

Community & Wellbeing Centre, Ewell

Draft Status Report



December 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community & Wellbeing Centre is a key community facility providing vital support and wellbeing services—particularly for older residents and those living with dementia—within the area of Epsom. This Status Report consolidates current operational, financial, governance and strategic information to form a comprehensive baseline for future planning. It also begins to explore wider opportunities as part of strategic considerations driven by Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the Community Governance Review (CGR).

The Centre operates from a 1970s building comprising activity spaces, a café/restaurant, hall, offices and a dedicated dementia hub wing. It also provides a range of non-statutory but highly valued services including Meals at Home, Community Alarm, and Transport from Home. Through a membership model and an extensive activity programme—from exercise classes and social groups to hairdressing, foot clinics and a low-cost café—the Centre plays a crucial role in reducing isolation, supporting health and wellbeing, and enabling older residents to remain independent. Operational management sits within the Council's Venues Community Commercial Services team. Staff costs have recently reduced due to the transfer of catering functions to Bourne Hall. Volunteer support exists but is inconsistent. Governance and risk management follow corporate processes, and no formal collaborative partnerships are currently in place.

Financially, the Centre requires a significant subsidy, with a 2025/26 deficit forecast of around £438k. Expenditure has reduced due to service realignment, but income has also fallen. Capital works undertaken in recent years have included boiler and freezer upgrades, and a further £490k of proposed capital investment has been identified for windows, roofing, kitchen refurbishment, solar panels and electrical infrastructure. Under the Asset Management Plan, the Centre has an average annual maintenance forecast of £303k.

The Centre faces strategic choices. Initial feasibility work is being carried out to review the services and enhance the community offer.

Marketing and communications are currently limited but will be strengthened through a dedicated approach developed with the Council's Communications Team. A strategic communications plan should form part of future business planning and sit alongside a new Community Asset Plan.

Looking forward, key opportunities include evaluating stewardship models, developing external partnerships, strengthening marketing and community outreach and conducting 'true-cost' accounting to inform future decisions. These steps will support both improved community outcomes and progress towards financial sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Status Report is to collate information about the management, operations, governance and financial arrangements for the **Community and Wellbeing Centre ('the Centre')** site into a single comprehensive document. It is intended to capture the 'as is' status.

Furthermore, the document considers ways in which the services to the community could be better optimised to deliver both a stronger community offer, as well as work towards becoming **financially sustainable**. Consideration is also being given to options around **stewardship models**, and this work will be built into the future business planning process.

This is being done in the context of **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)** which has instigated the start of a **Community Governance Review (CGR)**, with Members keen to explore opportunities for key community assets to continue to be owned and managed locally.

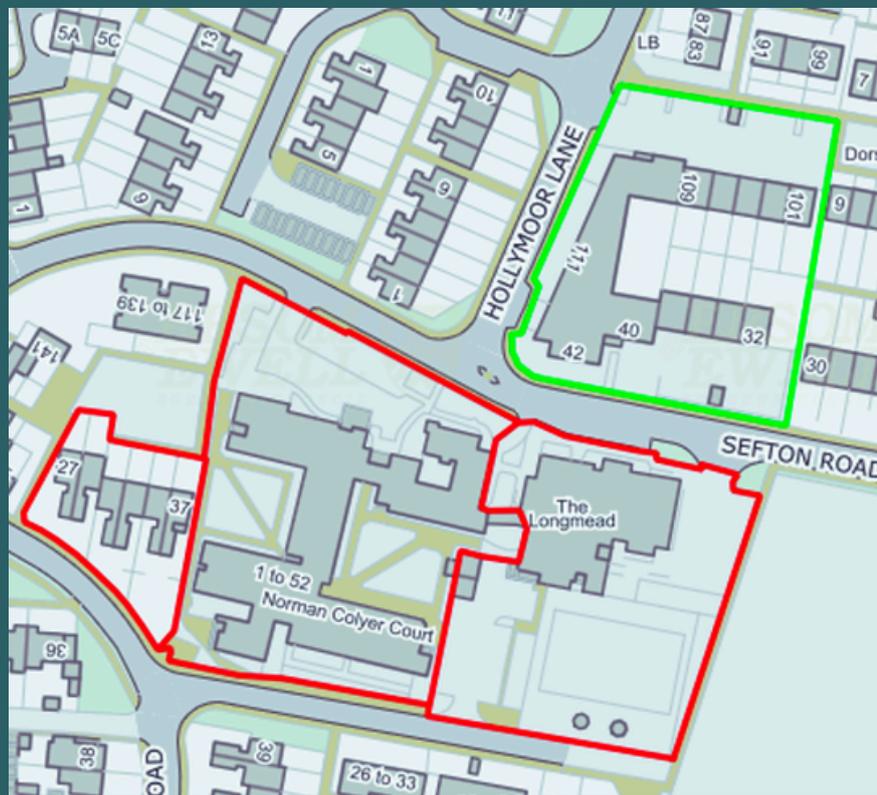
BACKGROUND

The **Centre** is a circa 10,000 square ft, brick build 1970's building accommodating a site area of approx. 0.47ha at the heart of the community, on the edge of Epsom. There is a small car park on site together with a Multi-Use Games Area, open for the community to enjoy. The building is physically attached to the social space of the adjacent Norman Colyer Court sheltered housing via a corridor, which is owned by Town and Country Housing Association (Rosebery Housing). There are six further houses thought to be owned by the affordable housing provider.

Opposite the Centre is affordable housing provided in recent years for local residents.

Within the Centre itself, there are a range of rooms and facilities used primarily to provide services and activities for those over 55, including the **Dementia Hub**. The Centre has a wider community purpose outside of the core times and is hired by a number of local groups and for private hire.

The building itself sits within the Estate, located to the north of Epsom town and comprises a number of elements.



The **Community and Wellbeing Centre** incorporates a range of spaces for community use including a restaurant/café area with associated kitchen, social space, hall, ancillary rooms/offices and spaces used for the dementia hub service. Also on the site is;

- **Norman Colyer Court:** a sheltered housing provision which utilise the facilities and services of the Centre
- **Car Park:** a small publicly accessible car park for the users of the Centre lies adjacent to the building
- **Multi-Use Games Area:** An open access facility for local people to enjoy.

BACKGROUND CONTINUED

The Centre is home to a café/restaurant and social meeting space, as well as various halls, rooms and spaces that can be hired. There is also the Wellbeing Day Care (respite for people with dementia and memory loss) which functions in a wing of the building with its own entrance and is provided with its' own ancillary facilities, providing a calm and welcoming space for its clients.

A membership programme is operated at the Centre. Annual membership for those age 55 and over is £15.50 for residents of Epsom and Ewell and £31 for non-borough residents. This includes a discount on a wide ranging programme of activities, some of which are tutor led and some of which are led by the onsite staff.

The building provides an operating base for the following additional non-statutory income generating services operated by the council and which are believed to be highly valued by the community;



Meals at Home: tasty, nutritious meals prepared by our chef on-site and delivered direct to your door, five days a week

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Community and Wellbeing Centre provides important and crucial services to the borough's residents and should be retained regardless of the long-term use of the Centre. The Council owns, manages and operates the venue directly, providing both revenue and capital support, within the following policy framework;



Strategic Priorities (2025–2027): the Council has recently adopted a set of core priorities in light of the LGR context. This includes a strategic asset review, with a focus on community assets, along with the consideration of options to transfer suitable assets to a new local governance structure.



Four Year Plan (2020–2024); it is noteworthy that community facilities and venues such as Community & Wellbeing Centre have been a priority for many years, linking in with the broader focus on Health & Wellbeing and Culture.



Health & Wellbeing Strategy: focussing on improving the mental health & wellbeing of the Borough's residents, the Strategy recognises the important role that arts, culture and heritage facilities play in this agenda. It therefore supports the case for the services to be provided from Bourne Hall, which is able to promote a greener setting and wider range of facilities and services to complement that which is currently provided at the Centre.

CURRENT OFFER

The **Community and Wellbeing Centre** offers a wide range of activities, services, facilities and programmes which support a vulnerable sector of the population, complemented by the wider community venue provision for the immediate community. The Centre acts as a community and social hub for local residents and residents in need. The Team is constantly considering how to improve, extend and maintain the current service offer to support local people whilst also generate income to underpin the Centre's operating costs.

The **Dementia Hub** provides a vital service for those with early onset dementia and memory loss, acting as a respite space for both the individual and their families. Additionally, the Centre provides a meal service through the onsite cafe, laundry and bathing service. The café provides affordable meals five days a week to its members and other users of the Centre together with a space to gather and socialise. With the cost of living having very real impacts on many people, this service provides lifeline for some who could not otherwise afford a healthy, nutritious meal.

Other regular services provided from the Centre include hairdressing and a foot clinic which are chargeable services but provide a vital 'one stop shop' for Centre users, alongside clothes, card and tabletop sales.

There is a large hall which serves as a space for activities and programmes to meet the needs of the clients and which operates a varied programme throughout the week to meet a diversity of interests including;

Chair yoga

Bingo

General Knowledge Quiz

Scrabble Club

Line Dancing

Outside of daytime hours, the Hall can be hired for private parties or by local organisations wanting to run their clubs/programmes from the Centre, operating in a more traditional community hall hire manner.

More detailed work, including a SWOT analysis will be carried out to look in more detail at the opportunities and challenges facing the facility, as part of a future business plan.

OPERATIONS AND ORGANISATION

The **Community and Wellbeing Centre** is operated and run by the Council, with staff employed directly. It sits within the Venues Community Commercial Service function, reporting into the Interim Head of Service. There are links across to staff within the Housing and the Property team.

The following sets out the current staff structure (FTE equivalent not known) For 24/25 the staff salary costs were reported as circa 355k (probable outturn). For 25/26 the reported forecasted cost is circa £210k, reflecting the movement of the costs associated with the Catering Hub to Bourne Hall. A contribution to internal Corporate Support Services also forms part of the budget and this is set out in the financial matters section below.



A new Senior Coordinator will be in post at the Centre in late 2024.

The Centre does have volunteers, but their support is inconsistent and therefore data to analyse their impact is not available.

GOVERNANCE, RISK & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The services from the Centre are overseen by the Council's Community & Wellbeing Committee, with reports or decisions going to Full Council as required.

The Council's **Constitution** sets out the formal governance and decision-making arrangements.

Performance & Risk Management forms part of the Council's Corporate Performance & Risk Management process, with regular reporting in line with Council procedures.

The Council does not currently have any partnerships in place with other service providers to add capacity to the current offer. Services are delivered in-house.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

The site is managed on a **Corporate Landlord** model, with operational matters dealt with locally (see Organisation and Operations below) and through the Venues Community Commercial Service. Repair and maintenance issues, as well as capital projects are managed by the Property and Facilities team through the normal processes, with relevant officers from the Car Park team liaising as appropriate.

The Council's **Strategic Asset Management Plan (AMP)** 2020-2030 sets out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its land and property assets. It includes a 10 year Planned Maintenance Programme (PMP), which is reviewed annually and indicates the long term financial cost, underpinned by condition surveys undertaken on a five year rolling programme. Of note;

- **Routine maintenance and repairs** will be a mixture of planned and reactive works, met from the revenue budget. Minor day to day repairs are covered under the facilities management contract.
- **Maintenance works** are currently categorised in three levels of priority and are undertaken as soon as possible, as budget allows.
- Approval for **major capital works** and improvements is through a project basis through the capital programme bidding process.
- Forecasts around **capital expenditure** will be mindful of emerging legislation, guidance and priorities around **Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES)** and associated work to continue to decarbonise the estate.



ASSET MANAGEMENT CONTINUED

The AMP sets out an average annual maintenance forecast as a 'global' figure for the Community and Wellbeing Centre of £303k over the ten-year period of the plan.

A breakdown on current proposed capital works for the Community & Wellbeing Centre, along with indicative costing is set out below;

Works	Budget (indicative)
Switch gear & distribution board replacement	£100,000
Windows replacement	£50,000
Solar Panels installation	£60,000
Kitchen refurbishment	£130,000
Pitched roof replacement	£250,000
	£490,000

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Council oversees and manage the finances for the facility through its existing Council financial management arrangements.

The Council insures/arranges insurance as required, including public liability insurance. Users of the premises for events and venue hire will be required to provide appropriate public liability cover as part of their user agreement. Purchase of supplies and procurement of professional fees and building contracts is undertaken in line with the Council's existing procurement and purchasing rules.

Revenue

The following table is extracted from the Council's approved Budget Book 2025/26 and sets out the last 2 years high level revenue accounts, with a forecast for the current year.

It is clear that expenditure fell considerably from 23/24 to 24/25 and is predicted to decrease again for the coming financial year. This is reported as being due to the transfer of the Catering Hub to Bourne Hall, not as a result of any changes in services being provided. Costs of capital charges have been reduced significantly since 23/24 but have since remained the same. Total income has reduced significantly over this period, but is presumed to relate to the transfer of the Catering Hub & associated income.

These figures have been reviewed and explored in more detail. There are some reported operational discrepancies that need to be worked through. However, the current published proposed revenue deficit for 25/26 is currently forecasted at £438k.

	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26
	Actual £	Original Estimate £	Probable Outturn £	Estimate £
Employees	379	323	355	210
Premises	146	95	97	97
Supplies & Services	75	29	29	21
Support Services	154	253	253	160
Capital Charges	148	57	57	57
Total Expenditure	902	757	791	545
Contributions from other agencies	(35)	0	0	0
Sales	(212)	(143)	(143)	0
Fees & Charges	(85)	(169)	(101)	(109)
Total Income	(332)	(312)	(244)	(109)
Contributions to (from) reserves	14	2	2	2
Net Expenditure/(Income)	584	447	549	438

FINANCIAL MATTERS CONTINUED

Capital

Capital projects to date have included the following;

Works	Completion	Cost (£)	Funding source
Walk in freezer refurbishment	2023/4	21,000	Revenue funding
Boiler replacement	2023/4	100,000	EEBC Capital Programme
	Total	121,000	

To date, the funding streams to support revenue and capital activities have primarily been direct Council funding.

Moving forward, depending on the future ownership & stewardship model, other sources of funding may be secured including opportunities for grants and further income generation. This would be considered as part of a future business plan.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

A **Promotions Strategy** was put together for the Centre by the Council's Communications Team in 2025. The new Senior Coordinator will work with the Council's Communications Team to pull together further promotional and marketing approaches, once they are in post.

The main communications channels are currently the website and Facebook pages. There will be opportunities to further enhance the communications & marketing offer going forward, and this will be considered as part of a future business plan.



FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Moving forward, there are a number of areas to be considered in more detail, including;



'True cost' accounting to ensure full and transparent understanding of costs (existing and projects), alongside consideration of benefits.



Review of services currently delivered, with scope to further enhance the offer and improve financial stability.



Building partnerships with local service providers to add further value to the existing offer, potentially generating further income or alleviating pressure on current council budgets



Opportunities for coordinated and targeted marketing campaigns of the Centre and its services to meet local need and increase income to offset operating costs



Consideration of options around future stewardship models including Community Council, Charitable Trusts etc.



Utilising the Local Government Reorganisation context, which will see the formation of a Unitary authority, providing opportunities to reshape the arrangements for the benefit of all those in the borough