



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Committee Report

Public

Date of Meeting: 30th August 2007

Title: Yewdale Community Centre/Post Office

Report of: Director of Community Services

Report reference: CS 67/07

Summary:

The Executive Committee at its meeting on 28th August, considered the attached report on the current position regarding the possible development of a Post Office Counter Service in Yewdale Community Centre.

The outcome of that consideration will be available to Members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee who may wish to discuss the recommendations that emerge.

Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:

Consider the report and the recommendations from the Executive Committee

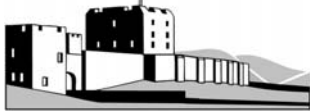
Recommendations:

Members are recommended to note the position agreed by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 28th August

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: CS 56/07



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Date of Meeting: 28TH AUGUST 2007

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan:

Yes

Inside Policy Framework

Title: PROPOSED POST OFFICE BRANCH IN YEWDAL
COMMUNITY CENTRE

Report of: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report reference: CS56/07

Summary:

To report on discussions which have taken place regarding the possibility of replacing the Branch Post Office in Yewdale Ward which was closed in 2006

Recommendations:

Members are recommended to note the position regarding discussions with both the Post Office Ltd and the Yewdale Community Centre Management Committee in connection with re-opening a branch in Yewdale following the closure of the local branch in 2006 and to confirm that no further action is possible.

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

- 1.1 At their meeting on 19th March 2007, the Executive Committee considered a report on the feasibility of extending Yewdale Community Centre to accommodate a branch Post office Post Office (Report No. CS13/07, Min No. EX063/07)
- 1.2 Since that time, further discussions have taken place with the Post Office Ltd and the Centre's Management Committee.
- 1.3 The Management Committee raised no objections to the possibility of an extension being added to the building to accommodate a Post Office, but did not wish to have any part in running or managing it. (Management Cttee meeting on 23rd April 2007)
- 1.4 The Post Office's response can be summarised thus;
- 1.5 In December 2006, the Government commenced a twelve-week national consultation into their proposals for the Post Office network and confirmed those proposals in May 2007.
- 1.6 This resulted in the restructuring of the PO network and up to 2,500 branches will close as a result, being replaced with about 500 new Outreach services, including mobile branches in locations such as village halls.
- 1.7 Post Office Ltd will be examining carefully the strict access criteria set by the Govt in order to plan how best to implement those proposals.
- 1.8 That process will involve the creation, during the next 18 months, of between 50 and 60 area plans across the country.
- 1.9 They feel therefore that it would not be prudent to seek to restore a PO in Yewdale until this process has been carried out. In Cumbria, the planning process will begin in January 2008.
- 1.10 They reminded us that the operation of a sub post office requires an applicant to express an interest in the position of sub postmaster and to provide suitable premises from which the service would run.
- 1.11 That had been no such expressions of interest since the Post Office in Hutton Way closed in December 2006.

1.12 Therefore, they feel it would be inappropriate at this time, to look at re-opening a branch in Yewdale in advance of them reviewing the area and in the light of the Government's decision.

1.13 In the light of both those responses, it is evident that there is no further mileage in pursuing this particular proposal at this time.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Consultation to Date. Consultation has taken place with the Post Office Ltd and the Yewdale Community Centre management Committee

2.2 Consultation proposed. No further consultation proposed

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are recommended to note the position regarding discussions with the Post Office Ltd and the Yewdale Community Centre Management Committee in connection with re-opening a branch in Yewdale following the closure of the local branch in 2006 and to confirm that no further action is possible.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To conclude the investigations and enable the Executive to respond to the original motion put to Council in November 2006 (Ref C183/06ii)

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – None
- Financial – None
- Legal – None
- Corporate – Whilst the loss of any community facility needs to be carefully assessed it is considered that it would be inappropriate to consider all PO closures outwith a strategy for the whole of Carlisle
- Risk Management – None
- Equality and Disability – None

- Environmental – None
- Crime and Disorder – None
- Impact on Customers – Whilst the closure of the PO in Yewdale had an initial impact, alternative arrangements appear to have been adopted by the community.

2nd August 2007

M Battersby

Director of Community Services