

Agenda Item 8

Cabinet Meeting Date 13/11/18	Classification Public
From The Leader and Cabinet Member for Growth and Leisure to the Cabinet	
Overview Committee 12/11/18	Title of Report Development of Community Hubs

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council wants to build a stronger relationship with its residents where we work together to solve the borough's challenges. To support that aspiration, we want to put public services at the heart of our communities through a new programme to develop locality hubs. These will be new, purpose built facilities that will bring council services, community groups and the wider public sector together in easily accessible locations. Working in partnership with residents, these hubs will allow us to develop new service models to meet the needs of our residents.
- 1.2 The majority of the hubs will be delivered by Redbridge Living as part of larger residential schemes, giving the opportunity to cross subsidise the cost of delivery; greatly reducing the direct capital cost to the Council.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- 2.1 **Approve the headline proposals to consolidate the delivery of the relevant services into five community hubs alongside a central Civic Hub to be located in Ilford;**
- 2.2 **Approve the proposed sites for the five community hubs in Seven Kings, Gants Hill, Ashton's playing fields, Wanstead and Hainault;**
- 2.3 **Update the brief provided to Redbridge Living for the development of the Seven Kings site as part of the July 2017 Gateway One approval to include proposals for a new Community Hub;**
- 2.4 **Acknowledge the inclusion of the Gants Hill site within a package of sites to be put through Gateway One for potential delivery through Redbridge Living under a separate report on this Cabinet agenda; and**
- 2.5 **Authorise officers to open discussions with relevant parties to consider the feasibility and timing of the delivery of community hubs in Wanstead, Woodford and Hainault with the results to form a later report to Cabinet.**

**THE DECISIONS PROPOSED IN THE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THIS REPORT
MAY BE CALLED IN**

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3. Background and Proposals

- 3.1. The Council wants to build a better relationship with residents where we work together to address the challenges facing our borough. Redbridge has already started work to forge more active relationships, notably through the Our Streets strategy and the roll out of the Three Conversations model in adult social care. As part of this ambition, we propose a new programme of community hubs that will put public services at the heart of the communities they serve.
- 3.2. These will be new, purpose-built facilities designed in partnership with our residents. While the services to be integrated into each property will be subject to engagement with local communities, it is envisaged that the anchor functions for each hub could include: library facilities, children's centres, local social care services, customer self service, local bases for the Civic Pride neighbourhood, cleansing and enforcement teams and cultural services. There would also be high quality community facilities which might include co-working space and space for VCS organisations.
- 3.3. Subject to consultation and agreement with partners, the Council may also seek to provide space for leisure facilities, GP surgeries and the police. By bringing these services together in one property, we will be able to increase accessibility, reduce property and management overhead, and improve the way services operate around the needs of local residents.
- 3.4. The hubs programme is designed to enhance and improve the quality of public services in Redbridge. It does not require the closure or reduction of existing services, though clearly it is likely to change the location of some services in order to improve overall accessibility.
- 3.5. There would be five new hubs alongside the redevelopment of the council's main offices in Ilford. The precise configuration of individual hubs will be a matter for engagement with communities. The Council is committed to co-designing each hub and providing local residents with an ongoing stake in their governance. The proposed location of each hub has been designed to promote accessibility, so that everyone in the borough can consistently and easily reach the core service offer.
- 3.6. Locality model hubs can serve a variety of purposes. For instance, Tower Hamlets uses its hubs primarily to provide space for local community groups, while Leeds has co-located housing, customer service, job seeker support and library services. A range of different models for community hubs is detailed in Appendix A.

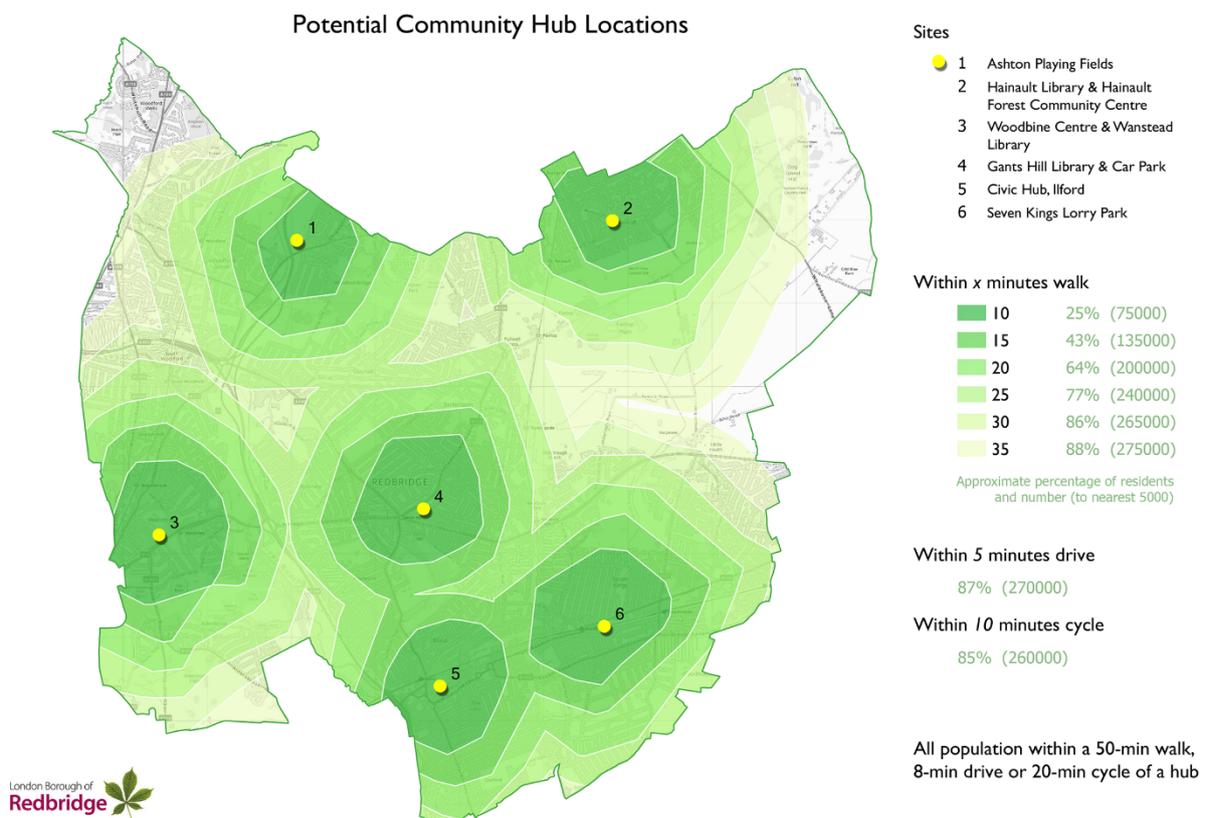
4. Proposed hub model

- 4.1. The Council currently delivers services from almost 50 different buildings. These include seven office bases, 24 nurseries, youth centres and children's centres, 12 libraries and 22 residential centres and day centres for adult social care. While most residents will live close to at least some of our services, there is no consistent approach to ensuring that services are readily available to everyone.
- 4.2. Over the coming years the Council will need to review this property portfolio. Many of the buildings are over 30 years old, with a substantial maintenance backlog. It is likely that some will have to close as they become uneconomic to maintain and operate. Moreover, the council currently spends around £10m on

property costs and needs to ensure that it is securing maximum value for this money. With the creation of a new corporate landlord approach to property, the Council has an opportunity to look at its entire portfolio strategically, rather than on a service-by-service basis.

- 4.3. The proposed Community Hub model would see a Central Civic Hub located in Ilford with five multi-service satellites located in strategic locations around the Borough. The Central Civic Hub would form the Council’s main operational base and would replace all remaining Council offices and seek to re-provide the central library, civic functions and theatre as part of a broader Cultural Quarter supporting the regeneration of Ilford Town Centre. This opportunity has been identified in the Council’s Local Plan and Ilford Manifesto and Prospectus and will be a major undertaking. A separate report on this will be forthcoming as more detailed work is completed.
- 4.4. We have proposed sites for the five locality hubs based on a rigorous analysis of their accessibility. The locations ensure that nearly all residents can reach their nearest hub on foot in under half an hour, with three-quarters of residents within 20 minutes. All residents will be able to drive to a hub within 8 minutes and to cycle within 20 minutes (fig 1). This will ensure that the hubs provide a high and consistent level of accessibility.

Figure 1. Travel distances to proposed hub sites



4.5. The six proposed hub locations are:

- Seven Kings – redevelopment of the existing Lorry Park and Car Park to provide a community hub with potential for commercial and health uses as part of a broader residential led development replacing the existing library currently within rented accommodation in the shopping parade opposite the site;
- Gants Hill– redevelopment of the existing library and car park to provide a community hub together with re-provided car parking and potential for commercial and health uses as part of a broader residential led development;
- Wanstead – redevelopment of existing library and Woodbine Centre to provide a community hub with residential uses above. The Woodbine Centre would need to be re-provided either within the hub or elsewhere;
- Ashtons playing field – development of new sports and civic amenities; and
- Hainault – redevelopment of the existing library, Community Hall, Adult Social Care facility and Nursery. The Adult Social Care property is being vacated, the nursery and community hall are subject to separate leases which would be subject to negotiation. It is anticipated that these uses will need to be re-provided on the site.
- Central Civic Hub – located in the Council’s redeveloped offices in Ilford.

4.6. As well as their strategic locations and availability, these sites have also been identified because most will allow us to develop the hubs as part of wider residential developments, with new housing cross-subsidising each hub. This may make it possible for the hubs to be developed at no additional cost to the council. As this is likely to be a long-term project for the council, we will keep the location of each hub under review to ensure we can make the most of any new opportunities that may come forward in future.

Delivering the hubs programme

4.7. A well-designed hubs programme could eventually enable the Council to release some existing service properties, providing a smaller, modern and purpose-built service estate with savings in maintenance and management costs. A small number of specialist service properties would probably be maintained outside the hubs where there is a clear business case for doing so.

4.8. Delivery of the hubs will be a medium- to long-term endeavour. By identifying the locations now, the Council will be in a strong position to deliver the hubs as each site is ready. The two most promising locations at present are Seven Kings and Gants Hill, and detailed consideration of hubs in these locations can begin immediately.

4.9. The Seven Kings site is largely vacant and has already been identified (Cabinet approval in July 2017) as an opportunity site for Redbridge Living (the Council’s wholly owned Development Company) which will be bringing forward proposals for the site in the coming months. It is recommended that the Council update its requirements for the site and confirm to Redbridge Living that it wishes the company to consider the potential to provide a community hub as part of its proposals for the site; and

- 4.10. The Gants Hill site is occupied by an operational library and car park but the car park is relatively underutilised and the site has high development potential which gives an increased likelihood that the costs of providing the new facility can be cross subsidised through wider residential development. Redbridge Living is likely to be the best delivery route for this scheme too and the site has been included within a schedule of 14 sites which are being progressed through Gateway One for potential delivery through Redbridge Living under a separate report on this Cabinet agenda.
- 4.11. Full business cases for the development of hubs in Seven Kings and Gants Hill would be prepared and considered by Cabinet as part of a Gateway Two approval for their delivery through Redbridge Living within six to eight months. It is likely that much – if not all – of the capital cost could be met by Redbridge Living as part of the works to develop the wider sites. This would, in effect, deliver the new hubs for no additional cost. The feasibility of this approach will need to be tested as the proposals are worked up into a detailed business case, with physical delivery of these first two community hubs taking 18-24 months depending on the scale of the wider residential development to be delivered.
- 4.12. The remaining three hubs all require further consideration before firm recommendations can be made in respect of their ultimate delivery. In Wanstead and Woodford, further work is required to explore the potential to adapt or relocate existing service facilities on the sites and in Hainault discussions are required with existing leaseholders to determine the potential to consider revised arrangements to support the delivery of the proposed community hub. At this stage, Cabinet is asked to support the broad locations and authorise officers to open discussions with all relevant parties with a view to a further report being provided in Spring 2019.
- 4.13. The Communications Team will publicise the benefits of the initiative.

5. Fairness Implications, including Equality and Diversity

- 5.1 In summary, section 149 of the 2010 Act requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to:
- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act (which includes conduct prohibited under section 29);
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not (which involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding).
- 5.2 Under the PSED the relevant protected characteristics are:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender Reassignment
 - Pregnancy & Maternity
 - Race

- Religion
 - Sex
 - Sexual Orientation
- 5.3 In respect of the first aim only i.e. reducing discrimination, the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership is also relevant.
- 5.4 Having due regard to the need to 'advance equality of opportunity' between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not includes having due regard, in particular, to the needs to:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic where those needs are different from the needs of persons who do not share that characteristic;
 - Encourage those who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 5.5 Further, section 149 provides that the steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 5.6 Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others, but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited under the Act (which includes breach of an equality clause or rule, or of a non-discrimination rule).
- 5.7 The proposal to establish Community Hubs will improve accessibility to Council services for all, whether they have physical limitations to mobility or others. There are no adverse equalities impacts associated with this proposal.

6. Staffing Implications

- 6.1 There are no immediate staffing implications arising from the proposal to develop business cases for the creation of Community Hubs in these two locations. However, if these business cases are implemented they will have implications for both the working location of some staff and require the redesign of job roles to support the development of new multi-functional service models. For instance, it is likely that the Council would seek to recruit generic hub managers to oversee the full range of services provided, replacing some individual service managers.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no immediate financial implications for the development of the business case for Community Hubs. Any financial implications that arise as part of the business case development will be contained within a further report to Cabinet.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The report proposes the development of 5 new purpose built local hubs alongside 1 Ilford civic centre site for the provision of local public services. It proposes that the hubs be developed through Redbridge Living. In the event that the sites of the hubs and civic centre are disposed of by the Council to Redbridge Living the disposal – unless the disposal is to consist of a short tenancy (being a tenancy for a term not exceeding 7 years) - is to meet the requirements of section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The titles to the sites have yet to be investigated. Any matters arising from investigating the titles will be dealt with as they arise.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A: the hub approach in practice

Leeds Community Hubs

Leeds co-located some of their services to form Community Hubs. The hubs offer a mixture of library services, housing services, customer services and offer job searching help and advice. They are also a venue for pop up surgeries from organisations such as the National Careers Service, DWP, Money buddies, Credit Union, CAB and others.

Case 1: Dewsbury Road Community Hub

"Dewsbury Road Community Hub is located on the busy and bustling main Dewsbury Road and covers various areas of Leeds including Beeston Hill, Holbeck and West Hunslet. It is also not far from the City Centre. The Community Hub offers access to library, job shop, housing and customer services.

"There are internet-ready PCs which are free to use, as is our WiFi, and we have free IT learning sessions to help you get online! There's no need to book for free story times for toddlers. We offer something for everyone including access to free eBooks and eMagazines, regular activities for children and access to any book currently in stock on Leeds Libraries lending catalogue including books in many different languages.

"We offer pop up surgeries from various organisations including the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Leeds Credit Union, Money Buddies and Leeds Counselling service.

"Appointments to see a Registrar can be made here and we can advise on housing, benefits, council tax, parking etc.

"If you are looking for work in the area we offer a jobshop service and our experienced staff can help with all aspects of looking for work."

Brent prototype hub

Brent has plans to roll out hubs following prototyping the concept in Harlseden. The prototype was run from April 2017 through March 2018. This determined that the need in that area was primarily:

- **benefits** – housing benefits and council tax support, overpayment of benefits, change in circumstances, enquiries about JSA, ESA, Universal Credit processes, financial inclusion advice relating to benefits
- **housing and homelessness** – rent arrears, facing eviction, repairs (relating to housing management), problems with landlords, moving home, sheltered accommodation enquires
- **money** – debt, rent arrears
- **employment** – support with setting up an email account, job search, CV writing
- **general support / form filling** – support with reading letters and completing forms (e.g. medical appointments, universal credit, oyster card, freedom pass, driving license, blue badge forms, registering to vote and passport forms)

"The hub team also provides a direct response to situations where required, connecting individuals with the support services they need. This has included supporting a vulnerable

adult who had no heating or electricity, an alcoholic in crisis, a vulnerable adult at risk of exploitation, someone experiencing social isolation, a domestic abuse disclosure and crisis support. These are situations which have required an immediate response with specialist input.”

The prototyping process also provided Brent with an opportunity to develop a profile their users. This model of hub is run alongside other specialist hubs in Brent addressing:

- domestic violence
- young people on the edge of care and their families
- hospital users

Newham

Newham decided in 2013, to move towards the Community Hubs model. Which led to a restructure of Libraries, Community Leaders & Engagement (CoLE) Teams, Customer Services and Community Centre services. One of the roles of the Community Hubs is mapping of community spaces and use of spaces in the forum area and ensuring facilities are well used and enjoyed. Newham’s Community Resilience handbook noted that, this model was a new way to deliver combined information in a practical way whilst delivering multiple services to residents.

There are 8 Community Hubs within Newham. They are located within Libraries and are equipped with multifaceted service delivery based upon the area they are in. For example, some include volunteering programmes offering clear routes to employment or offering the relevant workshops for residents.

An important part of the success of these Community Hubs is that management of the hubs must be efficient because of the variety of services being delivered. There is a separate commissioner (understands the need and budget) and delivery manager for the community hubs working with the manager to ensure that the Community Hub delivers.

The community assets review was done based on rationalising employees, rationalising buildings and ensuring service provision was correct down to area level.

Newham’s website states:

“Across the borough eight Community Neighbourhood teams help deliver this commitment by bringing people together in community centres, libraries and other public spaces to take part in activities, introducing neighbour to neighbour and linking people through new experiences.

“Community Neighbourhoods can provide help and advice, connecting people, and helping to identify resources such as space, expertise, courses and training such as first aid and funding opportunities.

“Do you have an idea to develop your community, support your neighbours, improve the environment, help children play and connect people? This can be a reality with support from Community Neighbourhoods.”

Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets currently has 3 hubs and is intending to develop a further 2. These are designed primarily to provide third sector organisations with flexible working

environment. They are also available to individuals and small businesses at a higher rate. They do not provide co-location with any services.

Their publicity states that:

“London Borough of Tower Hamlets is developing a network of Community Hubs across the borough. These are versatile, bookable spaces, designed to allow multiple community groups to use the building at the same time.

“All of the Community Hubs will provide high-quality facilities, including:

- A large hall or meeting space
- A small meeting space
- A kitchen
- Free Wi-Fi
- Multimedia facilities
- Secure lockable storage for regular users.”

https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Community-safety-and-emergencies/Community_hub/Community_hub_brochure.pdf