



Finance and Administration Committee – 13 June 2019

Agenda Item FA1453/19

Community Infrastructure Levy – Red Cross Centre

Introduction

Further to the motion agreed by Council in February, the land transfer working group has taken on the role to pursue negotiations with the Red Cross. We have held a meeting with them and now need funds to carry out a condition survey and valuation of the Red Cross building and to understand the obligations of the lease.

Discussion

Following the February FCM, we attended a Red Cross meeting in March to discover their plans for the building. It was a “private” meeting, however we were allowed access and it quickly became very public as so many other people also attended. It was clear that the Red Cross has decided to pull out of running Halls on a national basis and to focus on delivering services, such as equipment loan.

The Red Cross’s interest is to exit the lease on the building in Croxley Green and the associated liabilities. We understand that it is prepared to consider a range of options to achieve this objective. The next step is for the Council to find out more about the condition of the Centre and the remaining lease. It is estimated that we might require up to £10k in total for the evaluation, survey and other professional reports including helping to produce a business plan for the future use of the Hall.

We now have a reasonable accumulated sum from the Council’s share of Community Infrastructure Levy, and one of the allowable projects we could spend this on would be to provide a Village Hall. The Red Cross Centre would make a suitable Village Hall in the longer term and using CIL funds for the purpose was one of the popular options following the consultation last year. We therefore suggest that spending the initial sums specified in this paper is an appropriate use of these funds and responds to the wishes of local residents.

Recommendations

1. That the Parish Council agrees to commit up to £1500 for preparatory work required so we may make an informed decision whether to offer to take over the Red Cross Centre.
2. That funding is provided from the Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy fund.
3. That the land transfer working party continues to take this matter forward up to the point where the Council has a definite proposal to consider. Any consequent decision to commit further funds will come back to the Council.

Councillors Mitchell, Cole and Gallagher
5 June 2019