

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION
CABINET BOARD**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, LEISURE &
LIFELONG LEARNING – A.EVANS**

14 JANUARY 2015

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROVISION – RESULTS OF
CONSULTATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Purpose of Report

1. To consider responses received following the consultation on proposals to review the current stock of eleven Community Centres or Community Education / Enterprise Centres and to approve changes to the current operation and management of these facilities within the context of known budget limitations.

Context

- 1.1 Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council presently owns and manages eleven community centres across the region. These sites provide venues for the delivery of a wide range of services to the community; provided by both the council and external providers.

2 The proposal

2.1 As part of the savings programme led by the Director of Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure it has been proposed to:

2.1.1 *“Review the current stock of eleven Community Centres or Community Education / Enterprise Centres. This proposal will allow the Directorate, via consultation, to assess the potential future operation of each centre and, where relevant, consider a range of options from maintenance, to transfer or closure.*

The proposal will also provide an opportunity to redefine the purpose of the service, involving a possible restructuring of managerial roles across the Directorate, securing more strategic programming of community facilities and thereby maximise usage which will serve to maintain subsidy at an agreed level.”

2.2 It should be noted that the provision of community facilities is a non-statutory service.

3 The service

3.1 The council has managed and supported the community centres with the objective of

- Developing inspiring projects that bring together residents, small groups and local businesses.
- Engaging residents in the development of services and activities that encourage participation and engagement.
- Working with residents in most need of support to improve social and economic engagement.
- Supporting the development of community-led activities to improve local environments.
- Motivating local residents and businesses to become more involved through volunteering.
- Equipping local residents with the skills and motivation to improve their life chances

3.2 As part of the wider strategy to identify and quantify sustainable savings a full opportunity assessment has been completed reviewing this service.

3.3 The following elements have been included in this review:

- Cross Institute
- Mobile Support Gang
- Llandarcy Institute
- Baglan Hall
- Mozart Drive Hall
- Taibach Hall
- Cwmafan Hall
- Bryn Village Hall
- Glyncoirwg Hall
- Croeserw Community Education Centre
- Sandfields Day Centre
- Taibach Day Centre
- Community Development – management and admin

3.4 The table below reports the high level budget figures for the service:

	2013/14 Actuals (£k)	2014/15 Budget (£k)
Employee	646	612
Premises	286	249
Transport	10	10
Materials and equipment	43	38
General office	11	7
Services related	9	8
Fees and charges	27	37
Communications and computing	22	17
Expenses	1	1
Committee controlled support services	20	22
GROSS EXPENDITURE	1,077	1,002
INCOME	334	326
NET EXPENDITURE	743	675

3.5 The table below reports the audited outturn position for the 2013/14 year (excluding Noddfa, Glyncoirwg):

Site	Expenditure			Income	Net Expenditure
	Staff	Other	TOTAL		
Baglan Community Centre	£20,055	£19,438	£39,493	£23,802	£15,691
Bryn Village Hall	£11,454	£12,388	£23,842	£3,812	£20,030
Croeserw Enterprise Centre *	£58,823	£67,060	£125,883	£60,319	£65,564
The Cross, Pontardawe	£57,740	£43,687	£101,427	£37,268	£64,159
Cwmafan Community Centre	£31,741	£21,640	£53,381	£29,996	£23,385
Glyncoirwg Community Centre	£6,291	£9,000	£15,291	£7,267	£8,024
Llandarcy	£8,088	£18,044	£26,132	£-	£26,132
Mozart Drive Community Centre	£34,649	£21,043	£55,692	£27,676	£28,016
Sandfields Community Education Centre	£50,851	£52,619	£103,470	£39,823	£63,647
Taibach Community Centre	£38,718	£14,620	£53,338	£24,403	£28,935
Taibach Community Education Centre	£47,590	£71,448	£119,038	£48,439	£70,599
Central Management (Com Dev)	£208,211	£34,229	£242,510	£1,609	£240,901
Mobile Support	£20,080	£6,859	£26,939	£498	£26,441
Total	£594,291	£392,075	£986,436	£304,912	£681,524

* This represents 7/12 of the year due to the date of opening

4 The assessment process

- 4.1 In order to assess the potential impact of the proposed changes a structured consultation was undertaken. This included an extensive review of the existing operation combined with a series of public meetings across the County Borough.
- 4.2 The public meetings were held in the community centres affording the opportunity for the actual users of the services to listen to the options that were under consideration and to provide feedback directly to the officers responsible for the review. The public meetings were very well attended and provided an indication of the strength of feeling held within the community.
- 4.3 Alongside the public consultation a review of the financial and operational performance of the whole service was undertaken, identifying sites that were in highest demand and those that carried additional capacity.
- 4.4 The policies and procedures of the management team were also critically reviewed with the objective of refining the operation, delivering a higher output for lower input.

5 High level findings

- 5.1 It is somewhat harsh to utilise a simple return on investment analysis on the provision of Community Centres, as the benefits that they deliver concentrate on the softer, developmental side of the economic equation. However it does serve some benefit to identify, at a high level, the commercial return delivered by the individual sites.

2013/14 Actuals	Expenditure	Income	ROI
Baglan Community Centre	£39,493	£23,802	60%
Bryn Village Hall	£23,842	£3,812	16%
Croeserw Enterprise Centre *	£125,883	£60,319	48%
The Cross, Pontardawe	£101,427	£37,268	37%
Cwmafan Community Centre	£53,381	£29,996	56%
Glyncorrwg Community Centre	£15,291	£7,267	48%
Llandarcy	£26,132	£-	0%

Mozart Drive Community Centre	£55,692	£27,676	50%
Sandfields Community Education Centre	£103,470	£39,823	38%
Taibach Community Centre	£53,338	£24,403	46%
Taibach Community Education Centre	£119,038	£48,439	41%

5.2 It should be recognised that the utilisation of the individual sites varies dramatically across the portfolio. This is both a reflection of the variable demand across the geographical region combined with inefficiencies in the existing management systems.

Site	Hours utilised during week	% Potential hours
Taibach	55.5	61%
Taibach CEC	105	22%
Mozart Drive	60.25	40%
Glyncorrwg	15	29%
Cwmafan	90.25	46%
Cross	111.5	27%
Croeserw	50.5	46%
Bryn	15	21%
Baglan	36.75	31%
Average	557.25	31%

6 Options

- 6.1 To maximise the potential level of financial savings the logical option would be to cease the provision of all funding to support this non-statutory service.
- 6.2 In simple terms the service annually costs the council approximately £1m, an investment that generates a revenue stream of £326k.

6.3 As with all service based operations the two key elements within the cost base are staff and premises. These two costs represent over 86% of the base budget before recharges for the service in 2013/14.

6.4 A number of options are available to the council:

6.4.1 Option One - Withdraw all funding from Community Centres

6.4.2 If the council was to cease any form of support to the Community Centres savings of approximately £675k could be realised; the key elements of this being the staff (£612k) and premises (£249k) expenditure and loss of income (£326k). It should be recognised that there would be an element of residual costs associated with the “mothballing” of the property assets alongside of costs incurred through the resulting staffing issues.

6.4.3 Option Two – Undertake a rationalisation of the existing service provision

6.4.4 The detailed operational review of the services delivered from each of the sites combined with the costs associated with their maintenance and upkeep has allowed the council to develop an informed position concerning which sites should be retained and which should either be transferred to community management or closed.

6.4.5 The key elements within this analysis has been the existing level of utilisation, the return on investment generated by each site, the geographical proximity to alternative service provision (from sites not funded or managed by the council).

6.4.6 None of the sites are presently running at a high level of utilisation (see Appendix 1) and it would be realistic to expected that a reasonable level of savings would be achievable through more effective scheduling system combined with operational rationalisation. It should be recognised that due to the fixed timing of certain sessions that utilisation of over 85% is very unlikely, but it should be possible to cater for the demands of the community in a more efficient manner.

6.4.7 Option Three – Externalise management of service provision

6.4.8 The opportunity exists to realise some savings by externalising the management of the Community Centres to an organisation such as the leisure trust. The immediate benefit would be the change in treatment for the payment of NNDR (budgeted to be approximately £60k), however it is difficult to identify if any other savings would arise from this option.

6.4.9 It should be recognised that the Trust would expect the management fee to increase by at least the level of the existing base budget in return for taking on this responsibility. Whilst questions still remain about what the actual benefit would be, as there is no demonstrable evidence that the

Trust would be any better than the council in improving the management of this service.

6.5 Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. An overview of the EIA has been included in this report in summary form only and it is essential that Members read the Equality Impact Assessment, which is attached to the report at Appendix 7 for purposes of the meeting.

7 Recommendation

7.1 Having given due regard to the EIA it is recommended that Option Two - Undertake a rationalisation of the existing service provision, to take effect from 1st April 2015, be agreed.

7.2 The table below summarises the high level position for the individual elements of the service:

Site	Recommendation
Baglan Community Centre	Transfer or close
Bryn Village Hall	Transfer or close
Croeserw Enterprise Centre	Retain
The Cross, Pontardawe	Transfer or close
Cwmafan Community Centre	Retain
Glyncorwg Community Centre	Transfer or close
Llandarcy	Close
Mozart Drive Community Centre	Transfer
Sandfields Community Education Centre	Close
Taibach Community Centre	Retain
Taibach Community Education	Transfer or close

Centre	
Central Management (Com Dev)	Restructure
Mobile Support	Delete

- 7.3 The justification for the recommendations for each of the sites identified is detailed within the appendices to this paper; this is supported by a project plan detailing the tasks to be delivered over the period running from January to the end of March 2015.
- 7.4 For the sites that are offered for transfer out direct management by the council full support will be provided to the future management bodies, including the potential award of grants to off-set the rental costs of the individual properties.
- 7.4.1 An example of where this has been successfully delivered is the Noddfa site that has transferred into community management and a grant is to be provided to cover the rent at this facility for a five year period in line with the rent review clause.
- 7.5 The recommendation is projected to deliver cashable savings of over £453,050 over the 2015/17 period, as shown in the table overleaf.

FOR DECISION

Reason for Proposed Decision

To secure saving proposals in line with the Directorate's Forward Financial Plan.

List of Background Papers

None

Wards Affected

All

Officer Contact

For further information on this report item, please contact Aled Evans, Director of Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning on Ext 3298 or email a.evans@npt.gov.uk

Appendices

- Budget Analysis
- Financial and operational analysis of the individual sites
- 2015-18 revenue budget implications of Community Facilities savings proposal
- List and schedule of services delivered from community centres
- Detailed feedback from individual consultations (qualitative and quantitative analysis)
- Community Impact Assessment (incorporating the Equality Impact Assessment) for Community Facilities proposal
- Equality Impact Assessment

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROVISION – RESULTS OF CONSULTATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan impacts

Economic Prosperity	-	negative
Education & Lifelong Learning	-	negative
Better Health & Well Being	-	negative
Environment & Transport	-	no impact
Crime & Disorder	-	no impact

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	-	negative
Sustainable Development	-	no impact
Equalities	-	negative
Social Inclusion	-	negative

(b) **Consultation**

This item has been subject to external consultation.

Budget Analysis

Appendix 1

Site	Expenditure			Income	Recommendation	Projected Saving	Interested party?
	Staff	Other	Total				
Baglan Community Centre	£20,055	£19,438	£39,493	£24,000	Transfer/Close	£15,493	Possible
Bryn Village Hall	£11,454	£12,388	£23,842	£3,500	Transfer/Close	£20,342	Yes
Croeserw Enterprise Centre	£58,823	£67,060	£125,883	£84,870	Retain	£-60,000	n/a
The Cross, Pontardawe	£57,740	£43,687	£101,427	£40,872	Transfer/Close	£60,555	No
Cwmafan Community Centre	£31,741	£21,640	£53,381	£29,000	Retain	£-	n/a
Glyncorwg Community Centre	£6,291	£9,000	£15,291	£6,000	Transfer/Close	£9,291	No
Llandarcy	£8,088	£18,044	£26,132	£-	Transfer/Close	£26,132	No
Mozart Drive Community Centre	£34,649	£21,043	£55,692	£27,676	Transfer/Close	£28,016	Yes
Sandfields Community Education Centre	£50,851	£52,619	£103,470	£41,550	Transfer/Close	£61,920	n/a
Taibach Community Centre	£38,718	£14,620	£53,338	£20,000	Retain	£-	n/a
Taibach Community Education Centre	£47,590	£71,448	£119,038	£44,200	Transfer/Close	£74,838	Yes
Central Management (Com Dev)	£208,211	£34,229	£242,440	£-	Restructure	£189,524	n/a
Mobile Support	£20,080	£6,859	£26,939	£-	Delete	£26,939	n/a
TOTAL	£594,291	£392,075	£986,366	£321,668		£453,050	

Financial analysis

2014/15 Budget (£)	Baglan	Bryn	Croesenw	Cross	Cwmafan	Glyncorrwg	Llandarcy	Mozart Drive	Sandfields	Taibach CEC	Taibach
TOTAL EMPLOYEE COSTS	16,461	9,913	116,954	56,706	31,543	5,099	12,667	26,899	29,409	28,182	20,425
PREMISES COSTS	17,273	9,866	18,456	33,321	16,921	6,297	15,769	11,994	21,824	32,324	7,139
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	1,017	626	43,271	4,350	1,196	1,008	941	1,723	6,302	4,006	517
COMMUNICATIONS & COMPUTING	835	900	2,564	2,263	1,116	203	313	830	758	2,272	361
OTHER	1,119	709	1,120	2,375	1,378	567	689	1,119	1,206	1,759	653
GROSS EXPENDITURE	36,705	22,014	182,356	99,314	52,154	13,174	30,379	42,565	59,499	69,542	29,094
TOTAL INCOME	-24,000	-3,500	-26,500	-40,872	-29,000	-6,000	-	-27,676	-24,238	-25,783	-11,667
NET CTTEE CONTROLLED EXPENDITURE	12,705	18,514	155,856	58,442	23,154	7,174	30,379	14,889	35,261	43,758	17,428

Utilisation analysis

Site	Daily	Utilised days	Max	Utility	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	Total	Hours
Taibach	13	7	91	61%	13	10	14	6.5	9	1	2	55.5	09:00-22:00
Taibach CEC			474	22%								105	09:00-21:00
MR2	12	5	60	16%	5.5	2	2.25					9.75	09:00-17:00
MR1	8	5	40	30%		5	3	2	2			12	09:00-17:00
Int	8	5	40	29%		6.5	3	2				11.5	09:00-17:00
Cook	8	5	40	18%	4	3						7	09:00-17:00
Comp	8	5	40	43%	2		7	4	4			17	09:00-17:00
Coffee	8	5	40	20%	5		3					8	09:00-17:00
Barn	10	7	70	16%	2	1		1			7	11	09:00-19:00
Art	12	5	60	26%	3	5	3	4.5				15.5	09:00-21:00
All	12	7	84	16%	2	2	2	2			5.25	13.25	09:00-21:00
Mozart Drive			150	40%								60.25	
Main	12.5	7	87.5	45%	5	6	5	7.25	6	8	2	39.25	09:00-21:30
Side	12.5	5	62.5	34%	3	5	9	4				21	09:00-21:30
Glyncorrwg	13	4	52	29%	3	3	2	7				15	09:00-22:00
Cwmafan			198	46%								90.25	
Side	12	5	60	37%	5	3	3	5	6			22	09:00-21:00
Double	12	5	60	42%	3	10.75	6	3	2.25			25	09:00-21:00
Main	13	6	78	55%	6	11	6	9	5.25		6	43.25	09:00-22:00

Utilisation analysis

Site	Daily	Utilised days	Max	Utility	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S	Su	Total	Hours
Cross			420	27%								111.5	
13	8	5	40	10%	1.5		1.5		1			4	09:00-17:00
7	12	5	60	18%	5			6				11	09:00-21:00
6	8.5	5	42.5	15%	3	1.5	2					6.5	09:00-17:30
5	8.5	5	42.5	14%	2		1.5	1	1.5			6	09:00-17:30
2	12	5	60	46%	3.5	3.5	3	10.5	7			27.5	09:00-21:00
1	12	5	60	39%		6.5	4.5	4	8.5			23.5	09:00-21:00
Gallery	11	5	55	38%	7	5	5	2	2			21	09:00-20:00
Basement	12	5	60	20%		12						12	09:00-21:00
Croeserw			110	46%								50.5	
Main	11	5	55	39%	8	3.5	3	5	2			21.5	09:00-22:00
Meeting Rooms	11	5	55	53%	6	9	6	2	6			29	09:00-22:00
Bryn	12	6	72	21%		3	3	3	4	2		15	10:00-22:00
Baglan			120	31%								36.75	
Main	12	5	60	50%	7	3	4.5	9	6.5			30	09:00-21:00
Side Room	12	5	60	11%	2	1.75	3					6.75	09:00-21:00

2015-18 revenue budget implications

Appendix 3

	Recommendation	Net Controllable Expenditure (£)		
		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Baglan	Transfer	-	-	-
Bryn	Transfer	-	-	-
Croeserw	Retain then consider transfer	155,856	155,856	77,928
Cross	Transfer	29,221	-	-
Cwmafan	Retain	23,154	23,154	23,154
Glyncorwg	Transfer	-	-	-
Llandarcy	Close	-	-	-
Mozart Drive	Transfer	-	-	-
Sandfields	Close	26,445	-	-
Taibach CEC	Transfer	-	-	-
Taibach	Retain	17,428	17,428	17,428
Total Expenditure		252,104	196,438	118,510

1 List of services delivered

- Fostering
- Art
- Lace
- Return to Learn
- Introduction to childcare
- Sewing
- Card making
- Psychology
- Life skills
- OAP
- Spirit Lights
- Tai Chi
- Basic computers
- Computer maintenance
- Woodcraft
- Bingo
- W.I.
- Line dancing
- Astronomy
- Youth club
- Stop smoking
- Communities First
- Clych
- Catch Point
- Counselling
- AA
- Karate
- Choir
- Floristry
- Woman's Aid
- Welsh
- Church group
- Dog training
- Angling
- Want 2 Work
- Sugar craft
- Digital image
- Landscape photography
- Pottery
- Art group
- Flying Start
- Political meetings
- Hospital outreach
- Band practice

1.1 Consultation Feedback Summary

- High level summary of consultation feedback:

Centre	Letters	Petition Signatures
Mozart Drive	15	1,185
Cwmafan	26	712
The Cross	5	86
Baglan	24	-

- 66 generic budget consultation questionnaire responses

1.2 Community Impact Assessment

- The core elements of the attached CAI will be subordinate to the assessment for the overarching budget consultation
- The following elements are detailed:
 - Evaluation of existing service provision for locality and users with protected characteristics
 - Degree that service is used as community resource
 - Extent of alternative facilities within immediate vicinity
 - Impact of closure upon community
 - Mitigating action plan if provision is withdrawn

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Impact Assessment and Consultation Summary

Community Centres

8 Context

As part of the budgetary savings proposed by the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Directorate the services provided by the Community Centres across the County Borough have been identified as a potential area for sustainable cashable savings.

9 The proposal

Review the current stock of twelve Community Centres or Community Education / Enterprise Centres. This proposal will allow the Directorate, via consultation, to assess the potential future operation of each centre and, where relevant, consider a range of options from maintenance, transfer to closure.

The proposal will also give us an opportunity to redefine the purpose of the service, involving a possible restructuring of managerial roles across the Directorate, securing more strategic programming of community facilities and thereby maximise usage which will serve to maintain subsidy at an agreed level.

The Local Authority will consult with all interested parties to identify and understand options to achieve the savings required from the following sites:

- Croeserw Enterprise Centre
- Baglan Community Centre
- Taibach Community Centre
- Bryn Village Hall
- The Cross, Pontardawe
- Cwmafan Community Centre (to include consultation on the transfer of Cwmafan Library into the Community Centre with no proposed reduction in service).
- Glyncorwg Community Centre
- Llandarcy (with the subsequent re-location of the Youth Service)
- Mozart Drive Community Centre
- Sandfields Community Education Centre
- Taibach Community Education Centre

10 The process

A formal consultation process was undertaken by the council using a combination of public meetings, stakeholder meetings, and questionnaires.

The questionnaires were available in both paper and electronic format, an example is appended to this paper.

The consultation period ran from the 27th October until the 3rd December.

The consultation was advertised on a variety of internet and social media sites including NPTCBC, NPT Facebook and Twitter, and notices were posted within the Community Centres.

Consultation events were held at the actual Community Centres outside of normal business hours to afford all existing and potential users the opportunity to attend.

11 The service

Community Centres are defined as buildings which:

- Provide facilities for the development of the recreational, cultural and personal welfare of members of that community
- Constitute a meeting place for voluntary organisations or other groups in the community which need accommodation.
- Serve a community organised in an association which is responsible for the management of the building

There are presently 9 Community Centres and 2 Community Education Centres across Neath Port Talbot from Pontardawe to Cymmer in the Afan Valley, each delivering classes, activities and information services to cater for the needs of the whole community.

The Centres presently provide a wide range of services to the community including, but not limited to the following:

- Fostering
- Art
- Lace
- Return to Learn
- Introduction to childcare
- Sewing
- Card making
- Psychology
- Life skills
- Basic computers
- Computer maintenance
- Woodcraft
- Bingo
- W.I.
- Line dancing
- Astronomy
- Youth club
- Stop smoking
- Karate
- Choir
- Floristry
- Woman's Aid
- Welsh
- Church group
- Want 2 Work
- Sugar craft
- Digital image
- Landscape photography
- Pottery
- Art group
- Flying Start
- Political meetings
- Hospital outreach
- OAP
- Communities First
- Dog training

- Clych
- Catch Point
- Counselling
- AA
- Tai Chi
- Spirit Lights
- Angling
- Band practice

12 The response

Open public meetings were held in all Centres, with the exception of Llandarcy, with audience numbers ranging from four to over two hundred members of the public.

The table below details the number of non-questionnaire responses received by the council during the consultation period.

Centre	Letters	Petition Signatures
Mozart Drive	15	1,185
Cwmafan	26	712
The Cross	5	86
Baglan	24	-

In total 66 questionnaires were returned to the council concerning the proposed changes in the provision of Community Centres across the County Borough.

All but two of the questionnaire responses were submitted by individuals living within Neath Port Talbot. Of the fifteen that disclosed their age one was between 25 and 29, two between 30 and 39, four between 40 and 49 with the remainder being over 50 years old.

The summary analysis of the questionnaires is shown in the following charts:

Which Centre do your comments relate to?

	% Total	% Answer	Count
■ Baglan Community Centre	22.06%	22.39%	15
■ Taibach Community Centre	1.47%	1.49%	1
■ Bryn Village Hall	11.76%	11.94%	8
■ The Cross, Pontardawe	22.06%	22.39%	15
■ Cwmafan Community Centre	7.35%	7.46%	5
■ Glyncoirwg Community Centre	2.94%	2.99%	2
■ Llandarcy	13.24%	13.43%	9
■ Mozart Drive Community Centre	2.94%	2.99%	2
■ Sandfields Community Education Centre	2.94%	2.99%	2
■ Taibach Community Education Centre	11.76%	11.94%	8
■ [No Response]	1.47%	–	1

In what capacity are you responding to the questionnaire?

	% Total	% Answer	Count
Regular community centre user	66.18%	69.23%	45
Casual community centre user	0.00%	0.00%	0
Local resident	0.00%	0.00%	0
Local business (please specify)	29.41%	30.77%	20
Local club (please specify)	0.00%	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0.00%	0
[No Response]	4.41%	--	3
Total	100.00%	100.00%	68

91% of the respondents were concerned about the impact of the proposal.

86% of the respondents were concerned about the impact of the proposal on the variety of the remaining community provision in the local area.

86% of the respondents were concerned about how the impact of the proposal would affect the distance they would have to travel to another similar facility.

81% of the respondents were concerned that the impact of the proposal would result in the loss of specialist activities.

87% of the respondents were concerned that the impact of the proposal would result in the loss of a venue for other social activities.

52% of the respondents were concerned that the impact of the proposal would reduce access for schools.

64% of the respondents were concerned about the impact of the proposal on reduced access to sports and social clubs.

70% of the respondents were concerned about the impact of the proposal on health problems arising from the impact of the proposal.

80% of the respondents were concerned about the impact of the proposal on out of school activities.

Only 16% of the respondents would be likely to travel to a different site to participate in the same activities should their existing facility close, even if the facility was to be located within the immediate vicinity of the existing site.

Every single one of the responses opposed the closure or reduction of service provision making a detailed quantitative statistical analysis redundant; 100% of responses opposing the changes.

No proposals were made in the questionnaires concerning alternative delivery models or business opportunities. A single respondent suggested introducing the community centres to an newly developed, social enterprise working from Swansea, with the view to working in partnership to try to provide a sustainable future. This option is now being explored for The Cross in Pontardawe.

The comments appended to the individual questionnaires were very similar to the feedback gained from the public meetings. These themes could be broken down into a number of key strands:

- a) Loss of service provision to the community, especially in regard to child-minding, sports activity, special interest groups (eg. spinners, charities, and healthcare). There was clear concern that the closure of any site would be a permanent removal of service, rather than a “mothballing exercise” whereby the building could be re-opened at a later date once the economic environment had changed.
- b) Fear of transfer to external management leading to loss of community based service provision through the introduction of commercially focused services. There was clear tension and concern over the potential for any third party to assume management of the individual sites. The worry being based on the perception that any external provider would concentrate on the delivery of their core interest, with the other groups being denied access to the facilities.
- c) Changes in operational practices, such as a move towards a centralised booking facility with a single tariff structure allowing hourly booking slots rather than three hourly blocks (as is presently in place)
- d) Withdrawal of subsidised office space for small businesses, forcing them to seek alternative premises that might prove to be too expensive for them to maintain.

13 The degree to which the service is used now as a community resource

The level of utilisation of each of the sites was assessed and presented to the communities during the public meetings. The table below summarises the level of utilisation for the past twelve months for each site:

Site	Hours utilised during week	% Potential hours
Taibach	55.5	61%
Taibach CEC	105	22%
Mozart Drive	60.25	40%

Glyncorrgwg	15	29%
Cwmafan	90.25	46%
Cross	111.5	27%
Croeserw	50.5	46%
Bryn	15	21%
Baglan	36.75	31%
Average	557.25	31%

It should be recognised that the existing opening hours of the individual sites is determined by a combination of both the availability of staff and demand from the community.

The two elements are directly linked with one driving the other; however it is unclear as to which is the dominant factor in the equation. Having reviewed the operation of the service it is considered that the availability of each site is actually derived from the staffing structure determined by the previous management team rather than the demand from the community.

14 Extent of community facilities within easy reach of the alternative provision

The map below shows the location of the individual sites presently managed and maintained by the Council:



It is clear that the location of the individual Centres is directly correlated to the density of population within the immediate locality.

It should be recognised that in areas, such as Neath, alternative service provision is already available through the services offered by other organisations such as Town Councils, faith groups and sports/social clubs. The key differentiator often being the costs associated with the hiring of the premises; the council run sites being felt by most to offer the cheapest alternative.

The sites that have been identified to be at highest risk through lack of alternative service provision in the immediate vicinity are Bryn, Croeserw, and Cwmafan. Without the presence of the Noddfa community run facility Glyncoerw would also be included within this list.

15 Mitigation of impact of any closures

During the public meetings the community was reassured that if any sites were to have their hours reduced or be closed completely work would be undertaken to support the existing users of the Centres to identify alternative sites (either within the council portfolio or managed by third parties) to allow the activities to continue to be delivered.

A commitment was made to investigate the opportunities offered by the implementation of an electronic booking system to allow flexibility of location and a more effective utilisation of the community facilities managed by the council.

COMMUNITY CENTRES - CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Part One - Tell us what you think

We understand that these facilities are valued by customers and local communities and that you may have concerns about the gap in provision left by any future changes in these facilities. We would therefore like your comments on what you would like to see to reduce the impact of potential changes.

Closing date for comments 3rd December 2014.

1. Which centre/s do your comments relate to:

- Baglan Community Centre
- Taibach Community Centre
- Bryn Village Hall
- The Cross, Pontardawe
- Cwmafan Community Centre
- Glyncorwg Community Centre
- Llandarcy
- Mozart Drive Community Centre
- Sandfields Community Education Centre
- Taibach Community Education Centre

2. In what capacity are you responding to the questionnaire? Are you a:

- Regular community centre user
- Casual community centre user
- Local resident
- Local business; (please specify)
- Local club; (please specify)
- Other; (please specify)

3. We would like to know what your concerns are, should this or other centres close. Please consider each of the following statements and rate them using the following criteria:

Closure would:	Very concerned	Fairly concerned	Neutral	Not very concerned	Not concerned at all
Impact on the quality of the remaining community provision in the local area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impact on the variety of the remaining community provision in the local area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Affect the distance I would have to travel to another, similar facility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Result in the loss of specialist activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Result in the loss of a venue for other social activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce access for schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce access for sports and social clubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lead to an increase in health problems related to inactivity (either as an individual or whole community)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impact on opportunities for out of school activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What do you currently use the centre for?

- Community Group (Please specify).....
- Sports Club (Please specify).....
- Adult Education (Please specify).....
- NPT Youth Service
- OPA Groups (Please specify).....
- Church Groups (Please specify).....
- Communities 1st
- Local Small Business (Please specify).....
- Play Groups (Please specify).....
- Welsh Language Classes
- Disability Groups (Please specify).....
- Work Ways (Please specify).....
- Other (Please specify).....

5. How likely are you to continue this activity/s if the centre was to close? If they were:

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Neutral	Not very likely	Not likely at all
Delivered within your local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivered at another centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Given the need to make savings across the council and the efforts being made to maintain or provide alternative provision, do you support the closure of the centres?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please provide your reasons below:

Part Two: Business proposals and/or ideas for future operation

The consultation is seeking proposals from third party operators to retain and run facilities at these sites either in their existing formats or in new ways. Every effort will be made to identify and develop any viable proposals. Discussions, where appropriate, will take place with town and parish councils, voluntary organisations, sports clubs or any others who express an interest.

If you are interested in putting forward or discussing a potential business proposal for the future operation of any of the sites, please provide us with some brief details of your proposal and contact details by completing the form below.

Once received, we will contact you to arrange a suitable time to discuss your proposal in more detail.

Please insert a short description of your proposal:

