

## Appendix 4

Leona Dunleavy  
Chair  
Save Haywood Road Community Centre Steering Group

20th January 2017

Lance Juby  
Service Manager, Community Relations  
Gedling Borough Council  
Gedling Borough Council  
Civic Centre, Arnot Hill Park  
Arnold, Nottingham NG5 6LU

Dear Lance

### **Haywood Road Community Centre**

We are writing on behalf of the Save Haywood Road Community Centre Campaign to offer you and the members an update on our actions since the consultation period closed. We are of course aware that Gedling's Cabinet meets on the 2nd February and we trust this letter offers insight into the continued aspirations of the Group to secure a new community-led future for the Centre and the Green Space.

Since the consultation closed, we have continued to work on the development of a new future for the Centre and its associated green space. Many of the responses to the consultation referenced the fact that we are keen not just to prevent the closure and sale of the Centre and the land, but that we wish to work with Gedling on an alternative model that would see the Centre thrive and grow; see alternative uses of our very precious but as yet under-used green space and save the Council the limited resources at its disposal. The following shows in a short time how we continue to make progress.

### **Steering Group**

We have an excellent range of talented and committed individuals who are offering their skills and experience to develop the next stage.

At its meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2017, the Haywood Road Community Association (CA) included attendance by a representative of number of new groups that have been set up wishing to use the Centre. While this is an exciting development in itself – ie. getting new users on board thus increasing its viability - it has also had the positive effect of potentially reinvigorating the Association as it currently stands. Conversations with the current Chair and Treasurer of the CA have been welcome and extremely positive outside of the formal

meetings and we are grateful for their longstanding and valued service to our community and the fact that they welcome the opportunity to explore succession. We anticipate this taking shape up to the AGM.

The leads for the new groups using or wishing to use the Centre are also actively involved in our Campaign Steering Group. We now have local residents in interim key positions for our Group, notably Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, alongside vice-positions for each. They are supported by a wider Steering Group of 10 which combined with the 6 committee members makes 16 in total drawn from wider supporters from the community. These are interim positions as we will embed a healthy democratic process to our Group as we develop the plan further. Overall, this is a visible and tangible approach to succession and we have plans to draw this together under a refreshed CA.

### **Asset Transfer**

We would stress that this is by no means the end of our ambitions. We would like your and Gedling BC's support to develop an asset transfer of the Centre **and** its green space to the community. To date we have work on-going on the following aspects:

**Governance.** As referenced above, we are mindful that governance is key to a successful way forward. A future **legal structure** is being explored which will be the subject of discussion with the wider Steering group and with Gedling BC to see what might be achievable. We anticipate prefacing this with a session with the Steering Group to explore options and modelling. Our support to the existing CA as above represents a first step on this journey but we would like to explore the transfer at peppercorn of the land and building under a new legal structure.

**Business Case.** A sub-group is looking at the business case, based on the meticulous accounts and financials maintained via the CA and the experience of many of the Steering Group in running their own businesses or professional involvement in other similar projects across the wider area. We are developing our ideas based on excellent guidance, support and working practice offered via Locality and the Development Trusts Association. We have reviewed Gedling BC's helpful asset transfer checklist in tandem with the above and would welcome your involvement.

We have contacted Locality to secure their help and potential **consultancy support** to help us develop our plans further and to explore potential start-up resources from various parties including Locality and / or the Lottery, deepening upon the model we wish to adopt and Gedling's support in taking this further.

This includes looking at **financial modelling** for the running of Centre; for potential capital investments for our longer term plans and for the building and our plans for the green space. Though this work is on-going, we are able to make some initial positive forecasts and options for the financial sustainability of the Centre and these are summarised in the attached Appendix. We'd welcome the opportunity of discussing this further with you.

Our anchor for the Centre is the **Haywood Road Pre-School**. They wish to grow and expand their provision and we wish to support them. They already have created valuable support to our young people and have created jobs for local people. We envisage working very closely with them in developing the Centre and the green space in the medium term.

Our discussions within the local community have stimulated some amazing ideas not just for the Centre itself as articulated above but for the **green space**, based on the following themes:

- a **community space**, developed and looked after by the local community - a peaceful garden, an oasis for the residents and community but with flexibility for community events - including a Porchester festival, garden parties, weddings, celebrations, elderly gatherings and support for those with disabilities alongside open cinema evenings and other ideas being developed;
- small scale **allotment space**, run, managed and developed by local residents;
- a **children's open / play space**, integrated with the Community Centre and in particular the Pre-School who are looking to expand their business model and allow even greater outside play for the children's development.

In addition, the Centre has already benefited from new groups and users coming forward. As Gedling members will be aware from our recent CA meeting, already they include:

- The Porchester Craft Collective
- The Friends of Haywood Road Community Centre
- The Porchester Vinyl Record Club
- The Porchester Gardens History Society
- The Porchester Green Space Group
- Turtle Lodge Tai Chi

All bringing fresh thinking to the work of the CA and keen to take the Centre and green space forward. As testimony to our ambitions, we are inviting members of the Cabinet and officers to come along and meet with us shortly at the Centre. Separate contacts are being made.

A **skills audit** is being carried out, initially circulated to the community to review the skills we have amongst us and initial results confirm we have an exciting range of skills and experience locally which sets us on the right path and which will allow us to take on the responsibilities a new set-up will demand of us. Of note, we have locally residents who are skilled and experienced in running a business; making fund bids and making business cases; marketing and promotion; of gardening and green space design; childcare and play; legal perspectives and community asset development.

### **Our Ask of Gedling Borough Council**

While all of these developments are extremely positive, we need some time to finalise the work and your support to realise the potential. We trust that these considerable energies and the push to take-up a realistic alternative model for the community will be reflected in

the Cabinet report and the discussion with members, saving money and keeping the community asset available for Porchester residents and groups.

1. We are asking the Cabinet to at least defer a decision on the sale of the Centre and the land at their meeting in February and to offer us a year to take the strategy forward;
2. We would like you and Gedling Officers to work with us in taking our work to the next stage, allowing a new invigorated Community Association membership to take its steps forward and then to pursue alternative legal / ownership options as referenced;
3. We want to have conversations with and have the support of members at Gedling, and especially the local ward members to look to this model going forward.

Yours sincerely,

**Leona Dunleavy**

**Chair and on behalf of the Save Haywood Road Community Centre**

cc      Councillor John Clarke  
         Councillor Michael Payne  
         Councillor Peter Barnes  
         Councillor David Ellis  
         Councillor Kathryn Fox  
         Councillor Gary Gregory  
         Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth  
         Councillor Henry Wheeler  
         Councillor Chris Barnfather

John Robinson, Chief Executive  
Katie Walters, Estates Surveyor

## Appendix – Financial Summary

Since its inception in 1975, in summary, the Haywood Road Community Association (HRCA) has been responsible for the day to day costs of running the centre, including water, gas and electric bills, paying the caretaker and all internal maintenance. GBC has been responsible for the external maintenance of the building and the upkeep of the bowling green and hedges.

The 2015-16 accounts for HRCA showed total income was £9316.90 and total outgoings were £8983.69, leaving a net 'profit' of £333.21 alongside an overall balance of £7683.57 in the HRCA account. The HRCA has always covered its costs and made a small surplus, even during recent years when the centre has been deemed as 'underused'.

We estimate, taking into account some of the expenses in the 2015-16 figures that are 'one off' payments and factoring in a 1.5% rate of inflation that the **overall annual cost of running the centre is just under £9,000.**

At the moment, the room hire rates for Haywood Road have not increased since September 2010 and are significantly lower than equivalent GBC run community centres (for example, Westdale Lane Community Centre charges £13.30 per hour for use of its main hall; Haywood Road charges £16.50 for a **4 hour** session). We propose to increase the room hire rates to a more realistic £10 p/h for the main hall and £5 p/h for the small committee room, which would still be approximately 26% lower than GBC rates.

With these new fees in place and after discussion with Haywood Road pre-school, currently the main centre user group, here are three predictions for future income based on different centre usage.

### Low

Pre-school using centre for 20 hours p/w, term time only (39 weeks) - £7800  
3 groups per week using main hall in evening for 2 hours (50 weeks) - £3000  
2 groups per week using committee room in evening for 2 hours (50 weeks) – £1000  
Weekends – 20 parties/events of 4 hours per year (Saturdays only) - £800

**Total income: £12,600**

**Surplus: £3,600**

### Medium

Pre-school using centre for 35 hours p/w (8-3pm Monday to Friday), term time only (39 weeks) - £13650  
4 groups per week using main hall in evening for 2 hours (50 weeks) - £4000  
3 groups per week using committee room in evening for 2 hours (50 weeks) – £1500  
Weekends – 40 parties/events of 4 hours per year (Saturdays **and** Sundays) - £1600

**Total income: £20,750**

**Surplus: £11,750**

### **High**

Pre-school using centre for 35 hours p/w, NOT only term time (50 weeks) - £17500

5 groups per week using main hall in evening for 2 hours (50 weeks) - £5000

4 groups per week using committee room in evening for 2 hours (50 weeks) – £2000

4 groups using committee room **in day time** for 2 hours (after alterations to layout of building allow other groups to use room alongside pre-school) - £2000

Weekends – 60 parties/events of 4 hours per year (Saturdays and Sundays, day times and evenings) - £2400

**Total income: £28,900**

**Surplus: £19,900**

As this illustrates, even with the most conservative of predictions, the centre is not only able to cover all its costs, the surplus generated can be used to improve the building AND maintain and develop the green space of the Haywood Road site (which in turn has huge potential to increase the income of the centre in a symbiotic relationship).

Different legal and management models will impact on these initial assessments and upon liabilities (incl for example, depreciation) as well as potential savings and investments to be secured and we'd welcome the conversation with Gedling BC as referenced in the letter.

Separate work is on-going regarding the management (and potential development) costs of the green space given our aspirations as referenced in the letter. Further information would be required from Gedling BC to support our initial assessments, accepting that the information would be based on the core maintenance of the bowling green. This use will change under our plans.