

Portfolio Holder Decision

Report Title: Social Franchise Award Round 5 – Connected Communities Centres

Portfolio Holder: Janet Clowes – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Integration

Senior Officer: Linda Couchman,

1. Report Summary

1.1. This report is to determine the award of social franchisee status to eight applicants which meet the criteria approved by Cheshire East Council.

1.2. The report covers the fifth round of grants for 2017/18 and 2018/19 in line with Cheshire East Council's revised Social Franchise Model. There are a total of 4 grants recommended to be awarded. The grant will be paid by a maximum of four installments for two years every 6 months, each payment in advance e.g. if the grant is awarded in January 2018 it will run until January 2020.

2. Recommendation/s

2.1. To award the Connected Communities Centre status to the following venues:

- Booth Lane Methodist Church, Middlewich, Cledford
- Changing Lives Community Centre, Crewe East
- Stapeley Village Hall, Nantwich South & Stapeley
- Victoria Hall, Middlewich Town
- Alsager Library
- Middlewich Library
- Nantwich Library
- Sandbach Library

2.2. To award a grant of a maximum of £5,000 over 2 years to reserve the use of facilities for the delivery of early intervention and prevention services to

Changing Lives Community Centre, Victoria Hall, Booth Lane Methodist Church and Stapeley Village Hall. The libraries will not receive the social franchise grant.

3. Reasons for Recommendation/s

- 3.1. The venues stated in 2.1, with support from their local network / neighbourhood partnerships, have agreed to become a Connected Communities Centre and adhere to the criteria set out in the revised social franchise model (Appendix 1).
- 3.2. The way in which the individual grants are spent will be determined by the local partnership to ensure that local priorities are being tackled through the most appropriate and effective early intervention and prevention services available.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. The proposed organisations have been selected by local neighbourhood partnerships made up of key stakeholders in that locality. No other appropriate venues within these localities to date have applied to be considered for franchise status. An evaluation process is in place if more than one organisation expresses interest in becoming a Connected Communities Centre within a identified priority location (Appendix 1, page 8).

5. Background

- 5.1. The Cabinet Member for Communities approved a pilot social franchise model for Community Hubs on the 20th July 2015. A model was adopted and monitored for development.
- 5.2. Cabinet agreed to a set of changes based on learning from the pilot franchise model in the Connected to Services report on 8th March 2017.
- 5.3. Detailed amendments to the franchise model were then approved by the portfolio holder for Finance and Communities on 11th July 2017.
- 5.4. The venues that have been agreed to become Connected Communities Centres to date are as follows:

Venue	Location
Audlem Public Hall	Audlem
Bridgend Centre	Bollington
St Barnabas Church	Crewe Central
The Welcome Café	Knutsford, Longridge
Jubilee House	Crewe Central
St Johns Church	Macclesfield, Weston and Ivy
Beechmere Extracare Village	Crewe North and St Barnabas
The Georges Community Centre	Crewe North and St Barnabas

TS Ambuscade	Crewe East
St Andrews Parish Hall	Crewe South
Belong	Crewe South
Poynton Civic Hall	Poynton
Church of the Resurrection	Broken Cross and Upton Priory
Green in the Corner Community Café	Macclesfield, Hurdsfield
Lighthouse Centre	Crewe West
Sherbourne Bungalows	Crewe East
St Barnabas Church	Macclesfield South
United Reformed Church	Wilmslow West & Chorley
United Reformed Church	Macclesfield Central
Open Arms	Wilmslow Dean Row
Oakmere Extra Care Housing	Handforth
Knutsford Town Hall	Knutsford
Holmes Chapel Library	Holmes Chapel
Everybody Leisure Community Centre	Dane Valley
Goostrey Village Hall	Dane Valley
Bromley Farm Community Development Trust	Congleton East
Bromley Farm Wellbeing Hub	Congleton East
Ruby's Fund	Congleton East
The Old Saw Mill	Congleton West

5.5. The following venues have agreed to adhere to all of the criteria, offer and expectations and completed applications set out in Appendix 1:

- Booth Lane Methodist Church – Middlewich Cledford
- Changing Lives Community Centre, Coronation Crescent – Crewe East
- Stapeley Village Hall – Stapeley Parish Council – Nantwich South and Stapeley
- Victoria Hall - Middlewich Town Council- Middlewich
- Alsager, Middlewich, Nantwich & Sandbach Libraries

5.6. The grants are for 2 years only and within that time the Council will be supporting the Connected Communities Centres to establish sustainable funds and activities to continue to provide local residents with a range of priority tackling services.

5.7. About the venues:

Booth Lane Methodist Church- Cledford, Middlewich:

The church is one of a very few community buildings within the Cledford area. Cledford is an area of need which has access to very few services therefore the use of the church as a Connected Communities Centre will

enable Cheshire East Council and other partners to have a base within this community.

One of the Church missions is to outreach into their community. They already run a number of events and coffee mornings in support of local and national charities. They offer social activities and the premises are used by a number of local groups such as Girl Guiding UK, U3a etc.

Becoming a Connected Communities Centre will give them the opportunity to extend the reach of these activities as well as providing new opportunities to interact with the local community addressing local priorities.

Changing lives Community Centre, Coronation Crescent, Crewe:

Changing Lives are a charity supporting the homeless and most vulnerable. Their charitable aim is to meet the needs of the homeless, vulnerable and disadvantaged community in Crewe and the surrounding area that are in financial hardship in a number of ways such as: providing emergency food, essential toiletries, and household items to individuals/families in need and signposting them to relevant information and other advisory services.

This facility is a social supermarket and a community kitchen feeding the homeless and vulnerable whilst allowing spaces for a community base or the delivery of a range of health and wellbeing services.

Stapeley Village Hall:

Stapeley Parish Council manage the village hall and have welcomed the opportunity to become a Connected Communities Centre to better collaborate with a range of services and the residents it serves. The Parish Council likes to be seen as the "grass-roots" of local government and is the first contact point for local issues, the councillors pride themselves that they live within the parish and know the area well. Becoming a Connected Communities Centre will further develop the good work they already undertake.

Victoria Hall - Middlewich:

Victoria Hall is ran and managed by Middlewich Town Council, this great facility and is ideal for a wide range of events, can cater for large or small capacities, is well-facilitated and located in the centre of town with free parking to the rear. The Town Council already works with various partners including Middlewich Vision, local schools, Cheshire Police, CEC, local organisations so can build on these relationships and use local knowledge to promote and develop schemes in a coordinated way. The benefits of

becoming a Connected Communities Centre will ensure more services are being delivered in the heart of this community.

Alsager, Sandbach, Middlewich & Nantwich Libraries

The libraries are situated in the centre of these local towns and with good parking available, they are ideally located to serve the needs of each local community. Each library has accessible meeting rooms with kitchens and toilet facilities. The meeting rooms are currently well used by community groups but do have capacity for more usage and service delivery. The libraries are staffed by friendly and welcoming personnel who are committed to enhancing the health and wellbeing of local residents.

A library is a neutral venue, easy to find, well used, open to all and is recognised as a safe, well-maintained space and is utilised and enjoyed by the whole age demographic. Residents are using the libraries for far more than traditional library services and being Connected Communities Centres in these localities they would attract more people to the library and help make even more effective use of the information and resources available for the benefit of the community as a whole. The libraries would not receive any grant funding as part of this initiative.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

6.1.1. The Council has the power to award grants to organisations using its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. In exercising the power the Council must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making the decision the Council must have taken into account only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives and not acted unreasonably. An application process is a clear statement of the criteria that the Council is applying and is essential if the Council is to defend any challenge to its decision making process.

6.1.2. Franchises and grants to reserve the use of facilities for the delivery of early intervention and prevention services are being awarded to defined organisations following an application process and against set criteria. By entering into a formal grant agreement with the Council the organisations activity can be monitored and required to report back to the Council upon their compliance with the franchise requirements and expenditure of the grant. The decision making process was delegated to the Portfolio Holder in order to ensure that decisions can be made expeditiously and at the appropriate level.

6.1.3. Grant funding to organisations based on the application of the Council's published scheme satisfies the Council's public law duties.

6.2. Finance Implications

6.2.1. The grant payments will be made in four singular payments, paid in advance made over two years to 4 of the proposed 8 franchisees (excluding the libraries). A grant offer agreement will be used which will allow Cheshire East to recover funds if necessary, this will be funded from the Connected Communities Centres reserves which were approved as part of the Connected Communities Strategy by Cabinet on 8th November 2016. This will amount to £10,000 per year for two years equating to £20,000. There is sufficient funding in this earmarked reserve for up to 30 Connected Community Centres or until the allocated budget has been reached.

6.3. Policy Implications

6.3.1. Procurement policies will be adhered too in relation to the financial payment.

6.4. Equality Implications

6.4.1. Application has been open to all asset owners in 25 Connected Communities identified priority areas of deprivation.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

6.5.1. No HR implications are expected

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. All risks will be mitigated through continuous monitoring of the franchise model.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. Not all rural areas can be offered this support as the resource needs to concentrate initially on the in Connected Communities identified priority locations including the top 25% areas of deprivation.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People

6.8.1. The eight proposed Connected Communities Centres will be the flagship venues for public health service delivery in communities. The consideration of these venues in future commissioned contracts as delivery points to achieve outcomes will be of benefit to local hard to

reach residents, achieving a greater reach and assisting with outcomes for the commissioned providers.

6.9. Public Health Implications

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7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. Crewe East, Alsager, Sandbach, Middlewich, Nantwich South & Stapeley

8. Access to Information

8.1. All further information associated with this initiative can be found here:
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/connected-communities/connected-communities.aspx

9. Contact Information

9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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