

**COMMUNITY SERVICES REVIEW WORKING GROUP held at ZOOM on
TUESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2021 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillor R Freeman (Chair)
Councillors C Day and M Tayler

Officers in attendance: C Edwards (Democratic Services Officer), F Gardiner (Communities Health and Wellbeing Manager), R Harborough (Director - Public Services) and D Toombs (Senior Health Improvement Officer).

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Khan and C Emmett (Chief Executive Officer CVS Uttlesford).

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2021 were approved as a correct record.

3 APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FEEDBACK

The Communities Health and Wellbeing Manager said that there was some further information required from each of the three proposals currently being considered for funding - Stansted Mountfitchet, Thaxted and Great Dunmow.

The Chair said that the purpose of the working group was to re-open the former day centres after Covid, with increased services at a local level for local people, without them being imposed centrally by Uttlesford District Council. However, he said that because the funds requested were public money, there were checks and balances required to ensure accountability.

Further to a question from the Chair, the Senior Health Improvement Officer said that the Stansted Mountfitchet facility was currently open one day a week and over 100 residents were coming in per day. The next step was to open for a second day per week, and they were considering the best way to do this, either using a third party to manage the food aspect of the centre or to take on the running themselves.

The Director of Public Services said there did need to be accountability, but he was not looking for rigid compliance.

Councillor Day said he thought the day centres were in the right place now that responsibility had moved to the Communities department. He said the day centres did not want to be told what to do by Uttlesford District Council (UDC).

The Communities Health and Wellbeing Manager said that the Council was there for support and advice; she said the centres belonged to the Communities.

There was discussion about the framework and accountability of the centres.

Councillor Tayler said that there would be a legal agreement between UDC and the licensees with a review after a period of 5 years and that they would be largely independent of UDC. He said that as long as the ethos of the Council and the day centres were the same, they would flourish and be successful; this ethos should not change even if there was a political change within the Council. The Senior Health Improvement Officer said that he expected that the review would be on going.

Councillor Tayler said that the review needed to be set out within the licence agreement.

The Director of Public Services said that two agreements would be put in place. The first would be the licence with the premises which would set out UDC's landlord responsibilities. The second would be a funding agreement which would not be prescriptive in terms of how the funding was used but there would be a process to report back to UDC on how the money was being deployed.

The Chair agreed and said that it was important to maintain momentum and for each centre to be dealt with separately as they were at different stages of the process. He said that the Saffron Walden facility might also want to be involved in the process and would possibly ask for funding in the future.

4 UPDATE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

The Chair said this had mainly been covered in the agenda item above; he said that the Stansted facility was close to being fully functional, Thaxted less so and Dunmow had continued functioning throughout, although they were now making changes to what they provided.

5 NEXT STEPS FOR THE WORKING GROUP

There was discussion about the closing down of the working group.

The Director of Public Services said that now the budget had been established by Cabinet, Officers had delegated authority to agree the allocation of funds in consultation with both the Cabinet Members, Councillors Day and Freeman. He said it would be good practice to report back to Cabinet with the progress made.

In response to a question from Councillor Tayler, the Communities Health and Wellbeing Manager said that she was talking to representatives at Takeley and Priors Green and would work together with them, but she said that this working group had been formed to take forward the three former Day Centres.

Councillor Tayler said that he thought the Thaxted facility was ready to open apart from the signing of legal documents.

The Director of Public Services said that representatives from the Great Dunmow facility would need to produce a proposal to reflect ongoing discussions and that arrangements for the Thaxted facility were almost complete apart from providing some supplementary information about funding priorities.

The Chair said the working group had achieved what it set out to do and that with Cabinet agreement he suggested that this be the final meeting.

It was agreed that because some of the key people involved were not at the meeting that the Communities Health and Wellbeing Manager would speak to Councillor Lavelle and the Chair would contact Councillors Coote and Khan to see if they agreed with this proposal.

It was proposed that if there was general agreement, the suggestion to close the working group would be taken to the Joint Executive Committee on the 15th November 2021.

The meeting ended at 7.55pm.