



COMMUNITY SPACES NORTHAMPTON

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Community Asset Transfer Programme Overview

Community Centres

- 10 council-run
- 11 community-run

Community Asset Transfer of all centres under new arrangements

- 30 year lease
- 30 year service level agreement

Latest position

- 20 now approved by Cabinet
- Last centre under public offer



The need for change



Dissatisfied Communities

- Not aware of centres
- Centres do not run what they want
- Difficult to book & centres in poor condition



Dissatisfied Councillors

- Complaints from constituents about poor service
- Governing party criticised by opposition parties
- Pressure to reduce budgets



Dissatisfied Council

- Complaints from public about poor service
- Complaints from Councillors about dissatisfied users
- Financial burden

Cross-Party Task Force of Councillors

Visited centres; consulted communities; reported to Overview & Scrutiny

Cabinet approved policy review



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“Centres run by the community for the community”

Required Outcomes – Win:Win:Win

**Tangible
Benefits**



**Intangible
Benefits**

**Local
Community**

- User satisfaction up
- User complaints reduced

- Better local decision making
- More local pride and general well-being
- Community empowerment

**Voluntary &
Community
Sector**

- Increased income/more sustainable
- Long-term occupation
- Access to grant funding
- Financial support
- Limited property management
- Tenants' break clause

- Greater local control of facilities
- Greater local commitment to the Council

Council

- Substantive increase in service performance
- Significant budget saving

- Recognition, increased support & info sharing from community bodies



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Setting a new policy

- Cross-Party Cabinet Advisory Group set up
- New Policy
 - Third Sector Organisations to run all Community Centres
 - Long-term lease with nominal rent
 - High-level Service Level Agreement
 - Proper governance required
 - 5-year business plan & forecasts required
 - Start-up support grant
- Cabinet approved December 2010



An Integrated Programme - Projects



“Centres run by the community for the community”

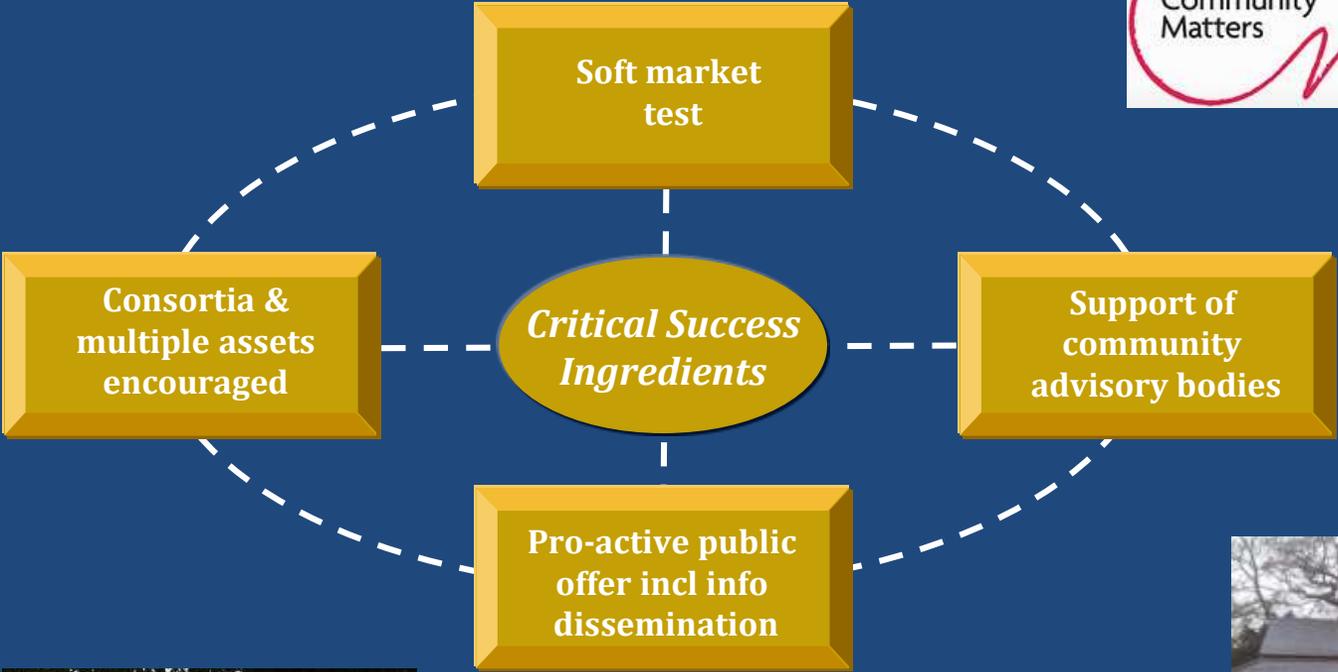
An Integrated Programme - Preparing the community

- Consulted existing centre management groups
- Consulted community support groups:
 - Community Matters
 - Volunteers Centre
 - Locality (ex DTA and BASSAC)
 - Council for Voluntary Services
 - Prohelp/Business in the Community
- Soft market testing of other Third Sector Organisations and Housing Assocs



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What made it work...1



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What made it work...2

- Political will
- Chief Executive support
- Community consultation & support
- Support from national bodies such as Community Matters and Locality
- Clear benefits to the community
- Clear benefits to management groups
- Clear benefits to the Council
- Internal capacity to support change
- External support & challenge



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Benefits to the Community

1. Community empowerment - gives more control to the community over what activities are run at centres
2. Allows more innovation by the community
3. Community demand and local need can be responded to more rapidly
4. More local pride and general well-being
5. User satisfaction up; user complaints down

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Benefits to Management Committees...1

1. Long term occupation – 30 year lease
2. Access to grant funding – the long term lease allows community organisations to apply for many grants which are not available to the Council
3. Nominal rent for full 30 years - £240pa per centre for 30 years
4. Financial support for four years – 100% of ex-Council costs less any income earned by the Council is available in the first year, tapering over the next three years

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Benefits to Management Committees...2

1. Full control of centre – caretaker, cleaner, internal decoration and maintenance, bookings, income, etc
2. Limited property management – the Council retains responsibility for the fabric of the building, the grounds and buildings insurance
3. Caretakers/TUPE – the transfer of the Council caretaker to the management organisation under TUPE may only apply where certain centres are run by one organisation, and appropriate indemnities may apply

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Benefits to Management Committees...3

1. Tenants break clause – 6 months notice can be given at any time by the managing organisation if they no longer want to run the centre
2. Access to Transition Fund – a grant of £100k across 20 centres available for each of the first 3 years to support the transition of community centres into the hands of the community
3. Centre utilisation – Council-run centres have relatively low utilisation in recent years which is a great opportunity for community organisations to increase room hire income for themselves

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CSN's viewpoint - Toby Birch...1



- Brand new community organisation formed between AGYCC and Doddridge
- Applied for multiple centres – 7 plus Lodge Farm
- Locality/Asset Transfer Unit and NBC provided matched funding support
- Prohelp/Business In The Community provided free property consultants and legal advisers

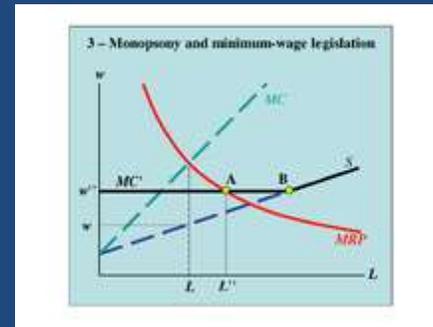
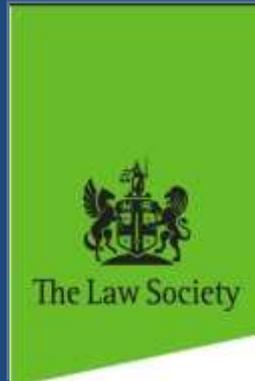


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CSN's viewpoint - Toby Birch...2



- Lessons learnt:
 - Employment law/TUPE
 - Company & charity registration
 - Leases & management agreements
 - Contract law



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CSN's viewpoint - Toby Birch...3



- Seeing increased utilisation and attracting new regular user groups
- Created sustainable, vibrant and viable centres for the community
- Case study for Locality and NCVO



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Summary

- **Need** – service improvement
- **Solution** - pro-actively transfer all community centres into community hands
- **Method** – Community partnership model and consortia/multiple centres (CSN)
- **Outcome** – community empowerment/ involvement, increased utilisation, reduced complaints, viable community groups, £1M+ Council cost savings
- **Win:Win:Win** – Community, VCS and Council



Required Outcomes - Win:Win:Win

Tangible Benefits	Intangible Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased community engagement• Improved community cohesion• Increased community leadership• Improved community reputation• Increased community responsibility for buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved community leadership• Improved community cohesion• Improved community reputation• Improved community responsibility for buildings



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Business Plan Template

- Summary: Concise overview of proposal
- Introduction: History and development of organisation
- Organisation: Legal structure
- Management: Staff, Trustees, Directors
- Proposal: Proposed activities and services
- Community: Marketing, sales and pricing
- Risk Assessment: Review of the risks
- Action Plan: Timeline of key tasks
- Performance Review: Monitoring and evaluation
- Financial: Current position and 5 year forecasts

Setting up the Project

- March 2011 – Invitation to apply
- June 2011 – 5 year business plan and financial projections submitted
- July 2011 – Awarded the right to manage the centres
- August 2011 – Meetings start with NBC
- Sept 2011 – Meetings start with NBC/Unison and GMB union
- Sept 2011 – Professional building surveys completed
- Sept 2011 – TUPE measures letters sent to NBC and unions
- Sept 2011 – Negotiated an indemnity of £50,000.00 from NBC in respect of any future TUPE liabilities
- Sept 2011 – Unions request a time off and facilities agreement

Setting up the Project

- Jan 2012 – Equitable pension scheme required for staff subject to TUPE
- 29th Feb 2012 – Lease documents, side letters, management agreements signed, some keys handed over
- 1st March 2012 – CSN assumes responsibility for managing 7 centres
- March 2013 – CSN takes on an additional community centre



Hindsight...

- Carry out health and safety inspections prior to transfer in addition to surveys
- Ensure all identified works are carried out prior to transfer, or a signed agreement in place
- Safety certificates, asbestos surveys, gas and electrical certificates need to be in place
- Added pressures apply towards the end of the process to make changes
- Don't believe transferee will want to give you the best deal
- Equipment lists need to be provided

Hindsight continued...

- Figures given on bookings, income and expenditure need to be treated with caution
- Be aware that the officers you deal with may move post during the process
- Ensure that hire charges are realistic in the business plan
- Manage expectations – information dissemination prior to, and following, handover
- Who has existing keys and alarm codes?
- Allow for staff training budget, and consider reorganisation of staff to eliminate previous work practices

Thank you for listening
Any Questions?

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