

Haringey Community Centres Network Workshop / Consultation on Leases

Held on 20th June 2024 @ The Community Hub, Wood Green [Initial report by HCCN]



Some of the attendees

[See Appendix 1 and 2 at end]

BACKGROUND This event was organised by the Council in collaboration with the Haringey Community Centres Network. Representatives of Community Centres in Haringey were invited to talk about experiences of leasing buildings, to share views about key issues, and how social value generated by such Centres should be recognised and measured.

Following a Cabinet decision in March, Haringey Council began undertaking an engagement process over the coming months to co-design a new approach to establishing future leases for Community Centres occupying Council buildings. This is to include a new process for organisations managing or seeking to manage such buildings to have key services they provide recognised, valued and used to off-set rent charges. The discount an organisation can be rewarded or qualify for will be determined by the social value it contributes, measured by objective criteria. The idea is to identify what types of activities or outcomes should qualify VCS organisations managing Centres to receive a discount on their leases (ie rents). Other key lease issues include lengths of leases, responsibilities for maintenance and repairs, and relations with Haringey Council.

Important note: This was the first event in an ongoing engagement process for the whole voluntary and community sector. The aim was to also organise a further workshop for other VCS organisations and stakeholders as well as a survey of the broader VCS sector.

THE AGENDA

- 12 Arrival/registration
- 12.15 Welcome + background from LBH and HCCN
- 12.30 First workshop session - the current key issues and proposed solutions regarding leases [Breakout tables]
- 1.10pm Brief report backs from each breakout group
- 1.25 Break for refreshments -----
- 1.40 Second workshop session - Measuring social value [Breakout tables]
- 2.10pm Brief report backs from each breakout group
- 2.25 General reflections
- 2.45 Final remarks, next steps, and networking

Introduction

Jess Crowe, the Council's Director of Culture, Strategy and Engagement, explained the Council's commitment to work with and support Haringey's voluntary and community sector in general, and with Community Centres in particular. She set out the reasons for the current consultation, with an aim to report back to the Cabinet in the autumn.

Dave Morris, for the Haringey Community Centres Network, explained the vital role of community-run Community Centres in the borough [36 on the HCCN list], the great work they do on a daily basis, and the serious challenges they have faced for years over leases and financial matters. He felt that HCCN/LBH negotiations held over the last 3-4 years were beginning to address these issues fruitfully and help develop better relations with the Council.

The following are the raw, unedited notes taken during the breakout group discussions....

First session – key issues with leases

First sheet

- Appliances not working (lifts, toilets, windows don't open, doors not opening, maintenance – accessibility issues)
- Unclear what is covered by insurance
- Lease expired and can't afford market rent
- Impacts on funding applications
- Responsible for internal repairs/LBH responsible for external repairs, but this is not clearly understood
- Fear that reporting building faults could lead to eviction
- Every 5 years the surveyor visits which is experienced as a threatening event
- Asbestos and other health and safety issues should be an LBH responsibility
- Orgs have fundraised to maintain their own buildings
- Council not honouring historic leases as obliged (repairs, listed buildings so adaptations restricted, can't get grants).
- Orgs can use a letter from landlord for funding applications but Council has been reluctant to provide.
- Length of lease is important for grant applications.

Main issues:

- 1) Repairs
- 2) Relationship with Council (slow, changeover of staff, non-delivery)
- 3) Length of lease (grant funding – impact on social value delivery).

Second sheet:

- One-size-fits-all approach not fit for purpose
- Rent
- LTA Auto Renewal

- Lease
- Length of Lease
- Communication (knowing who to contact)
- Decision making
- Maintenance Responsibility (repairs) clarity
- Full repairing leases
- Improvements capital investment
- Contracts – shared services
- Wider location challenges – antisocial activities
- Insurance
- (Fairness) inconsistency
- Minimum condition
- Back ground information on property

HVCA notes

- Rent: £194p.a. but not set (29K one year)
- Lease length (would like 25 years)
- Maintenance/Enhancement (offset). Council responsible for fabric
- Right to renew
- Fairness across the sector
- Condition of building: credit for good state of repairs
- Council shared services: waste collection, insurance, statutory compliance

Third sheet:

- Access/availability of space
- No short term space for project work
- Drive to monetize space – can't offer free spaces to other groups
- Food banks in meanwhile spaces
- Maintenance – condition.
- Suitability of space for activities
- Funders require a term of 8 years or more
- Point of contact
- Proactive maintenance rather than reactive maintenance
- Can't adapt buildings
- Lack of knowledge of repair responsibility
- Drive to survive
- No training / capacity building delivered by LBH
- 2 years on a lease?

Main issues:

- 1) Lease length
- 2) Point of contact
- 3) Drive to monetize

Fourth sheet:

Long Lease, 20-25 years

- Organisations should not have to prove this is needed for funders and bids.
- With break clauses on both sides
- With periodic rent reviews, joint review.
- To make sure that still meeting social value as social value may have increased?
- Separation of SLA agreement and property lease

Maintenance

- Fabric of building is automatically covered
- Maintenance contracts: both sides are responsible for their parts (implication of not meeting criteria has to be costed and taken into account)
- Recognition of tenants' maintenance costs included in lease.

Price

- 100% offsetting of the rent and maintenance

Insurance

- Councils should be responsible for fabric of building at least

Rent Review

- Should also take into account the social value

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First session – key issues with leases

Feedback from my table

Length of leases - organisations should not have to prove something like this is needed. Should be included on Heads of Terms.

Safeguarding of the asset if it stops being used with break clauses on both sides.

Monitoring is an important aspect – how is the lease monitored and who reviews it?

Periodic rent review – are you still delivering your business plan etc.

Property lease and SLA being another arrangement, but they need to run in parallel.

Would like a separation of SLA and Property Lease

Process around the review. Who has the power?

Would be helpful to have advisors –periodic joint review?

Maintenance

Some of the leases are repairing leases – you pay rent, and you do all the maintenance.

No community centre to have a maintenance agreement.

Council pay maintenance on a sliding scale dependent on social value of the building.

Fabric of the building to be automatically covered-e.g. the exterior.

Both sides are responsible for their parts and the cost implications of that must be identified.

Recognition of tenant's maintenance costs in the lease. Implication of not meeting criteria must be costed and taken into account.

Price

Social value can we offset to 100% of rent and maintenance.

Alongside rent review expect the value of other things

Insurance – take advantage of insurance and waste collection. Excess is currently too high.

Councils should be responsible for the fabric of the building at least.

Utility cost could be privately managed.

Feedback

Length of the leases – real issue with regards to organisation and funding.

Point of Contact – where there are issues with leases/SLA's who is the person we go to? Not one size fits all.

The drive to monetise – less opportunities for organisations to let the space. Taking on contracts or activities can cause issues over what the building is to be used for.

Summarised

Long lease – heads of terms get this as a standard with break clause on both sides

Rent review – joint review, lease still viable and we are meeting our social value

Property lease

Maintenance – fabric of the building should be automatically covered.

Insurance could cover internal costs as well if bringing social value.

Maintenance contracts both sides responsible for their part. Both sides are accountable if they don't maintain the building properly.

Price – 100% offsetting if you meet the social value and 100% maintenance contract.

Repairs issues

Ambiguity of who's responsible. One lease will say one thing and another something else.

Relationship with the council – staff turnover

Non-delivery of promises by the council

Organisations reporting issues historically and being evicted

Length of the lease in terms of being able to get grant funding if it's easier

Table Feedback

1 size fit all process not fit for purpose

Decision making - things getting kicked into the long grass.

Background info on property

Location challenges

Possible social value metrics. Recognise and value the services

Partnering with the council

Working group around cost centres like public health

Value overall.

Need to be aligned with Haringey council priorities

Legacy values

Organisations to become a charity.

Borough of culture – what does this actually mean?

Culture is community, community is culture.

Physical access – all buildings should be accessible.

Provision of pathways

Don't split us for fundings – we are one.

Partnerships – really important. One centre can't deliver everything, but we can work together to deliver more. Protecting all of the centres – need to think as one.

Cost of maintenance – 4 times higher. Haringey don't know what things cost.

Clearer categories between council and the centres.

Impact assessments

How do we prioritise?

Alignment overall with council strategic objectives

Measuring of the outcomes.

Showing value – but benefit in kind is important.

having a safe and social space for underserved communities.

affordability

Promoting community cohesion

Volunteering and training opportunities

Green priority with an understanding the council needs to lead that.

Services training – but with initial point there are other sorts of training that may improve the quality of life.

Looking at individual things

What if you thought of this in terms of categories, comfort, or access, or partnership working.

We need to work with the council and public health. We need to look at what are the key priorities and services that need to be provided. We are partners with Haringey and say what we understand and appreciate. You haven't costed what everything costs. How can we cost that but together we could have ways of measuring these costs and values.

We can work and protect each other

Council to impact access and we need to fit into those categories.

Look at the pathways

Ability to measure impact. Look at how we are currently measuring impact.

Chairty – to get most offset.

Are we delivering specific services or reflecting on the needs of our community.

General discussion

We are hoping council officers are not going to let us down. We want this lease to be sorted soon so we can apply for funds.

For 10 years we have not been acknowledged in any social media coverage. We haven't been represented. Can we have a photo of all of those who contributed today to say we are working with you as a partner.

Positive partnerships

Who dealing with it – Councillor Gordon

Need assurance that all these things will be put into place. How will you be deciding?

Draft and send it back to us to be considered before it goes to the cabinet

Public voice

Differences in what different organisations do. Space within the model to allow for differences.

We want to welcome new opportunities – I want that on the agenda we are front line organisations here

Public voice and mind in Haringey – the community centre to be top of your agenda

Measurements of impact – so many ways of measuring impact.

We need to know what Haringey are contributing per person.

Need to have a shared document that you are trying to provide for this to be shared and help to train ourselves and share knowledge.

We currently satisfy the needs of many people but it's not recognised.

Lordship hub – receives £50 per day per volunteer – simple and effective way of costing.

Combination between getting everything in generally and then how do you measure that in the real world?

Does the rent fluctuate? Lordship Lane generates 4 x amount as the rent.

We want to take pride in the work we deliver. Grateful to lordship hub for having a model we all can look to.

The word volunteer cheaply branded about but we need to look at things as part of a working group.

National model that will rate per hour volunteers is between £17-£96 per year.

Each have different agreements.

Working with the council to find the best models to how we can join up to save communities

Need to prove why we need at least 22-25 year lease and this has been insisted. We have to get letters from funders to say that's a requirement for capital funding

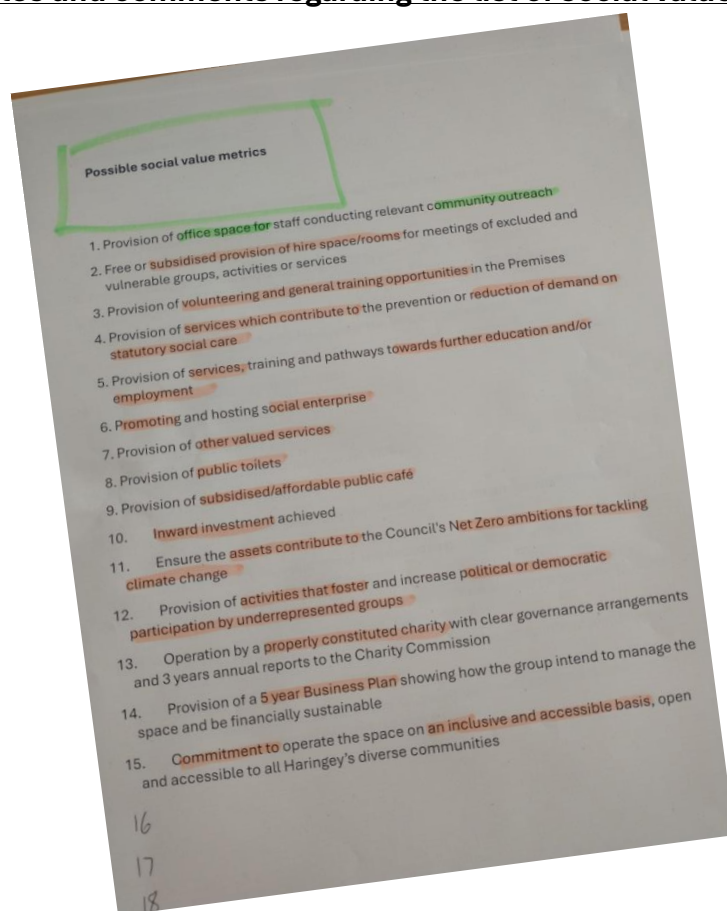
Markfield – this shouldn't be on leaseholders. The point of the network is we fight as one voice

Lots of volunteer hours to write letters and we don't have a system to do that.

If we are all asking for same length of lease

Clarity needed around the business plan for the centre.

Notes and comments regarding the list of social value metrics



First sheet:

- 16. Social space for BME people to visit. Over past 5 years we have had no reasonable prices.
- 17. Promote community cohesion and combat isolation.
- 18. Young people.

Second sheet:

Circles around: 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 15... +

- 16. Alignment/Flow-down of LBH strategic objectives! Social value & broader impact.
- 17. Contribution to reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- 18. Combatting climate change, ecological damage.
- 19. Local engagement – employment, social, community-belonging.

Third sheet:

TJ post-it ordering: 1) 5-8 2) 3-4, 9, 16-21 3) 1-2, 11 4) 12-15

‘Herman Irish’ post-it ordering: 1) 12-15 2) 5-8 3) 16-22

- 16. IT/Digital training/School holiday break
- 17. Specific space for elderly meetings
- 18. Warm spaces/Cool spaces
- 19. Cultural events & social activities
- 20. Sign-posting and drop-in
- 21. Space for NHS & Council services e.g. satellite services, resettlement.
- 22. Door-count

Fourth sheet:

Adding to 4: space for NHS/Council services outreach

- 16. Drop-in & signposting

Fifth sheet

Circles around 10 and 13.

- 16. In line with LA

Sheets listing items in priority order:

Sheet labelled 'Markfield Project'

1 – 13

2 – 7

3 – 4

4 – 15

Second sheet

1 – 4 & Safe, social space for underserved communities (ethnic groups, younger, older and disabled residents).

2 – 2 (emphasis on affordability)/ promote community cohesion & tackle isolation.

3 – 3

4 – 11 (with support from Council and understanding that without leases it hasn't been possible.)

5 – 5 (broaden ‘training’ to include training residents to improve quality of life e.g. caring responsibilities) and 6.

Third sheet

- 1 – Alignment with council strategic objectives
- 2 – Social value (measuring outcomes) / benefit for residents (how collected)
- 3 – Voluntary training / jobs

Additional notes from Hornsey Vale

- Ability to measure impact
- Development of reproducible models of engagement
- 1) Being able to provide free or subsidised spaces (access and inclusion for spaces and services)
- 2) Opportunities for people to meet, socialise, eat, receive advice & volunteer hours.
- 3) Toilets & improved facilities (inward investment).
- Discrepancies between ‘market rate’ in Tottenham and Hornsey. Does one set of valuations on each element work?
- Think in terms of categories rather than specifics. E.g.: Access, comfort, culture, partnerships, etc.

Extra sheet

Suggested Approach

Rent (5 metrics) quantitative

(Based on the tables top 5 from the 15 items suggested list) 60?

Partnership – outcomes (qualitative percentage) 40?

100% score for which weighting is then applied to (80%) of market rent. Suggestion for 80% could be to align with business rates percentage.

ENDS

Appendix 1 - List of attendees

Name	Surname	Centre
Tejas	Patel	Community Hub
Candy	Fernandes	Goan Community Centre

George	Thompson	Goan Community Centre
Herman	Irish	Goan Community Centre
Debra	Mendes	Hornsey Vale
Lynne	Huca	Hornsey Vale
Daisy	Byaruhanga	Innovation Vision Organisation
Robert	Senfuma	IVOUK
Leyla	Laksari	Living Under One Sun
Mark	Adams	Living Under One Sun
Dave	Morris	Lordship Hub
Keith	Fair	Markfield Project
Silvia	Hurtado Corral	Markfield Project
Beth	Kay	Mind
Lynette	Charles	Mind
Deborah	King	Mind
Dan	Rogers	Public Voice
Awale	Elmi	Rise Projects
Andrew	Johnston	St Francis at the Engine Room
Raj	Gupta	The community hub. Council of Asian people
Malcolm	Springthorpe	Tottenham Community Sports Centre
Carmen	Lomotey	West Indian Cultural Centre
Fatima		Wolves Lane horticultural centre
Sarah	Ebanja	Wolves Lane horticultural centre
Jamie	Hignett	
Jess	Crowe	Haringey
Verna	Baker	Haringey
Martin	Samuda	Haringey
Sarah	Lavery	Haringey
Olly	Bennathan	Haringey
Suzanne	McGowan	Haringey

Note: A number of Centres sent apologies

Appendix 2

List of community-run Community Centres (from the HCCN email list)

Access To Sports	Kori Youth Charity
Bernie Grant Arts Centre	Kurdish Advice Centre
Burghley Rd Children's Centre	Kurdish Assembly
Caris Haringey	Living Under One Sun / Down Lane Community Hub
Chestnuts Community Centre	London Catholic Worker
Citizens Advice Haringey	Lord Morrison Hall
Cypriot Community Centre	Lordship Hub
Engine Room	Markfield Project
GIK-DER	Mind In Haringey
Goan Centre	North London Community House
Grace Centre	Open Door
Greek Cypriot Women's Organisation	Selby Trust
Haringey Irish Centre	The Community Hub (Wood Green)
Haringey Migrant Support Centre	Tottenham Community Sports Centre
Haringey Phoenix Group	Turkish Cypriot Community Association
Hornsey Vale Community Centre,	Wards Corner
Innovative Vision Organisation	Winkfield Centre
Jacksons Lane Arts Centre	Wolves Lane Centre
Jan Trust	