

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

DATE: 24th March 2014

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 2012/13.

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. For the operating year 2012/13, Upton Community Centre was nominated for a Best Performer award and Castlefields Community Centre won the award for the Most Improved Performer.

3.6 Annual usage of the community centres increased steadily in 2009/10 and 2010/11 however, in 2011/12 this dipped considerably. Contributing factors were withdrawal of services from Adult Day Services and Youth provision in community centres, added to this Castlefields Community Centre was in a period of transition with the regeneration programme. 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 in March 2012 has generated significant increased usage and is the key factor for the overall increased usage in operating year 2012/13, an increase of 25,716.

- 2009/10 307,633 Attendances
- 2010/11 309,952 Attendances
- 2011/12 271,264 Attendances
- 2012/13 296,980 Attendances

3.7 The community centres service has demonstrated increased efficiency over the past three year operating period, in:-

2010/11 Net operating costs - £462k (inclusive of £248k income)
2011/12 Net operating costs - £358k (inclusive of £318k income)
2012/13 Net operating costs - £307k (inclusive of £317k income)

The net operating costs for the five Centres over the 3 year period have reduced by £154,595 and income has grown by £69,300.

4.0 COMMUNITY CENTRE PROFILES 2012/13

4.1 Castlefields Community Centre

4.1.1 The new community centre (opened in March 2012), at the heart of the regeneration has become firmly established as a community hub. The investment in the infrastructure has provided a vibrant local centre reflected in the increased levels of usage.

4.1.2 Castlefields had a significant increase in usage in this operating year, attendance was 45,662 compared to 21,316 an increase of over 50%. This is a complete turnaround from the previous operating year which had a 24% reduction in usage.

Total annual opening hours	2958
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1161
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	4310
Total attendance main room	17622
Total attendance other rooms	11725
Total other attendance	16315
Total attendance	45662

4.1.3 Category of usage is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	5997
Lifelong Learning	3857
Health & Healthy Living	28744
Arts Development	3868
Sports Development	1200
Statutory Agencies	1956
Events	40
Total	45662

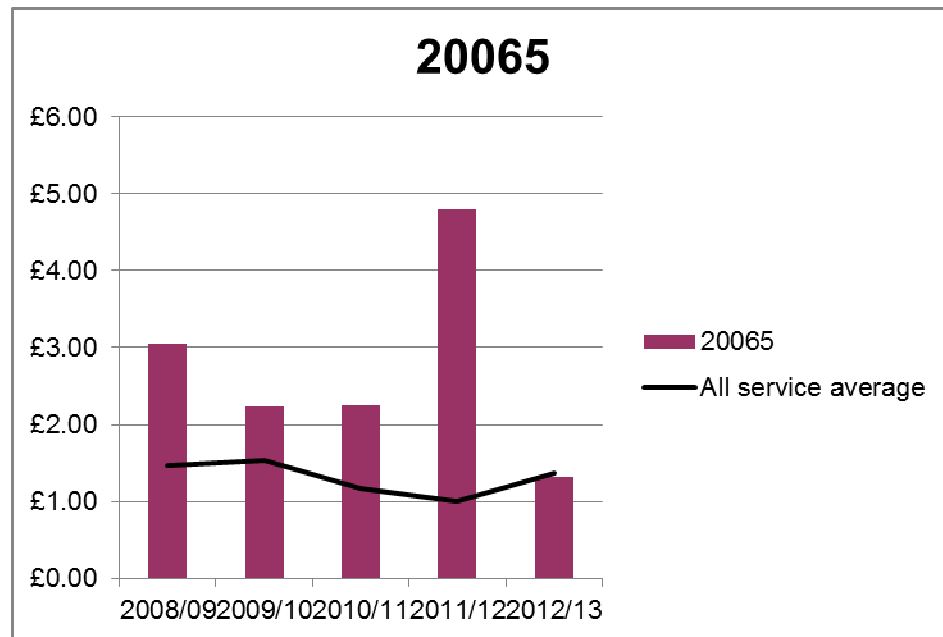
Health related attendances are high, in the main this is due to regular bookings by Smoking Cessation, Weight Watchers and Shape-up. This category has increased by over 20,000 compared to the previous year. 'Other community use', is the highest category this includes parties, events, the community café and meetings such as residents groups, planning meetings and consultation to support the Castlefields Regeneration Programme.

4.1.4 Castlefields 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.

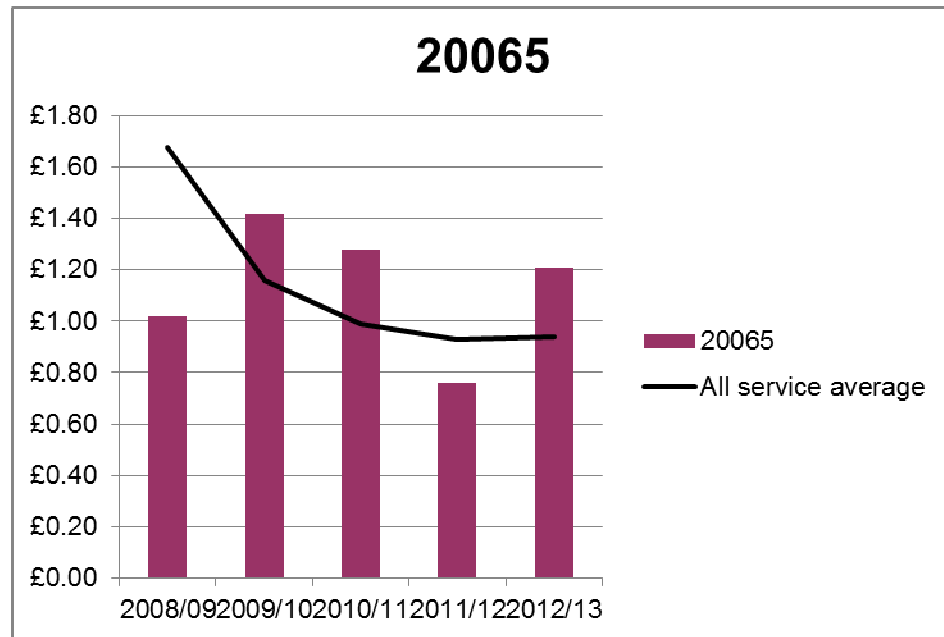
- **Castlefields Net Cost Per User**

The 20065 on the chart is Castlefields pin number in APSE data set, hence 20065 references Castlefields Community Centre.



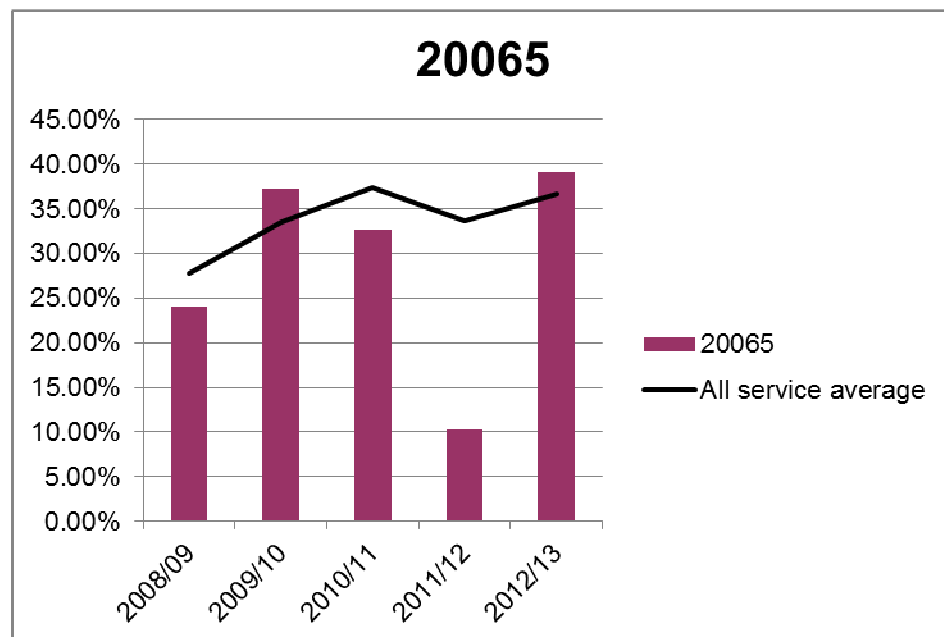
The graph shows the direction of travel of cost per user over the last five years. As described earlier in the report, in the previous operating year usage suffered, as a result the cost per user increased significantly to £4.79. In 2012/13 this has reduced to the lowest level in the five year period, £1.31 owing to increased user numbers in the new community centre.

- **Castlefields Total Income Per User**



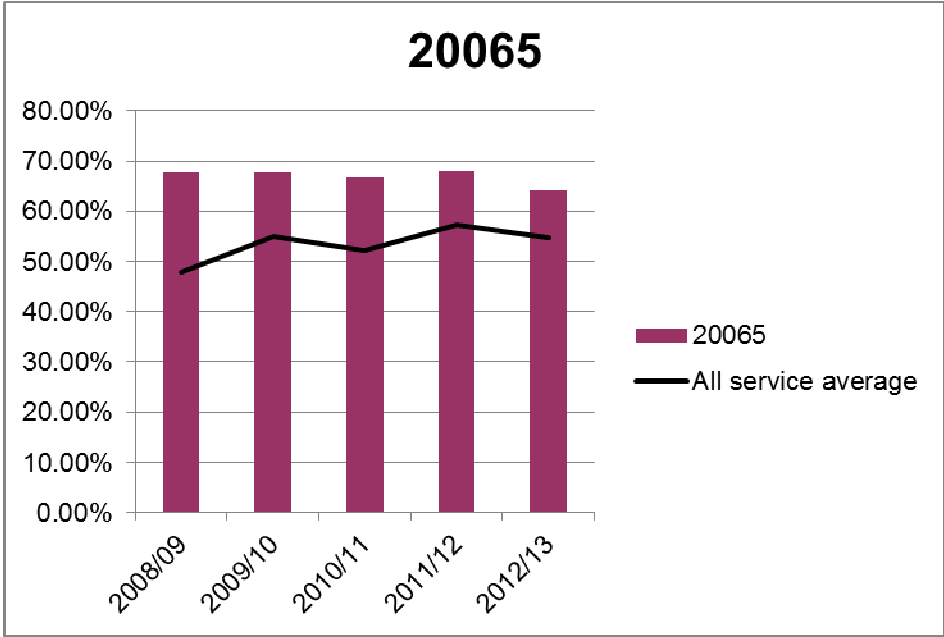
This diagram has a similar picture demonstrating that a fall in usage and a drop in income can have a dramatic impact on a centre's performance. In this case the total income per user was at its lowest in 2011/12 at 76p, 2012/13 has shown clear signs of recovery with income per user rising to £1.21.

- **Castlefields Operational Recovery**



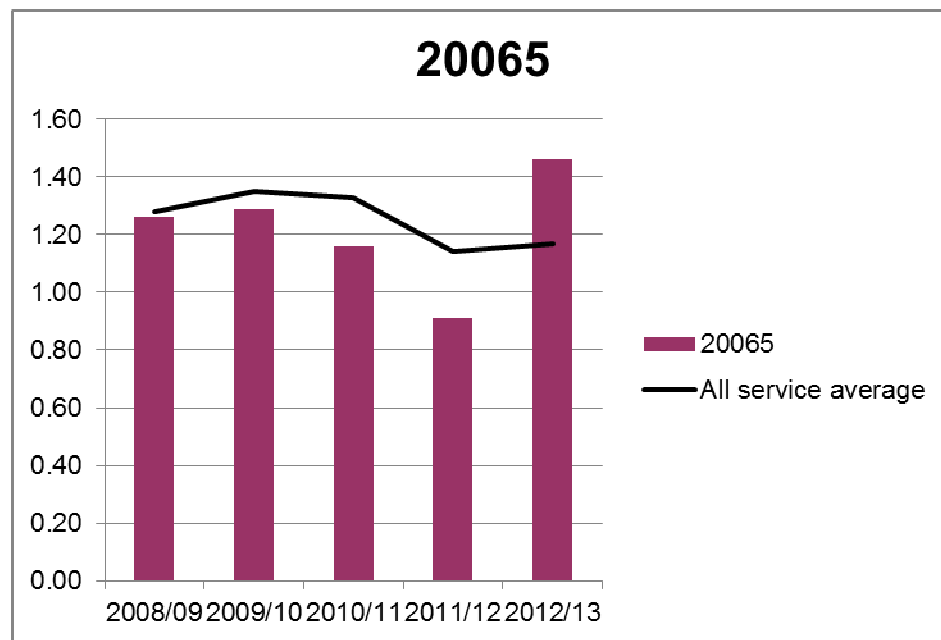
Castlefields operational recovery dipped to the lowest position in a five year period in 2011/12 at 10.35%, as is the trend across the other indicators this has recovered with a dramatic increase up to 39.11% in 2012/13. A significant factor in achieving the Most Improved Performer award.

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



There is very little variation over a five year period, albeit a positive reduction of just over 3% between 2011/12 and 2012/13. This is typical of a small team where attendance levels are fairly 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 chart demonstrates a decline in visits per household until 2012/13, this correlates with the overall trend at Castlefields.

4.1.5 Castlefields Community Centre has benefited from increased usage and income. 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 centre, all contributing to increased usage and a vibrant community hub.

4.2 **Ditton Community Centre**

4.2.1 Ditton has increased in terms of usage and numbers attending in this operating year:-

Total annual opening hours	
Total aggregate hours main room hired	776
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	6687
Total attendance main room	16186
Total attendance other rooms	76416
Other attendance	10000
Total attendance	102602

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

Youth & Children	14088
Lifelong Learning	4406
Health & Healthy Living	14544
Arts Development	58949
Sports Development	5843
Statutory Agencies	1040
Other community use	3732
Total	102602

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. This category of usage increased significantly in 2012/13.

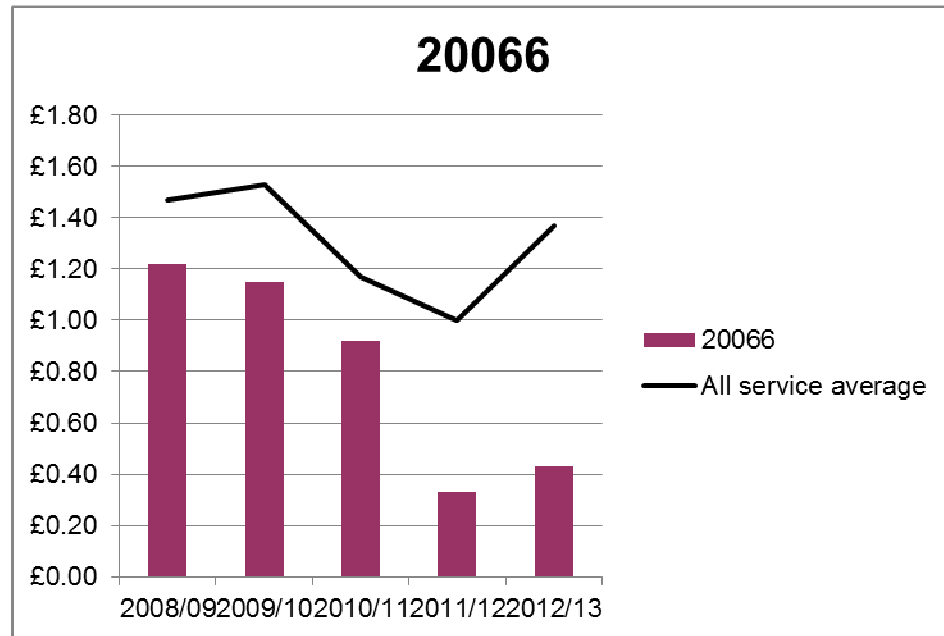
Youth and children not surprisingly have high levels of attendance due to the co-location of Children's Centre. The centre was awarded excellent status by OFSTED in the last inspection with the relationship between the Community Centre and Children's Centre being highlighted as being particularly strong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

Health and healthy living activities generate good levels of usage as the centre hosts Pulmonary Rehab, Recharge, Happy Hearts the Alzheimer's Society and Weight Watchers.

Investment in the ICT suite in 2013 has resulted in increased usage for drop in sessions and adult learner courses thereby increasing attendances in the category of life-long learning.

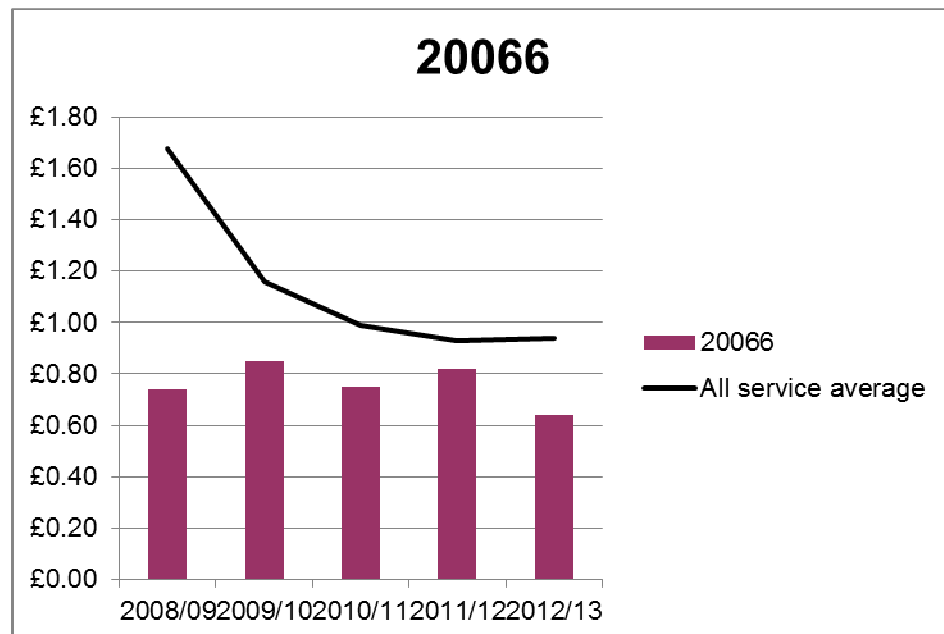
4.2.3 Ditton Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20066)

- **Ditton Net Cost Per User**



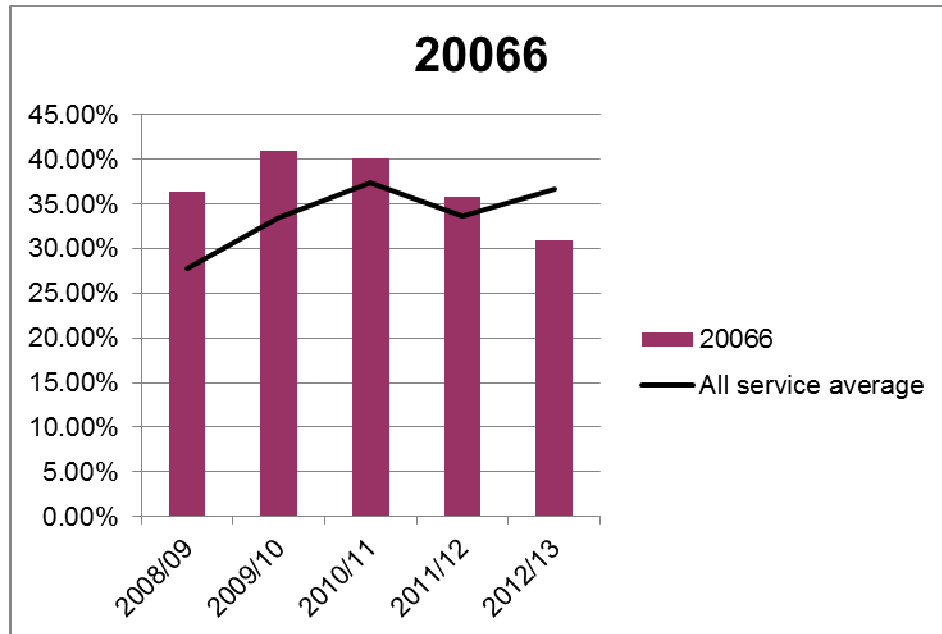
This graph demonstrates a positive direction of travel owing to increasing income and a steady footfall until 2011/12. Ditton has consistently overachieved on income positively impacting against this indicator and goes someway to explain the slight dip in 2012/13 when income was in line with the target. The figure is 43 pence, the lowest across Halton's five community centres.

- **Ditton Total Income Per User**



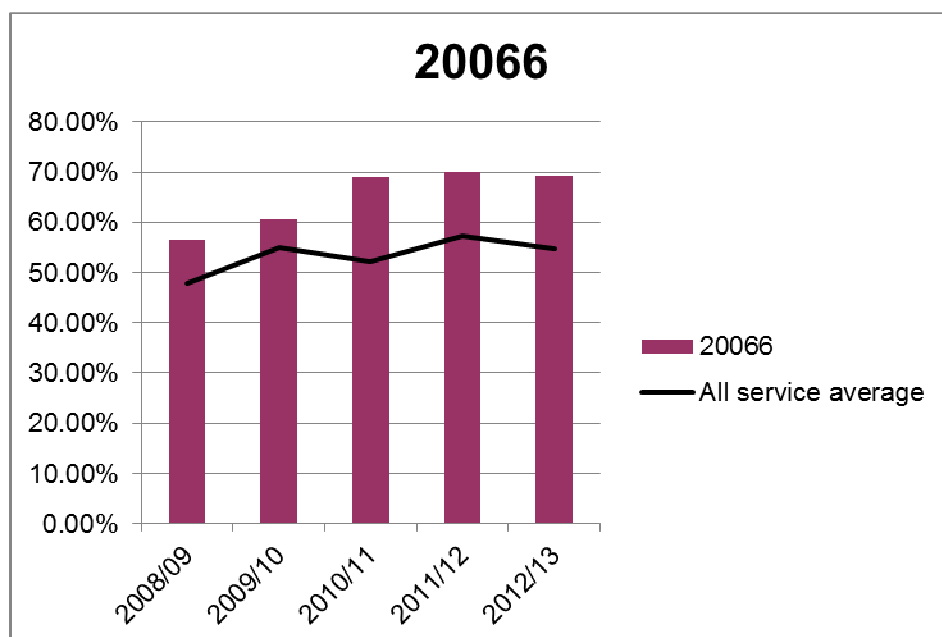
2011/12 saw a five pence increase on income per user achieving 82p however, this has dropped in 2012/13 to 64p, a significant drop. Out of the five centres this is also the lowest income per user and an area of focus. Ditton is the only centre that had no café/catering provision during this period which is highly likely to be a factor.

- **Ditton Operational Recovery**



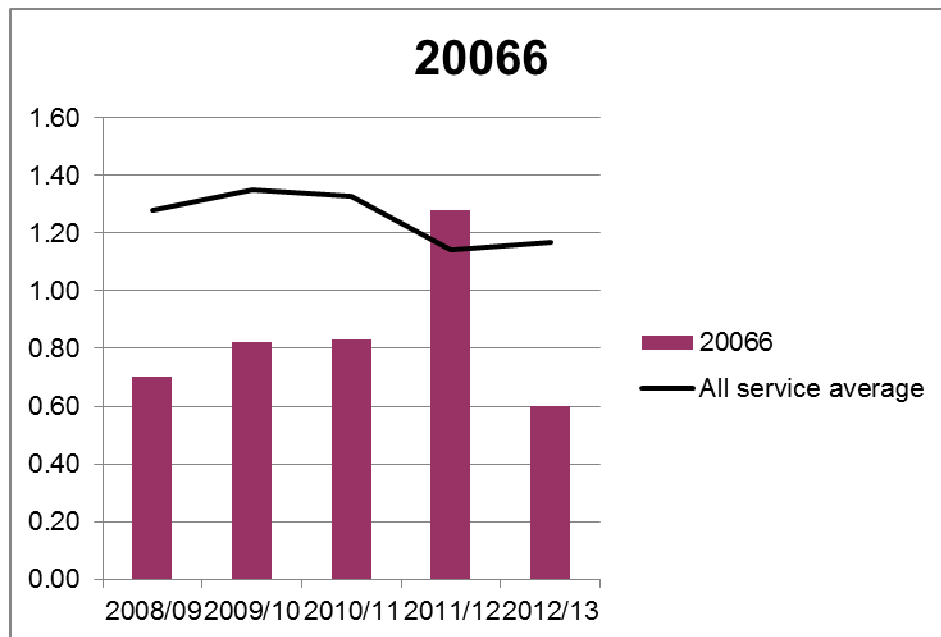
Ditton has experienced a drop in operational recovery which correlates with the income indicator. Ditton's current operational recovery is 30.90%, the average is 36.65% hence, a key target for Ditton to reverse this trend.

- **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 albeit, in the last operating year this has reduced by just over half a percent, not a significant amount but a move in the right direction. The steady increase in costs 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.**



2011/12 saw a peak in visits per household and has suffered a sharp drop in 2012/13, the lowest in the five year period. Another key area of focus for Ditton in future operating years. 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 the centre benefits from a Centre Members Committee which hosts social events.

The Grangeway Community Centre Forum was established in 2012 supported by the HBC area Community Development Officer who is located at the centre. This group have been successful in gaining funding for improvements at the centre and have a key role in supporting local involvement in the delivery of services at Grangeway.

- 4.3.2 Attendances at Grangeway fell significantly in 2011/12 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 Services withdrew from using the centre hence a low figure in the statutory agency category. This current operating year has seen this trend continue with a further reduction of 8657. In considering Grangeway/s usage a key factor is 50% of the space/usage is not included in the APSE figures as it is exclusive youth provision and therefore has a bearing on Grangeway's performance.

Grangeway café provision also ceased early in this operating year, another key factor directly impacting the user numbers. A new café provision is due to commence in March 2014 for a six month pilot. This is a public/private sector initiative generating income for the centre and it is hoped regenerates usage numbers at Grangeway.

Total annual opening hours	3470
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1475
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	1929
Total attendance main room	28649
Total attendance other rooms	19003
Other attendance	5000
Total attendance	52652

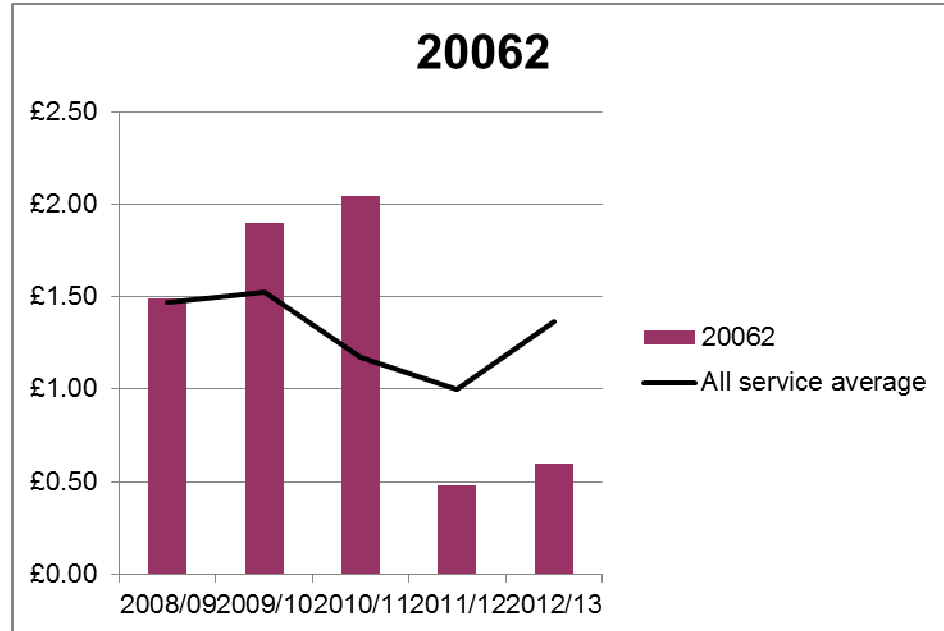
- 4.3.3 **Category of usage** at Grangeway Community Centre is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	2430
Lifelong Learning	650
Health & Healthy Living	16799
Arts Development	15424
Sports Development	10208
Statutory Agencies	161
Other community use	6980
Total	52652

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 Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20062)

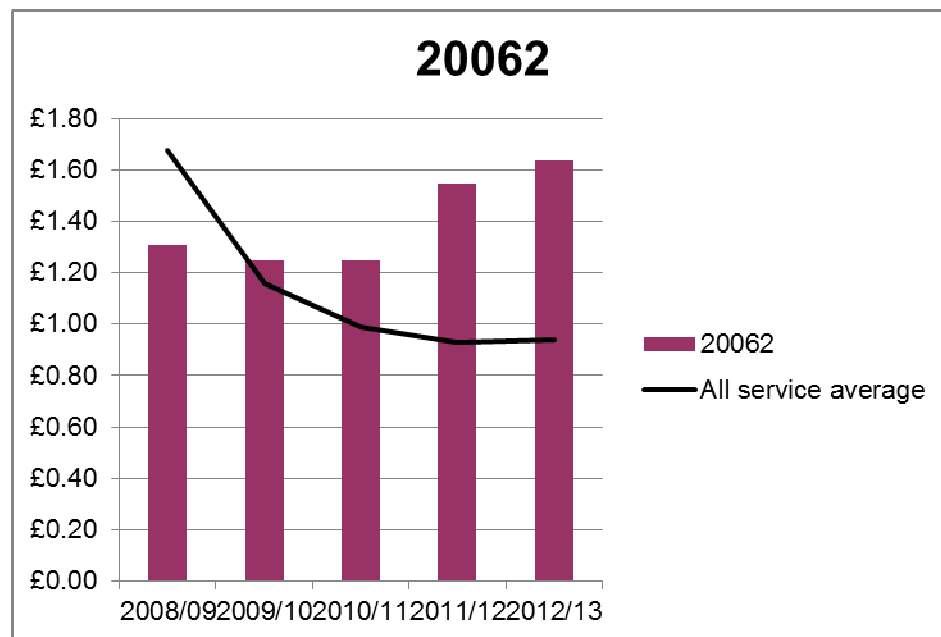
- Grangeway Net Cost Per User



Net cost per user dropped dramatically in 2011/12 year due to overall expenditure costs reducing by £63,097 from the previous operating year. This is in the main was 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 was increased income from the previous year of around £10,000 to deliver a vastly improved net position. This improvement in centre performance led to Grangeway Community Centre being shortlisted in the Association of Public service excellence (APSE) Civic Cultural and Community Venues performance networks as Best Performer 2011/12.

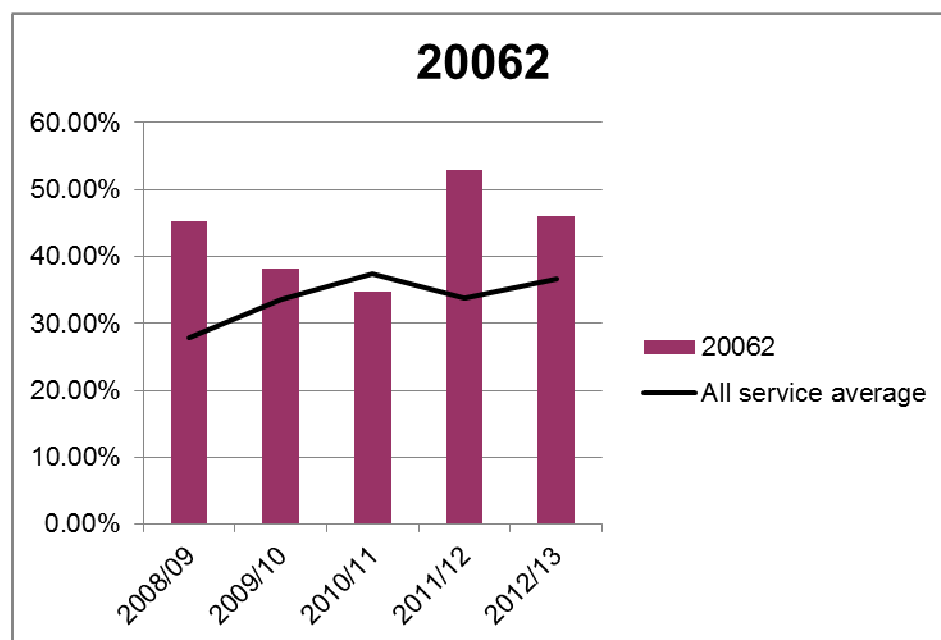
This figure has increased slightly in 2012/13, this is not surprising as there was no further high level efficiency reductions to impact in the formula. At its peak, net cost per user at Grangeway was £2.05 in 2010/11, in the operating year 2012/13 its 60 pence, a positive overall direction of travel.

- **Grangeway Total Income Per User**



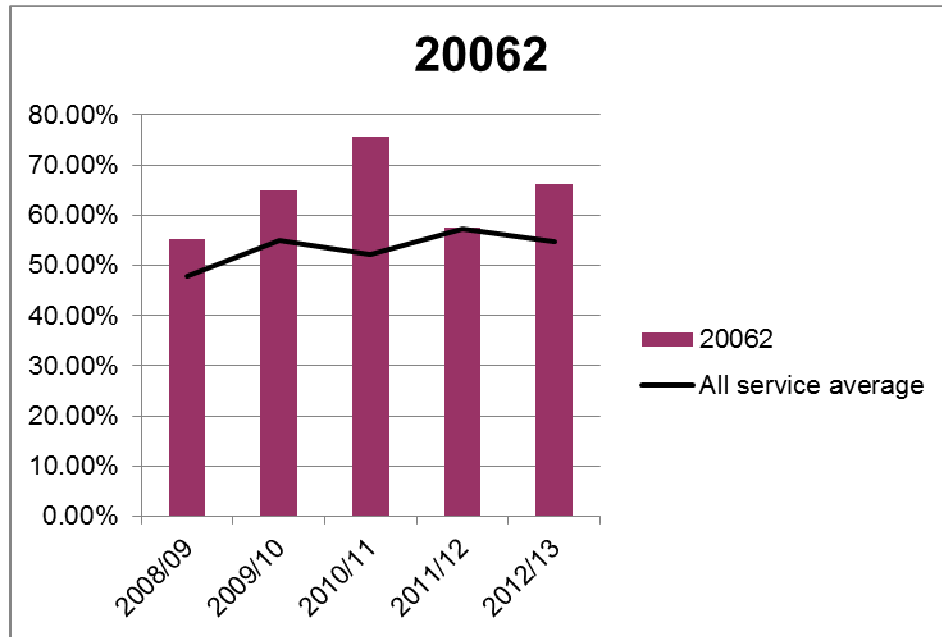
Grangeway has experienced a positive upward trend and direction of travel over a five year period. Income has increased by co-locating service providers whilst maintaining levels of community usage. In 2012/13 income per user was £1.64 compared to 83p in 2010/11.

- **Grangeway Operational Recovery**



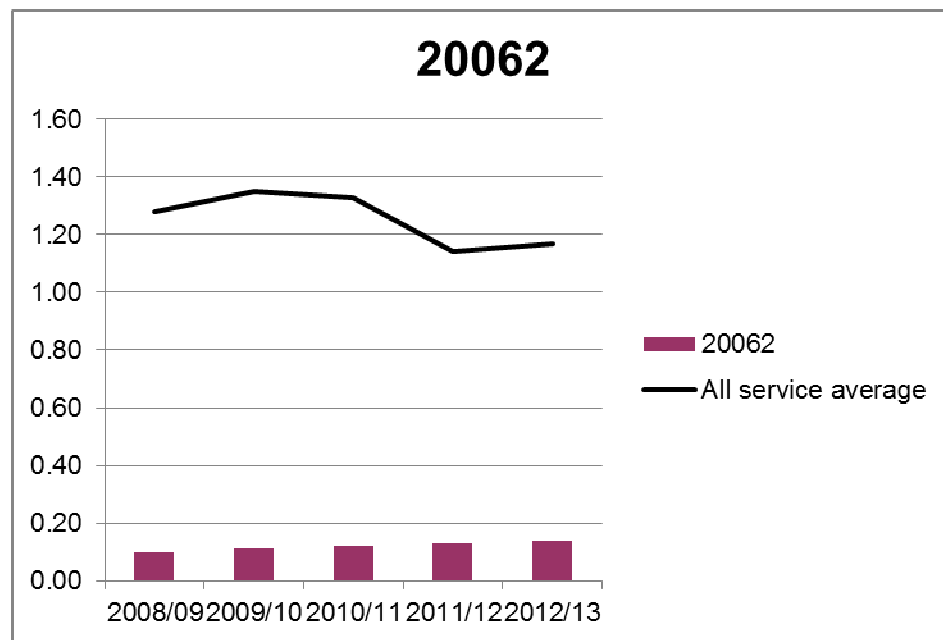
Grangeway was the first Halton Community Centre to achieve over a 50% operational recovery in 2011/12 which was a fantastic achievement. Unfortunately, the operating year 2012/13 has seen this dip to 45.93%, still significant as the average operational recovering rate is 36.65%. This demonstrates centres can be more financially viable and there is still income capacity to be achieved.

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



The staffing cost as a percentage of total cost reduced significantly in 2011/12, this was due to efficiency savings. In 2012/13, the budget had reduced in line with the efficiency savings which has translated into an increase in staffing as a percentage of total cost of the budget in this reporting year.

- **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 with a steady increase in 2012/13.

4.4 **Murdishaw Community Centre**

4.4.1 Murdishaw Community centre has an annual programme of events which is firmly established with centre users and a highlight to the centre's calendar. The centre also benefits from having a Board of Directors (including four Local Councillors) and an active Project Group to provide structured involvement in decision making and future planning for the centre. This model of governance has charitable status and has enabled access to external sources of funding.

4.4.2 Usage is down on the previous year from 26,348 to 25,420 however, bookings are slightly up with the number of hours the centre was booked increasing marginally.

Total annual opening hours	2972
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1168
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	3625
Total attendance main room	14767
Total attendance other rooms	10222
Total other attendance	431
Total attendance	25420

Bookings for the main hall fell in 2012/13 compared with the previous year, bookings in the other rooms at the centre have increased supporting the increase in hours booked.

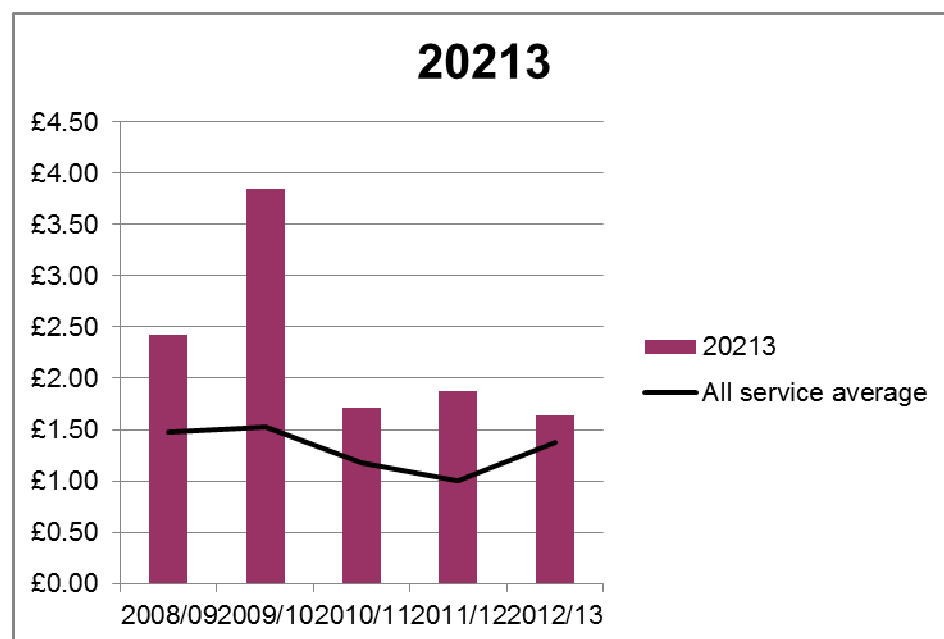
4.4.3 **Category of usage** at Murdishaw Community Centre is broken down as follows:-

Events	4923
Youth & Children	1440
Lifelong Learning	748
Health & Healthy Living	3428
Arts Development	414
Sports Development	117
Statutory Agencies	10,708
Other community use	3642
Total	25420

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, however there has been a downturn in this category of usage compared to the previous year; similarly the same scenario with youth & children related usage.

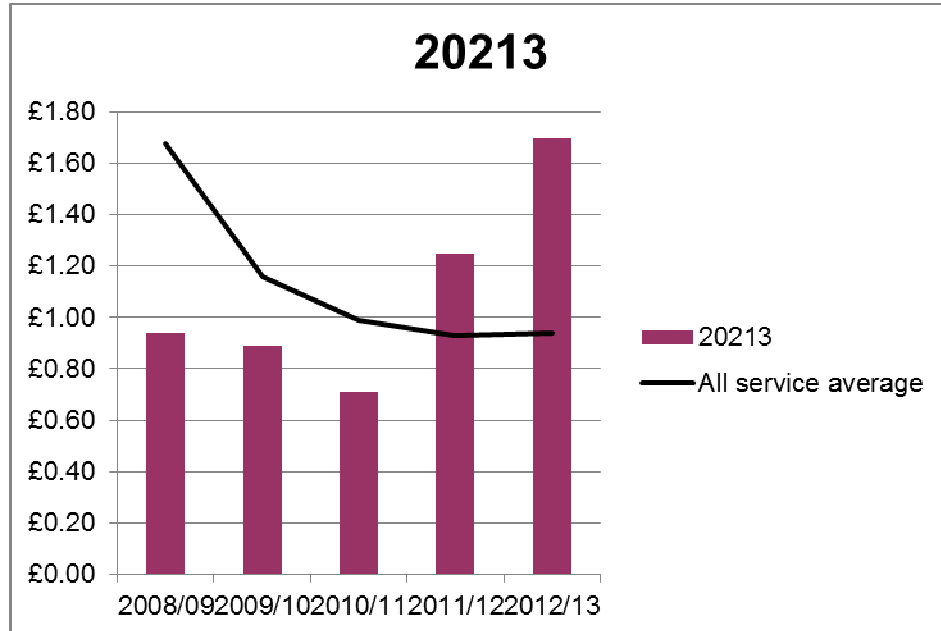
4.4.4 **Murdishaw Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20213)**

- **Murdishaw Net Cost Per User**



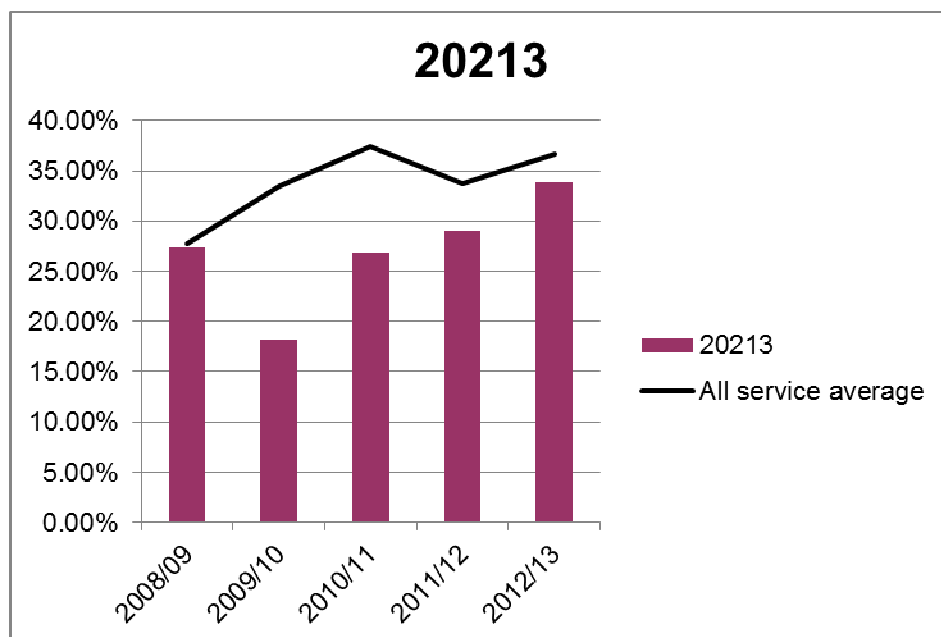
The net cost per user has reduced to its lowest ever at £1.64 in 2012/13, a positive shift in the direction of travel.

- **Murdishaw Total Income Per User**



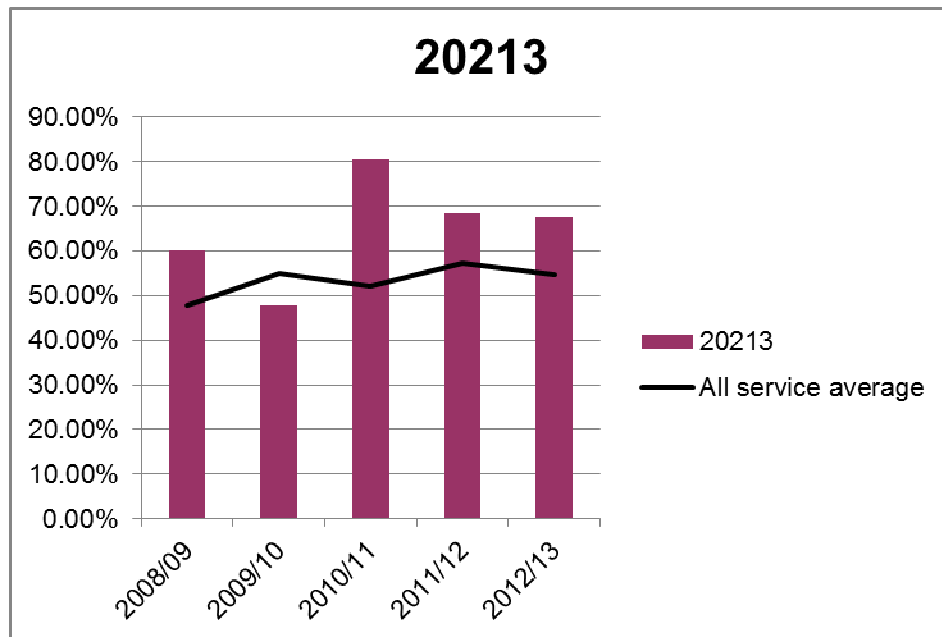
Total income per user has gone up significantly in the operating year to £1.70, a continued trend from the previous year. This is a dramatic increase from 2010/11 when the income per user was 71 pence, the average across the venues is 94 pence hence, strong performance for Murdishaw in this performance indicator.

- **Murdishaw Operational Recovery**



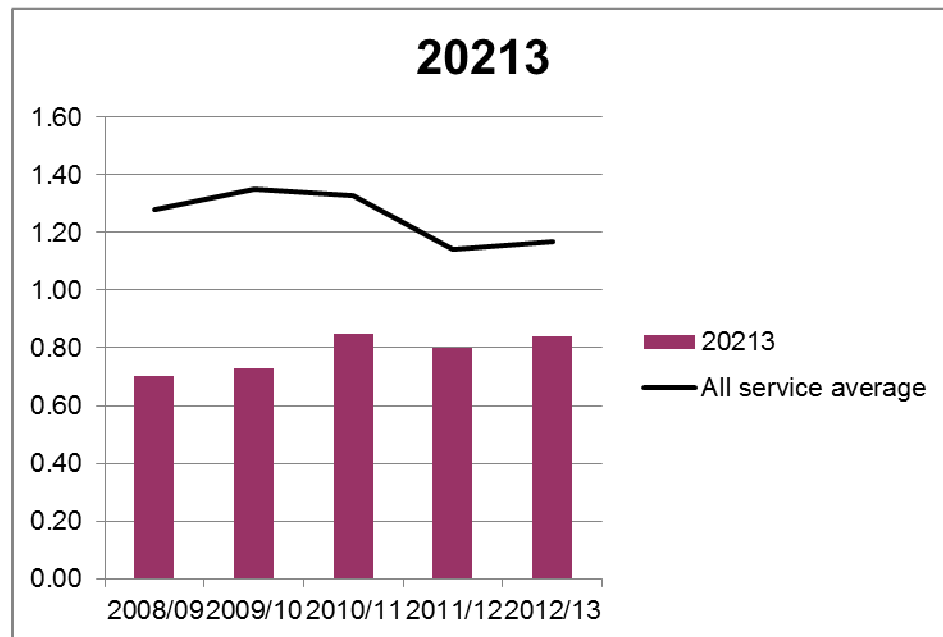
There was a significant drop in performance in 2009/10. Play Services withdrew from Murdishaw creating vacant space. There was a gap before Day Services occupied the accommodation which has impacted positively on operational recovery. The centre has also benefited from a number of new bookings and associated income and the positive trend has continued in 2012/13 with the centre achieving its highest level of operational recovery at 33.80%. The aim is to continue this trend which is a key factor supporting future sustainability.

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



Performance in this indicator has had a negative trend year on year as the centre carried a vacant Centre Assistant post for two consecutive years. An unexpected spike in the 2010/11 operating year is due to cover for a member of staff who had a significant period of sickness requiring cover. The 2011/12 and 2012/13 operating years have presented a consistent picture.

- **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, continued in 2012/13 indicating usage by local residents.

4.4.5 **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 is the only community centre with a 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's Got Talent events. Upton has a range of group rooms which are ideal to deliver lifelong learning and training activities. 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	3504
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1538
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	3141
Total attendance main room	23036
Total attendance other rooms	32908
Other attendance	14700
Total attendance	70644

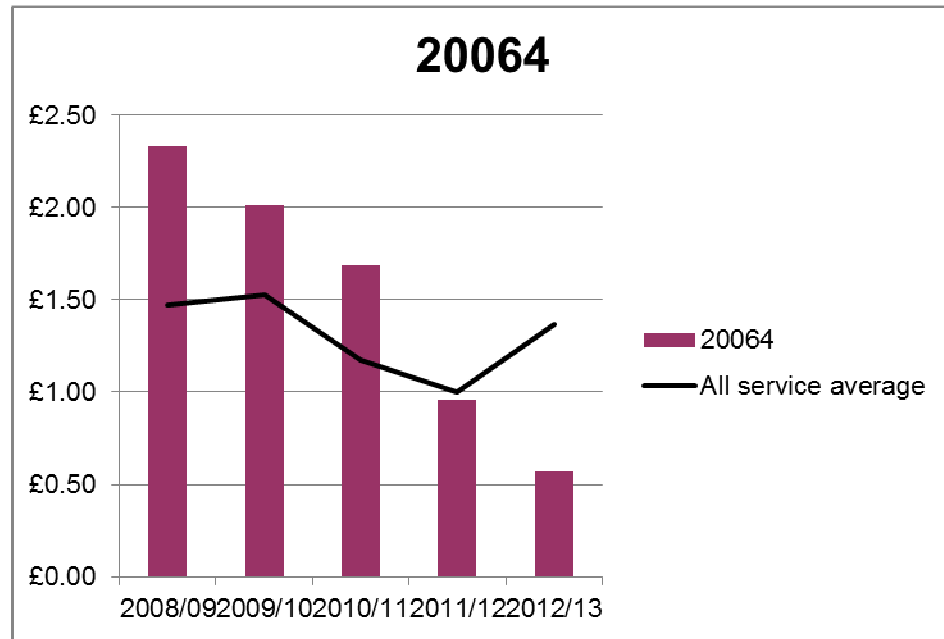
4.5.3 **Category of usage at Upton Community Centre** is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	4037
Lifelong Learning	4759
Health & Healthy Living	20624
Arts Development	7630
Sports Development	12861
Statutory Agencies	4346
Other community use	16387
Total	70644

Upton experienced a marginal drop in usage compared to the previous year of 1346, an average of 27 less per week and a reduction of 46 open hours over the year. There has been some shift in the categories of usage with health & healthy living activities experiencing an increase of almost 13,000, these numbers would of previously been attributed to "other community use" however, 2012/13 benefitted from an increased programme of activities directly impacting on health & healthy living. Youth & children also increased which is an identified target for Upton Community Centre as is increased usage of the sports hall.

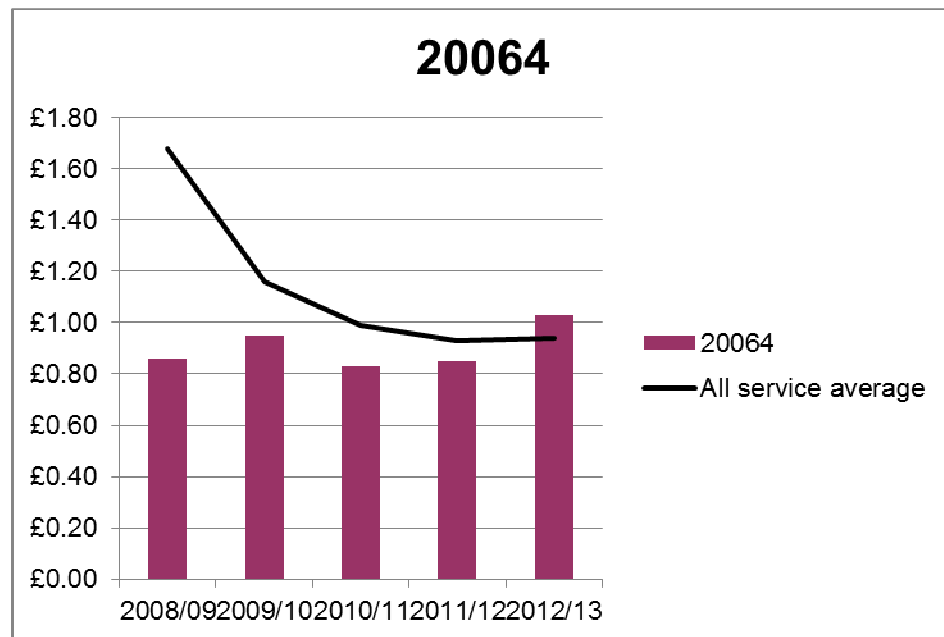
Upton Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20064)

4.5.4 • Upton Net Cost Per User



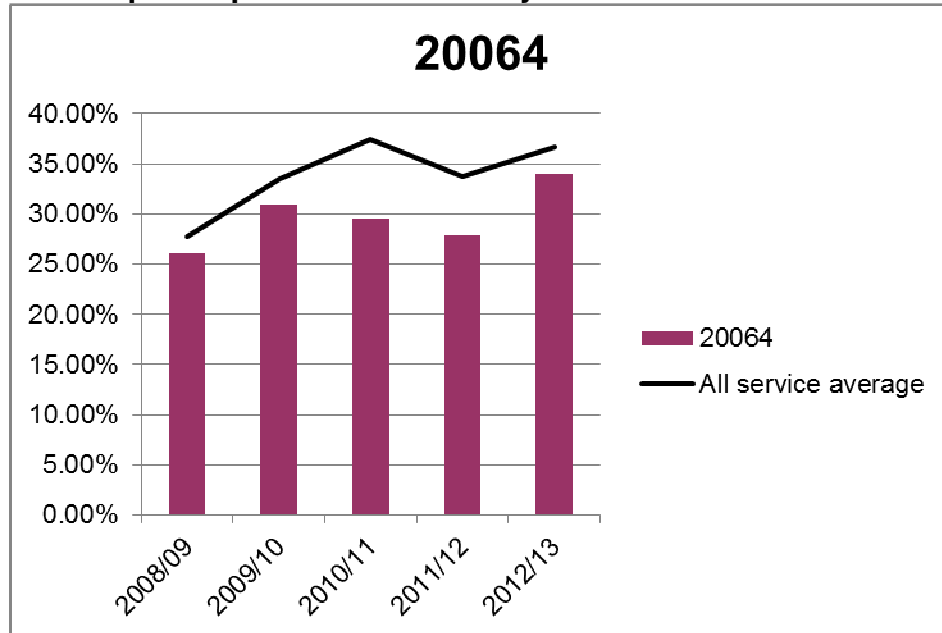
This key performance indicator shows a positive direction of travel achieving the lowest cost per user in the five year period at Upton, in 2012/13 the unit cost per user was 57 pence. The reason for an improving trend is in the main due to efficiency savings and managing staff overtime and sickness. In addition we have reduced premises related costs such as energy costs.

• Upton Total Income Per User



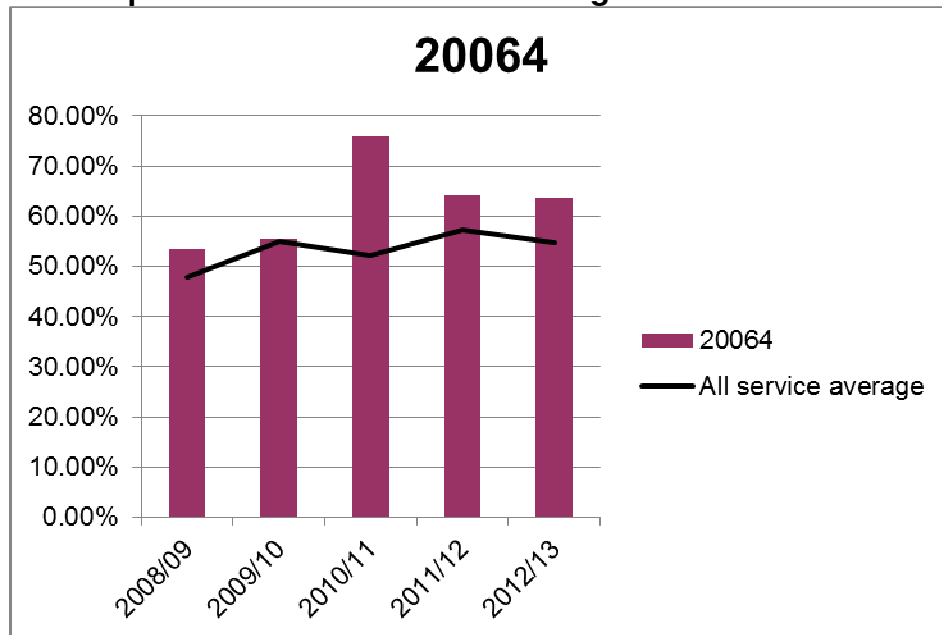
Total income per user has a continued positive trend travelling from 86 pence in 2008/09 to £1.03 in 2012/13.

- **Upton Operational Recovery**



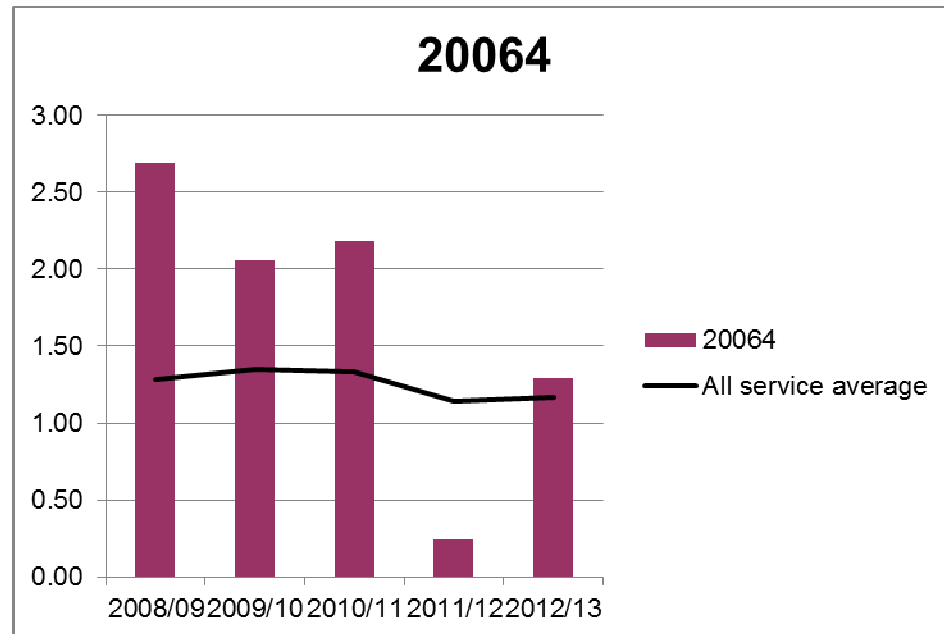
Operational recovery showed slight signs of improvement over the period 2007/10 and then dropped slightly in 2011/12. This operating year has seen a good level increase up to 34.02% compared to 27.89% in the previous year. Last year's report noted a forecast for this improvement due to additional income from Training delivering courses at the centre.

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



This demonstrates staffing costs are the most significant service cost. This spiked in 2010/11 due to the efficiency programme and costs initially associated with reducing staff. Staffing costs have remained steady in 2011/12 and 2012/13.

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



2011/12 saw a significant downward trend in this indicator, this was due to the drop in attendances but equally demonstrated a shift in usage by users outside the catchment area. A detailed post code assessment has provided further analysis on the users of Upton Community Centre and 2012/13 has seen a dramatic increase in usage from the catchment area.

4.5.5 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 SERVICE SUMMARY & FUTURE CHALLENGES

5.1 Overall, the centres had 296,980 visits and generated income of £322,722. Comparatively the centres perform well however, the service strives for continuous improvement with key targets to increase capacity and usage. Securing service level agreements and fixed income for the community centres is a key objective.

- 5.2 There is an overall trend across the centres of reduced usage in the main halls. The reduction isn't dramatic however, gives the service an area of focus; main halls tend to be the more expensive hire rate however, there may be considerations in future fees & charges for reduced rates, in particular for least popular periods to support an increase in demand.
- 5.3 The five centres had wifi installed in 2012/13. This is both supporting the Council's agile working policy and public access to IT. This has particularly provided a positive impact in centres where Job Clubs exist and future roll out of digital access and Job Clubs is a priority.
- 5.4 A formal mechanism for customer insight in shaping the service will be implemented. This is being developed alongside a holistic Marketing Strategy for the service considering the service image and consistency across the sites.
- 5.5 Customer profiling and demographic analysis will be carried out for each centre in the next operating year to consider how the centres meet local needs, identify gaps to meet and further build on strengths.
- 5.6 A strategic plan for café provision across the five centres will be developed by September 2014. This will consider the current range of models of delivery and market test for future arrangements considering direct provision, partnership arrangements through Service Level Agreements or commercial procurement.

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.