants involved two of these have continued to tend the outdoor space and in particular the raised beds that were installed the previous year.

4.4.2 Usage is slightly down on the previous year from 28,033 to 26,348 a drop of 1685 conversely bookings are slightly up.

Total annual opening hours	2882
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1367
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	2741
Total attendance main room	16860
Total attendance other rooms	9488
Total attendance	26348

4.4.3 **Category of usage** at Murdishaw Community Centre is broken down as follows:-

Events	5271
Youth & Children	2002
Lifelong Learning	696
Health & Healthy Living	5201
Arts Development	452
Sports Development	76
Statutory Agencies	9846
Other community use	2637
Total	26181

Statutory agencies are the highest category due to usage by Bridgewater and Adult Services. Similarly health and health living feature prominently due to regular bookings by the Stroke Association, Lunch Bunch, Stop Smoking and Recharge.

4.4.4 **Murdishaw Capacity Analysis**

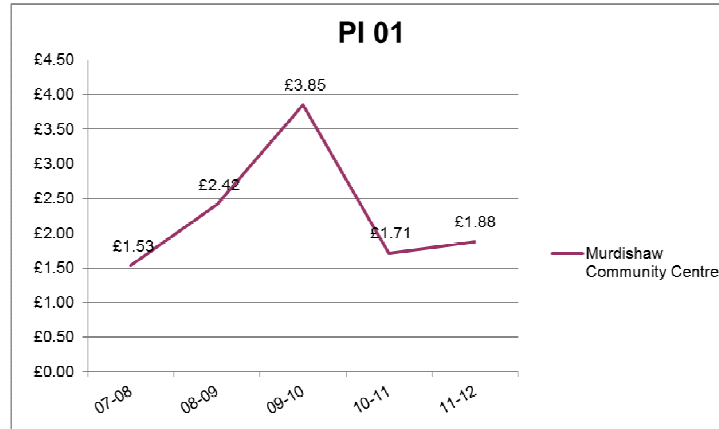
Murdishaw had average bookings for 65 hours per week in 2011/12. The capacity analysis provides a breakdown of actual usage:-

Room	Usage Per Week
Hall	27 hrs 42%
Café	34 hrs 52%
Playroom	41 hrs 63%
Education Rm	4.5 hrs 7%
Housing Office	4 hrs 6%

Clearly there is significant potential for increasing usage with both the housing office and the education room, both require very little investment and would provide a suitable base for a small organisation team or agency. Hall usage particularly in the day time offers scope for increasing income. The centre is overseen by a Board of Directors who are supported by a project group it will be the task of the project group to identify opportunities for establishing regular bookings. The centre office would be an ideal incubator space for a small business venture.

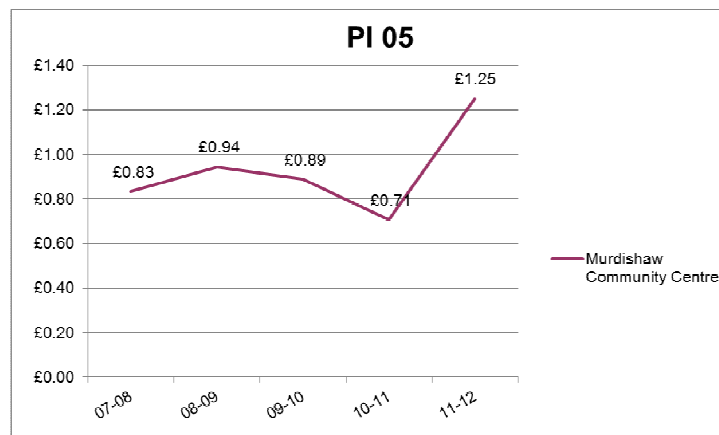
4.4.5 Murdishaw Direction of Travel Indicators

- **Murdishaw Net Cost Per User**



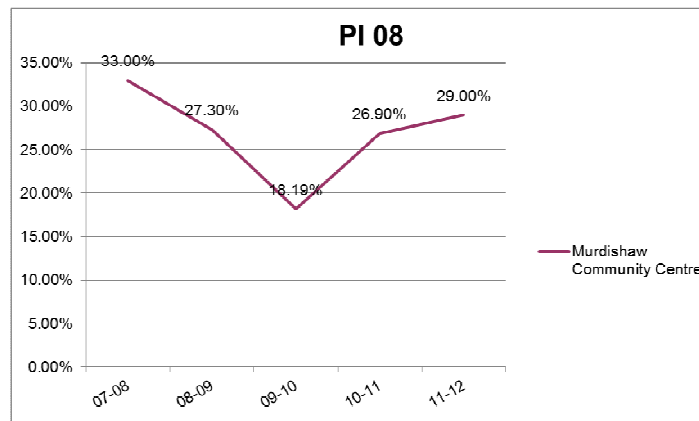
The net cost per user has gone up slightly due to an increase in expenditure costs coupled with the total number of attendees reducing slightly.

- **Murdishaw Total Income Per User**



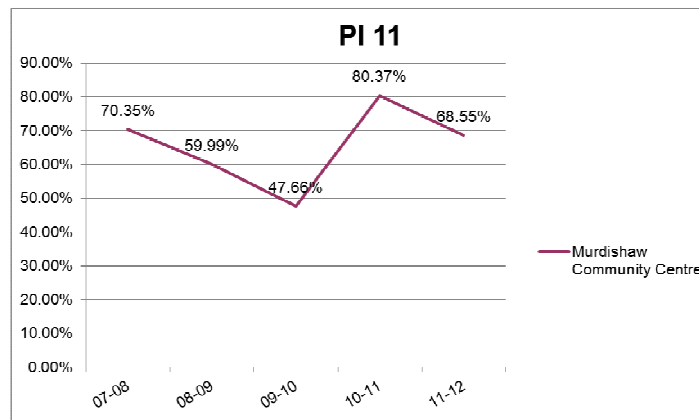
Total income per user has gone up significantly in the operating year, a combination of recharges to Day Services and hire income has generated this increase. This improvement in financial performance led to Murdishaw being shortlisted in the category of most improved performer for APSE Annual Awards.

- Murdishaw Operational Recovery**



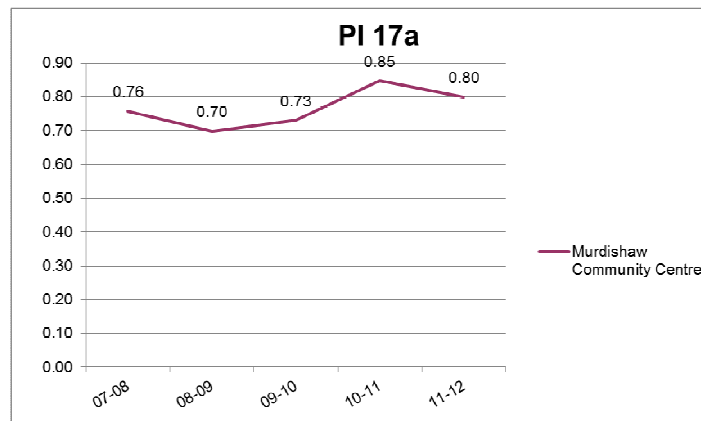
There was a significant drop in performance in 2009/10. Play Services withdrew from Murdishaw creating vacant space. There was a gap before Day Services occupied the accommodation which has impacted positively on operational recovery. The centre has also benefited from a number of new bookings and associated income.

- Murdishaw Staffing Cost as a Percentage of Total Cost**



Performance in this indicator has fallen year on year as the centre carried a vacant centre assistant post for two consecutive years. An unexpected spike in the 10/11 operating year is due to cover for a member of staff who had a significant period of sickness requiring cover.

- **Murdishaw Visits Per Household- Catchment Area.**



Visits per household in the catchment area have altered very little over a five year period, overall it's an upward trend indicating usage by local residents.

4.4.6 Catering Provision

The cafe at Murdishaw is delivered by Country Garden. This has been expanded from being a two day operation to operating five days a week, a small recharge is levied against this operation.

4.5.1 Upton Community Centre

4.5.1 Upton Community Centre has a recently refurbished Sports Hall which attracts sports teams from the local and wider community. There are nine junior football teams in addition to senior block booking sessions that ensure the hall is booked out every night of the week between 5 and 10 pm and has a waiting list. The centre has a thriving Taekwondo Club based at Upton and have a key role in developing young talent through their junior 'Tigers' club. In addition to the Sports Hall, Upton has a diverse programme of activity ranging from arts class's to musical minis, cake decorating and majorettes. Each year the centre has a pantomime delivered By HEARTS theatre group this helps to develop local talent and is a key pathway for young people entering the annual Halton Got Talent events. Upton has a range of group rooms which have recently been refurbished in order to support lifelong learning and training activity. Upton Community Centre is strengthening links with the Children's Centre in order to further develop and promote child and family activities, stay and play and courses such as ICT and preparation for work for parents.

4.5.2 Upton has maintained steady opening hours and seen a slight increase in new bookings.

Total annual opening hours	3550
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1999
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	4136
Total attendance main room	21982
Total attendance other rooms	50008
Total attendance	71990

4.5.3 **Category of usage at Upton Community Centre** is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	426
Lifelong Learning	2537
Health & Healthy Living	3947
Arts Development	1426
Sports Development	1426
Other community use	11554
Total	21316

Upton experienced a drop in usage in 2011/12 with a significant reduction compared to 2010/11 however bookings haven't reduced indicating less people are attending.

4.5.4 **Upton Capacity Analysis**

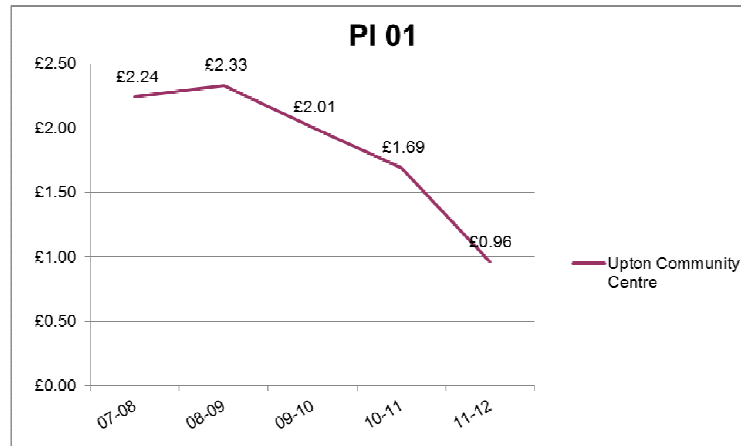
Upton had average bookings for 71 hours per week in 2011/12. The capacity analysis provides a breakdown of usage as follows:-

Room	Usage Per Week
Hall	34.25 hrs 48%
Café	31.5 hrs 44%
Rooms 1 & 2	Nil
Room 3	11.75 hrs 16.5%
Room 5	7 hrs 10%
Room 6	8.75 hrs 12%
Sports Hall	29 hrs 41%

Upton has significant potential for increased usage and income. In 2012 Corporate Training funded refurbishment of rooms 5 and 6 to provide training space to deliver courses from, hence this indicator should see an improvement in the next operating year. Focus on boosting sports hall usage is a priority to increase income levels.

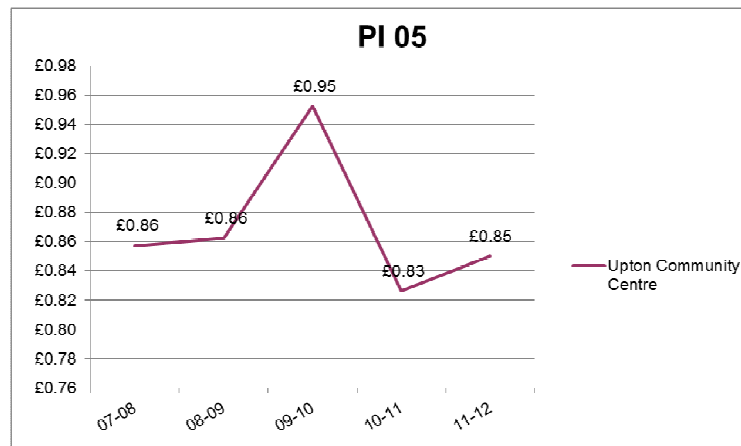
4.5.5 Upton Direction of Travel Indicators

- **Upton Net Cost Per User**



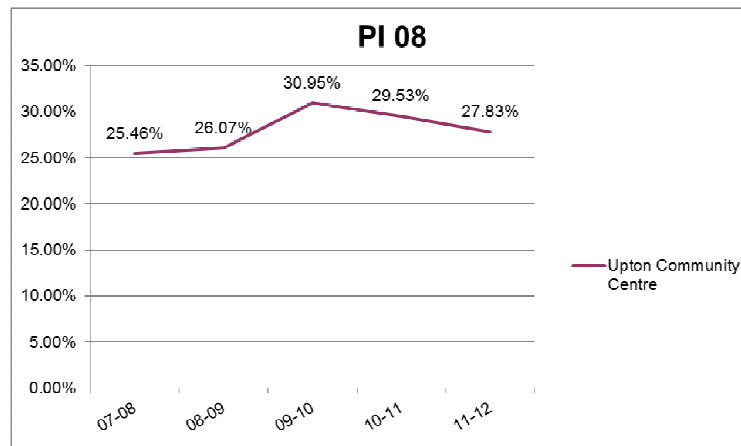
This key performance indicator shows a positive direction of travel which is surprising given the fall in attendances. The reason for an improving trend is in the main due to efficiency savings and managing staff overtime and sickness. In addition we have reduced premises related costs such as energy costs.

- **Upton Total Income per user**



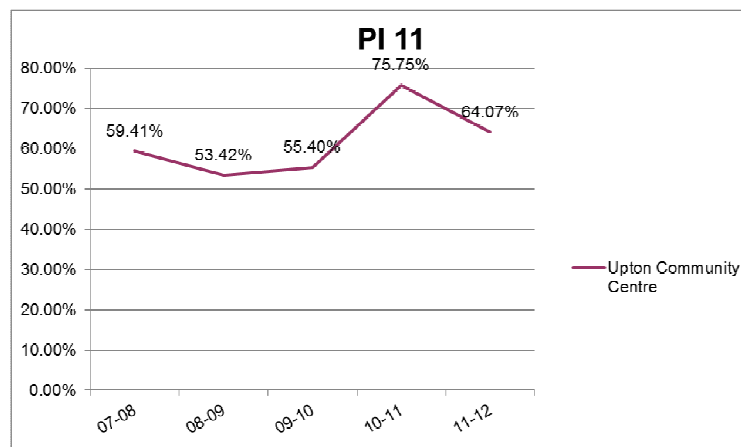
Total income per user has risen slightly, this is a result of drop in attendances being proportionally higher than the drop in income.

- **Upton Operational Recovery**



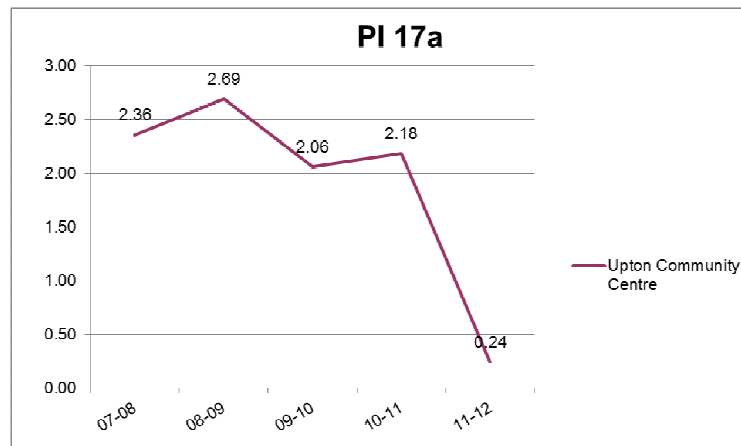
Operational recovery showed slight signs of improvement over the period 2007/10 but this has dropped slightly over the last two years primarily due to a drop in income offsetting positive efforts to reduce operational expenditure. The forecast is for a significant improvement is 2012/13 with the additional income from Training.

- **Upton Staff Costs as a Percentage of Total Cost**



This demonstrates staffing costs are the most significant service cost. This spiked last year due to the efficiency programme and costs initially associated with reducing staff. Staffing costs have reduced by over 10% in the operating period 2012/13.

- **Upton Visits Per Household – Catchment Area**



There is a general downward trend in this indicator, this is due to the drop in attendances but equally it demonstrates a shift in usage by users outside the catchment area. A detailed post code assessment of usage will provide further analysis on the users of Upton Community Centre.

4.5.6 Catering Provision

The catering is direct provision operating four days a week providing breakfast and lunch. This service is well used by the local community and is a valuable space where people meet and socialise. It is financially viable but is experiencing an impact from local competition.

5.0 FUTURE CHALLENGES

5.1 Securing service level agreements and fixed income for the community centres is a key objective. Adult Day Services and Youth Services have reduced usage creating gaps. Focus on securing alternative use and income is a priority to support increased efficiency in the service.

5.2 The community café provision at Grangeway needs resolving. Options for the future are being considered.

5.3 Expanding the governance model at Murdishaw to the other community centres would provide opportunities to access external funding to support the facilities and community initiative's. There are legal considerations that require exploring and the model requires community representation to be viable thus requiring capacity building and intense community development support.

5.4 A customer evaluation mechanism to be introduced by April 2013 to

provide a formal mechanism for feedback and customer suggestions in shaping the service.

5.5 A focus on marketing and publicity for the Community Centres is required considering social media and local opportunities to expand publicity and usage.

5.6 Striving for continuous improvement and increased efficiency to support the viability of the service in difficult economic times.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Intergenerational activity, community activity, youth service delivery in community centres, NEET training in Grangeway Community Café. Deliver Halton's Got Talent each year engaging with hundreds of young people, signposting to culture and performing arts activities and showcasing youth hubs to increase participation.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Employment within the service areas, community delivery points for training and employment initiatives and lifelong learning, future job funds placements, work experience for young people and adults with learning disabilities.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Community cafes, health initiatives, health based activity in community centres such as physical activity, smoking cessation, breathe easy, stroke association, community gardening, healthy eating, cook & taste, weight management. 19% of usage in community centres is directly health outcome related. Community Centres are SHOP (Safer Homes for Older People) and HELPS (Home Equipment at Low Price) outlets providing low cost safety equipment.

6.4 A Safer Halton

A sense of community and community connectedness reduces residents fears of crime where they live, they are likely to feel a stronger sense of belonging and safety in an environment where the communities know each other, are active and there are established links to other stakeholders like police, housing, community wardens, etc. Community Centres provide a community hub and platform for this.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Community Centres contribute to wider community initiatives and regeneration in the areas they are sited. There are numerous community gardening and local environmental projects across the service working jointly with key stakeholders.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 Community centres provide cohesion to those communities they serve. Accessing services and participating in community life contributes to residents health and wellbeing by providing support, enhancing skills and building connected communities. The service is non-statutory, withdrawing community centres would result in poorly served and disconnected communities.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 The service is open and accessible to all Halton's residents.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act