

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
ABBEY
MOWMACRE
BEAUMONT LEYS

CABINET

25TH June 2001

ISSUES RAISED BY CLOSURE OF THE JOHN ELLIS CENTRE

Report of the Director of Education

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To provide a brief summary of the progress on relocation of provision from the John Ellis Centre for lifelong learning and to respond to the concerns of Scrutiny Committee about the future of the site.

2. Summary

- 2.1 At its meeting on 15th May, the Education and Lifelong learning Scrutiny Committee considered a report of the Director of Education in response to calls for the retention of the John Ellis site for use in lifelong learning. A copy of the report and the minute of the meeting is attached. The Cabinet lead for Education and Lifelong learning wrote to the Scrutiny Committee setting out Cabinet's position, a copy of his letter is also attached as an appendix. The Committee resolved:
- a) That the report be formally referred to Cabinet with the request that it formally considers the matter given that the Scrutiny Committee has now twice expressed its concerns regarding the closure of the John Ellis site; and
 - b) That the Scrutiny Committee expresses its grave concern and deep disappointment that the Cabinet lead member had not attended the Committee.
- 2.2 Officers of the department have worked closely with centre staff to provide alternative locations for current provision and have consulted with officers in the Environment and Development Department on the potential uses of the site.

- 2.3 The John Ellis Centre for Lifelong Learning is scheduled to close on 31st August 2001. Officers have been working closely with staff, individual groups and the community to find appropriate alternative locations for provision.
- 2.4 It should be noted that the provision at John Ellis has significantly expanded since the decision to close the establishment was made in 1998 as part of the Secondary Review of Education in Leicester. The commitment to find alternative locations for provision pertained to programmes which existed in 1998. However officers and staff at the centre have worked hard to ensure as much as possible of the current provision can be relocated.
- 2.5 The granting of an extension to keep John Ellis open to 31st August 2001 means that Community Groups have had approximately three years notice to find suitable alternative venues.
- 2.6 The youth provision staff are being located to the nearest possible location, Stocking Farm Youth and Community Centre. The youth work provision including detached and outreach work will be operated from this site.
- 2.7 The REMIT provision for people with mental health difficulties is being relocated to 160 New Walk. This establishment is a new city centre venue which will significantly enhance the service and facilities provided. Officers in the department have worked closely with REMIT staff to ensure that the new provision meets the needs of this vulnerable group of learners.
- 2.8 The adult education provision will be relocated as follows:
- 6 courses and tutors are going to Babington Community Technology College (3 more will possibly be relocated here once tutor availability is confirmed).
 - 20 courses and their tutors are provisionally relocated to the Tudor Centre.
 - 9 courses are finishing because either the group has come to a natural end, the tutor does not want to continue or has found alternative employment.
 - 5 computer courses are being relocated to the Stocking Farm Youth and Community Centre. 5 computer courses cannot be continued as there are insufficient computer suites to house these courses in the existing area. However there is a wide spread of ICT provision in many locations across the city.
 - 8 special needs courses are being assessed to determine the educational needs of the learners. Once this assessment is completed, work will begin to identify appropriate venues. Officers aim

to complete this work before the end of June.

- 2.9 The courses currently managed by the John Ellis Centre based at the following three schools will continue as normal: Mellor Community Primary School, Catherine Street Infants School and Abbey Primary School.
- 2.10 The John Ellis Playgroup has now ceased due to parents moving their children to alternative provision. In addition, support has been offered to Community Groups and organisations in finding alternative locations.
- 2.11 The use of the old school buildings for the pupil referral units will continue until the end of the calendar year whilst replacement premises are being refurbished. However the management of the premises will relate only to these functions and the centre will not be available for an community use.
- 2.12 The centre will be handed over to corporate property for disposal to realise the capital for the secondary school improvement programme following the secondary review. Guidance can be written into the supplementary planning guidance for prospective purchasers setting out any community facilities or linkages the council would wish to see incorporated into any proposals for the redevelopment of the site.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To note the contents of this report and consider Scrutiny Committee's comments and concerns about the future of the John Ellis site.

4. Financial and Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report.

Consultation

Officers in the Environment & Development Department

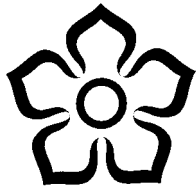
Background Papers

Report to Scrutiny 15th May 2001, Response to Scrutiny Motion and Petition – John Ellis Site.

From Education Scrutiny minutes - Response to Scrutiny Motion and Petition – John Ellis Site

Letter from Councillor Subedar to Scrutiny Committee (via Committee Administrator)

Report Author/Officer to contact: John Crookes, Assistant Director, Lifelong Learning & Community Development. 2527703



Leicester
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED
ABBAY**

APPENDIX 1

**Education, Lifelong Learning
Scrutiny Committee**

15 May 2001

**RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY MOTION AND PETITION –
JOHN ELLIS SITE**

Report of the Director of Education

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. To respond to calls for the retention of the John Ellis site.

2. Background

2.1 The Education and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee on 13 March noted receipt of a petition containing 2149 signatures seeking retention of the John Ellis site.

2.2 In addition to receiving the petition the Scrutiny Committee received a question from Ms J Foxworthy. She asked Scrutiny if they would urge Cabinet to urgently look at ways to retain the site, and the Scrutiny Committee agreed the following motion:

“This Scrutiny Committee urges the Cabinet to look beyond the confines of the Secondary Review and undertake a formal review of the planned closure of John Ellis and urgently explore ways of keeping this excellent Centre open.”

2.3 The decision to close the John Ellis site was made as part of the Review of Secondary Education. This decision was made by members following approval given by the Secretary of State for Education.

2.4 Details of the consultation process about the closure of John Ellis as part of the Review of Secondary Education are outlined in reports agreed by former Education Committee on 3rd November 1997 and February 1998.

2.5 The Secondary Review Plans included an expectation of a capital receipt in excess of £1million for the disposal of the John Ellis site.

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28/06/01

Therefore, it was originally agreed to cease the teaching of school-age children on site at the end of the summer term 2000 and that Community Education activities will end on 31st August 2000.

- 2.6 Following further consultation with Community Education staff and users, an extension was granted to keep the John Ellis site open until 31st August 2001. This extension was aimed at ensuring continuity of provision and giving groups and users a longer period of time to find alternative premises. Therefore significant notice about the necessity to relocate has been given to community users.
- 2.7 Work is currently being undertaken to relocate the education provision at John Ellis to alternative premises in the local area.
- 2.8 The cabinet lead member has discussed this issue with his colleagues and there will be no review of the John Ellis site. The sale of the John Ellis site is a long standing member decision essential to the funding of the secondary review changes aimed at raising standards of achievement across the whole city.

A capital receipt in excess of £1million is expected in relation to the sale of the John Ellis site. This £1million forms an essential part of the Secondary Review Budget. In addition, extra running costs of approximately £300,000 per annum would be required to keep the site running. This amount is not in the Lifelong Learning & Community Development Division budget.

3. Recommendations

Education and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee:

- (1) to note the response regarding the scrutiny motion and the petition;
- (2) that the Director of Education advise the lead petitioner and questioner accordingly.

. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report (Guy Goodman, Assistant Head of Legal Services – ext 7054).

Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting information	References
Equal Opportunities	NO		
Policy	NO		
Sustainable and Environmental	NO		
School Improvement	YES	2.8	
Crime and Disorder	NO		
Human Rights Act	NO		

Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Education Committee November 1997
Education Committee February 1998

Report Author/Officer to contact: John Crookes, Head of Lifelong Learning & Community Development

**EXTRACT OF THE MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 MAY 2001**

**67. RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY MOTION AND PETITION -
JOHN ELLIS SITE**

The Director of Education submitted a report responding to the petition and scrutiny motion calling for the retention of the John Ellis Centre. The report set out that, following consultation with Cabinet members, no review of the John Ellis Centre closure was proposed.

It was noted that the Cabinet Lead Member had been formally requested by the Triumvirate to attend the meeting but had been unable to attend as he was at a meeting of the Education Partnership Board in London. He had accordingly submitted his apologies and circulated a letter setting out the rationale behind maintaining the previous decision to close the John Ellis Centre which had been taken as part of the Secondary Review.

The Committee expressed grave concern that Cabinet had not formally discussed the Scrutiny motion which had received unanimous support from the Committee.

Members were concerned that Cabinet members had not looked beyond the confines of the Secondary Review. The Scrutiny Committee was of the opinion that John Ellis was in an ideal location to link with the nearby National Space Science Centre and extend lifelong learning.

Members of the Committee also questioned whether it was appropriate for the new division to be making budgetary savings in years two and three of the three year budget strategy when these could be put towards maintaining this Centre.

Members asked about the relocation of a number of groups currently at John Ellis. There was concern groups' programmes would be disrupted and that some groups had already been relocated once from the now closed Mundella site. Members asked what support, both financial and from officers had been earmarked for relocation.

The Director reported details of proposed relocation including moving youth work to the Stocking Farm Youth and Community Centre as well as moving computer courses to the new computer suite at this site. The Balki asian girls group would be relocated to Abbey Community Primary School. The group used a mini bus for security reasons could not function without this transport.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report be referred to Cabinet with the request that it formally considers the matter given that the Scrutiny Committee has now twice expressed its concerns regarding the closure of the John Ellis site; and
- (2) that the Scrutiny Committee expresses its grave concern and deep disappointment that the Cabinet Lead Member had not attended the Committee.

PLEASE ASK FOR: Clare Robinson
EXTENSION: 7154
DIRECT LINE: 252 7154
FAX: (0116) 247 1181
OUR REF: ED1/CMR
YOUR REF:
DATE: 15 May 2001

APPENDIX 3

**Members of the
EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Dear Member

Re: Response to Scrutiny Motion and Petition – John Ellis Site

The Scrutiny Triumvirate formally requested that the Cabinet Lead Member attend the Scrutiny Committee regarding the above report. However the Cabinet Lead Member has indicated he will be unable to attend the meeting on 15 May due to a prior commitment in London regarding the Partnership Board.

Accordingly the Cabinet Lead Member submits his apologies to the Scrutiny Committee and submits the attached letter in relation to the Response to Scrutiny Motion and Petition – John Ellis Site (appendix A on the agenda).

Yours sincerely

For Town Clerk

Please ask for: Councillor Subedar
Direct Line: 0116 252 6040
E-Mail: subef001@leicester.gov.uk
Fax No: 0116 224 8228
Our Ref: FS/bw/cfs
Date: 9 May 2001

Clare Robinson
Committee Administrator
5th Floor
B Block
New Walk Centre
Leicester City Council

Dear Clare

After a great deal of consideration and in conjunction with officers and Cabinet colleagues I have arrived at the conclusion that we will be upholding our original decision to close the John Ellis site. This is for the following reasons:

1. To be consistent with decisions made about the Secondary Education Review
2. To release the building for capital receipts for the modernisation of our expanded secondary schools
3. The £300,000 per annum running costs are prohibitive since this amount is not in the Lifelong Learning and Community Development budget.

The site was due to close last year but was given a one year extension ending on the 31st August 2001 to allow the Community Education activities based at John Ellis time to relocate. Ann Wood, the new Senior Community Learning Manager for the area, will be working with any organisation that has not found a new suitable location.

With regard to the closure of John Ellis being raised at Cabinet, I have discussed this issue with my colleagues and there will be no review of the John Ellis site.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Farook Subedar
Cabinet Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning