

COMMUNITY CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES – CLARIFICATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Submitted by: Executive Management Team

Portfolio: Regeneration and Planning/Culture and Active Communities/Resources and Efficiency.

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To respond to a request from the Committee's Chair to provide clarification of the division of responsibilities between the Council and the various Community Centre Management Committees (following the recent health and safety breaches at one of the community centres).

Recommendation

That the information be received.

Reasons

To clarify the respective responsibilities of the Council and local Management Committees with regard to the Council's community centres.

1. Background

- 1.1 In 1996 the Council established informal arrangements for the local management of its community centres; at a summary level this meant the Council retaining responsibility for the main property-related matters with the day to day operation and management of the centres being undertaken by the emergent Management Committees.
- 1.2 Following the recent prosecution of the Council, in relation to breaches of Health and Safety legislation at one of the Council's community centres, the Chair of this committee asked officers to advise members about the division of responsibility between the Council and the various Management Committees which manage the centres.

2. Issues

- 2.1 There are no formal agreements in place in relation to the use of the community centres and the responsibilities of the Council and the Management Committee, however, since 1996 an informal arrangement has been adhered to as follows:-
 - (i) The Council is responsible for maintaining the fabric of the building, including the roof, roof timbers, walls, doors, window frames, floors, electrical, gas and water systems, internal and external decorations together with all of the required tests under the statutory testing regime (which includes matters such as gas appliance testing, electrical system testing and, where applicable, legionella testing).
 - (ii) The Management Committee is responsible for all other maintenance and repair which includes glass to windows, floor coverings, light bulbs, crockery, furniture and curtains.

2.2 It is important to note that, since the health and safety breach (relating to gas appliance maintenance) which occurred in one of the centres in 2009, the Council has established and maintained a robust statutory testing regime since then and all gas appliances, including central heating equipment in all community centres, have had annual gas safety checks carried out as required by legislation.

2.3 On a broader note members will be aware that officers are in the process of undertaking a comprehensive review of community centres (see Forward Plan); this exercise will seek to address the full range of considerations including the potential formalisation and clarification of the responsibilities of local management arrangements.

3. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

3.1 The efficient management and operation of the Council's community centres is important to the achievement of objectives relating to corporate priorities in relation to both the 'creation of a healthy and active community' and 'transforming the Council to achieve excellence'.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

4.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility for maintaining its properties in compliance with prevailing legislation relating to matters such as health and safety, gas safety, legionella and electrical safety.

5. **Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no financial or resource implications arising directly from this report.

6. **Major Risks**

6.1 There are no risks arising directly from this report, given that the report is simply providing clarification of existing arrangements. However members will appreciate the importance of having satisfactory arrangements in place to minimise the risk of the Council breaching health and safety legislation and those matters referred to earlier.