



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: Community Engagement

Date of Meeting: 4TH JUNE 2010

Public

Key Decision: No

Recorded in Forward Plan:

No

Inside Policy Framework

Title: RESIDENTS PETITION – SAVE OUR CENTRES

Report of: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Report reference: CD05/10

Summary:

A petition, carried out on behalf of the Carlisle and District Federation of Community Centres, urging the Council to reject any cuts to Community Centre grants, has been received.

Sample pages of the petition, which contains over 3,350 signatures, are attached.

Recommendations:

Members are recommended to receive and note the petition

Contact Officer: Rob Burns

Ext: 7352

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

N/A

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Consultation to Date. None

2.2 Consultation proposed. None

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are recommended to receive and note the petition

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 In order to note the concerns of petitioners regarding the reduced funding for Community Centres

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – None
- Financial – None
- Legal – None
- Corporate – None
- Risk Management – None
- Environmental – None
- Crime and Disorder – None
- Impact on Customers – None

- Equality and Diversity – None

Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age		
Disability		
Race		
Gender/ Transgender		
Sexual Orientation		
Religion or belief		
Human Rights		
Social exclusion		
Health inequalities		
Rurality		

If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:

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If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.

RB/VH

20th May 2010

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	
FILE	
20 MAY 2010	
PASSED TO	
ANSWERED	
DATE	

Carlisle and District Federation of Community Organisations

The signatories of this petition would urge the Executive to reconsider their decision to cut £68,00 from the Community Centre grants.

The Community Centres provide vital services to the community, and any cuts will put our Community Centres at risk of a reduction in services, jobs or ultimately closure.

These cuts will affect our communities at a time when people are already worried about jobs, housing, school cuts etc and place EXTREME pressure our Management Committees who are all VOLUNTEERS.

Last year there were approximately 42,000 volunteer hours worked in our Community Centres, and this equates to a saving of a minimum of £250,000 to our council.

If the Community centres were not there where would we hold health initiatives such as Smoking cessation clinics, Child Welfare clinics, Pensioners Lunch Clubs, Exercise classes, and at what cost to the communities in which we live. Who would provide youth clubs and pre-school facilities and what would the cost be to the council if other venues for these activities could be found.

At present many Centres subsidise community groups. The proposed cut backs would mean that the Management Committees would need to reconsider their position and withdraw some financial support, and increase fees paid by members, which could lead to a reduction in usage of our Centres and therefore a further reduction in income.

Community centres provide a source of comparatively cheap, warm, comfortable accommodation where contact with the community can be made at grass roots level in all types of communities, from large to small and of all socio-economic groups and classes.

As many Community Centres are in deprived areas, it is essential that they are able to provide affordable low cost services, and help to promote health and well being within the community.

One community Centre is in the middle of a Parking Zone and is the only Centre without its own 'Off Street' parking. It is only allowed two Parking Permits by the City Council, and this restricts its ability to attract business because there is nowhere to park.

Two of the Centres are Grade 11 listed buildings which are a valuable asset to the citizens of Carlisle, but listing brings its own set of problems and expenses to these Centres.

All Community Centres have worked hard along with help from energy grants, the Council and their own money to upgrade their Centres and reduce their carbon footprint, their bills and make their Centres a nicer and more efficient place to be.

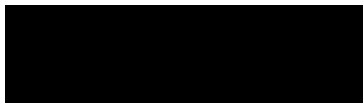
Each Centre has a responsibility to maintain reasonable reserves for contingencies, and the Solace Report on which the proposed cuts are based uses figures for the year 2006/2007 which are no longer valid in 2010.

By cutting our grants we will have to reduce our staffing levels or expect Managers to apply for grants to cover their own salaries and most Funders will not pay grants to cover salaries.

Grants are very difficult to access in this economic climate. The Council no longer employs anyone to assist us with grant applications and many of us have limited knowledge in this field. Competition is fierce and all Centres are going after the same pot of money.

We hope that you will be able to find savings elsewhere and not cut our Community Centre grants

Yours truly,



Chairperson

Number of signatures 3350