

SCENARIO – COMMON INFORMATION FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

The old community centre in Brentchester is valued by the local community but is in a poor state of repair. It is currently used for a range of activities, including parent and toddler groups, after school clubs, English language classes, a job club, and a poorly attended youth club who complain about the facilities. At the weekends, local residents can rent rooms for minimal cost for parties, and the local amateur dramatic society always rent rooms on Tuesday evenings.

- **Wessex Council**, who currently own and run the centre, want to transfer the asset to Better Brentchester, a community organisation active in the town. If they can't transfer it to Better Brentchester, they have said publicly they will sell it to developers who want to convert the building into loft apartments.
- **Better Brentchester** are interested in the council's proposal but are concerned about taking on responsibility for the backlog of repairs, about ongoing running costs, and about new skills they might need to manage the centre effectively.
- As part of their new strategy of integrated community-based services, **East Wessex CCG** are interested in using about half of the space in the community centre as a base if it remains open.
- The **Wessex Police Constabulary** are concerned about the rise of anti-social behaviour in the area attributed to local young people. They are keen to see improved youth provision in the area. If the centre is to remain, they would like to see the youth club reinvigorated and the outside space developed into a lighted area with a 5-side pitch and basketball hoops.
- **Active Wessex** are responsible for the Wessex Sport England Local Delivery Pilot. Knowing they have a budget burning a hole in their pocket, the council have been keen to bring the community centre situation to their attention as a place to invest. Always looking for opportunities for systems change, Active Wessex see it as way to put their 'Community First' model into practice, as well as a base for CCG to get serious about social prescribing and utilise individual budgets to make community provision sustainable.
- **Wessex CVS** are starting to see a pattern in the way the council is seeking to off-load assets to community groups, without considering the capabilities and ongoing financial support that is needed to manage transferred assets effectively and sustainability. They strongly support community ownership but have recently been lobbying councillors about the terms on which this is being offered. If a deal is to be done (and they very much hope it will be) it must be on terms which are sustainable. If not, no deal is better than a bad deal, because of the precedent it could set.

The Council has invited all parties to a meeting to discuss the following issues:

1. The terms of any asset transfer from the council
2. Financial support for the transfer and ongoing sustainability
3. Governance of the centre after the transfer
4. Development of the outside space
5. Ongoing use of the centre and the activities and services it will offer

The meeting will be held virtually and will be chaired by the Council. Not all parties have to reach agreement – parties can sign on to any deal as long as it is acceptable to them.