

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 27 AUGUST 2008**

**ARDBEG COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRE**

**Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to declare Ardbeg Community Education Centre surplus to operational requirements.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** As members will be aware, the North West Area Centre was formally opened on 19 March 2007.
- 2.2** There are two aspects of the North West Area Centre which impact on the operational requirements of Ardbeg Community Education Centre. Firstly, the Community Learning and Development staff located in the offices of the Community Centre have now moved into the North West Area Centre and there is no longer a requirement for office accommodation. This part of the building has already been closed. The North West Area Centre, co-located with the Hunter Centre, has facilities for community use.
- 2.3** Knockinlaw Community Association were consulted during the developmental phase of the North West Area Centre. The group met with Council and partner agency officials on a number of occasions to discuss the accommodation needs of the Association, including the opportunity to discuss room layouts, and to keep them informed of developments. Since the new Area Centre has become operational, a number of further meetings have been held with the Association to encourage them to use of the new facilities on offer within the North West Area Centre. Attached as an appendix are dates of consultations with Knockinlaw Community Association in respect of the North West Area Centre.

**3. THE PROPOSAL**

- 3.1** The Ardbeg Community Education Centre sits behind the North West Area Centre. Discussion took place last summer with the Community Association regarding the potential for the current programme of lets taking place in the Ardbeg Centre to be located in the overall campus of the North West Area Centre. All of the activities in the Centre are organised by the Community Association. Officers have been provided with no additional information to suggest that lets, independent of the Community Association, take place. It has been confirmed that lets relating to social, or family events and which may currently be considered for the Ardbeg Centre, can be accommodated satisfactorily in nearby premises.

**3.2** A number of issues have been presented regarding the relocation to the North West Area Centre Campus, these are set out below:

- The Unemployed/Retirement Club meet in the Ardbeg Centre three days a week and have meals supplied. Although there are no kitchen facilities in the North West Area Centre meals can be supplied through Onsite Services to enable this group to continue to meet.
- There is an active Youth Club and Disco Dancing Group which uses the Community Education Centre four evenings a week. The activities in relation to this group of young people can be accommodated in the Hunter Centre.

**3.3** Discussion took place over the summer (2007) with the Knockinlaw Community Association and an invitation was made to look at the facilities available in the North West Area Centre and Hunter Centre and subsequently to try the facilities. Although an internal meeting took place, the Association did not seek to try the facilities. If the Hunter Centre and the Daniel Coffey Community Suite are both used then the current letting programme can be facilitated.

**3.4** If Cabinet approves the recommendation to declare Ardbeg Community Education Centre surplus, one of the issues will be the need to pay for a let for the use of the North West Area Centre campus and at the moment the accounts provided from the Community Association to the Council shows no evidence of any income from lets for the current programme. In order to support the Community Association to continue with the programme, the Community Learning and Development Service will work with the group (or groups) to source funding to support the cost of lets.

**3.5** An option is available to the Community Association to lease the building from the Council, and secure their own funding, subject to the appropriate leasing conditions being met.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** The current operational costs of the Ardbeg Community Education Centre is £23,050, of which employee costs account for £14,250.

**4.2** A survey of the building has been done and indicates that extensive works are required to bring the building up to modern standards. The costs are estimated at £0.530m if a lift is required to allow public access to the first floor or £0.394m if this is not required. There is no current provision in the Capital Programme for this at present.

## **5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** The Community Education Centre currently has 1 WTE Centre Supervisor post. The postholder's position will be considered in accordance with normal Council procedures.

## **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** Nil.

## **7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** The proposals contained in this report relate to the Promoting Community Learning Theme of the Community Plan.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1** This proposal will assist in implementing the Council's Asset Management Plan and ensure best value. If the Centre is not declared surplus to operational requirements, there are a number of health and safety issues which will require to be addressed.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1** It is recommended that members of Cabinet:
- (i) approve the recommendation to declare Ardbeg Community Education Centre surplus to the operational requirements of the Educational and Social Services Department as of 30 September 2008; and
  - (ii) ask the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to
    - (i) formally discuss the potential for community management of the Ardbeg Centre with Knockinlaw Community Association and depending on the outcome of this discussion
    - (ii) work through the detail of the relocation of current lets in the Ardbeg Centre, and
  - (iii) ask the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to return to Cabinet with the outcome of the above.
  - (iv) otherwise note the content of the report.

Graham R Short  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

19 June 2008  
KG/SR

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Service:  
Community Support, Tel: 01563 576104.

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: KAY GILMOUR**

## APPENDIX

### Details of Community Consultations held with Knockinlaw Community Association regarding the North West Kilmarnock Area Centre

<b>Date</b>	<b>Community Group</b>
11 June 2002	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
25 November 2002	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
19 December 2002	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
23 June 2003	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
14 February 2005	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
17 May 2006	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
29 June 2006	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
31 August 2006	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>
31 May 2007	<b>Knockinlaw Community Association</b>