
TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM QUALITY OF LIFE

Report by Service Director for Neighbourhood Services

TWEEDDALE AREA FORUM

18 DECEMBER 2014

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report seeks approval from Tweeddale Area Forum to delegate authority to the Service Director Neighbourhood services to allocate the remaining funds for the current financial year to Quality of Life, subject to consultation with and approval by all six members of the Tweeddale Area Forum via email.**
- 1.2 In order to enable the timely delivery of projects funded by available Quality of Life budgets, delegated authority is required for the remainder of 2014-15 financial year.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Tweeddale Area Forum;-
Agrees to delegate authority to the Service Director Neighbourhood Services to allocate the remaining funds for the current financial year to Quality of Life, subject to consultation with and approval by all six members of the Tweeddale Area Forum via email.**

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Elected Members, Community Councils and the public can request financial support to enable delivery of local improvement projects and initiatives via the available Quality of Life budget. Additionally requests for direct work to be undertaken by Neighbourhood operations can be made by contacting the Neighbourhood Area Manager direct. Neighbourhood Operations is contactable via the new Scottish Borders Council telephone number 0300 100 1800, e-mail address – enquiries@scotborders.gov.uk or by writing to Neighbourhood Services, Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.

4 Quality of life

- 4.1 To enable the timely delivery of projects within the 2014-15 financial year a decision making process is required which ensures inclusion and accountability.
- 4.2 The process being proposed at 2.1 of this report is already in place for other Area Forums within the Scottish Borders Council region.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

Of the original £20,000 available and taking account of previous funding approval, there is a remaining budget of £8,062.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

If the budget is not spent, the local area will not fully benefit from potential improvements the budgets enable.

6.3 Equalities

It is anticipated there will be no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.4 Acting Sustainably Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009

It is anticipated that there will be a variety of positive economic, social or environmental benefits arising from the proposed schemes in paragraph 2.1.

Carbon Management – Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009

6.5

There are no significant effects anticipated to Council carbon emissions by approving the proposals in this report.

6.6 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes required to the scheme of administration or delegation arising from the contents of this report

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR, the Interim Service Director Capital Projects and the Clerk to the Council will be consulted and any comments received will be incorporated in the final report.

Approved by

Service Director of Neighbourhood Services

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Jason Hedley	Neighbourhood Area Manager (Tweeddale) 01835 824000 Ext 8037

Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Reference: Tweeddale Area Forum December 3rd 2014

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jacqueline Whitelaw can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Jacqueline Whitelaw, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel 01835 825431, Fax 01835 825071, email aitranslationrequest@scotborders.gov.uk.



**Newlands and Kirkurd Playgroup
Newlands Centre
Romanno Bridge
West Linton
EH46 7BZ
01968 660367**

1 December 2015

Dear Councillors Archibald and Bhatia

Further to our meeting on 17th November, we have gone through our records of meetings during the period where we were involved in discussions with Scottish Borders Council and NCDT to support and explain our understanding of what we had agreed to with regards to the move to Newlands Centre.

Please find enclosed copies of meeting minutes, letters to NCDT and SBC and a history of the decision to move.

At the meeting with Karen Fagan, Jean Robertson and Susan Smith, we were told that there would be no space for the OOSC within the school and that we would therefore need to move to the Newlands Centre and pay an annual rent. Given that the OOSC was running at a loss it was immediately explained that this would cause the demise of the club. We were assured that there would be grant funding available to cover this additional cost. You will see from correspondence that by 2 November 2011 the Committee had been given the clear impression that OOSC rent was to be covered by grants.

Throughout all of the negotiations Newlands and Kirkurd Playgroup reiterated that the Out of School Club would not be able to pay any rent without the support of grant funding and our understanding was that we would be able to apply for Vulnerable Out of School Club grants.

Following the move to the Newlands Centre an application for a Vulnerable Out of School Club grant in 2012-13 was refused and it was explained that this grant was only available once which was not our understanding of the situation. After many meetings we were awarded a grant in 2013-14 but again have since been told that this was "exceptional".

Given our warnings about the financial situation of the OOSC and the assurances coming from SBC before the move to the Newlands Centre you might understand some of our frustration.

Yours sincerely
Rodna Angus
Manager
Newlands and Kirkurd
Playgroup and OOSC

Newlands Primary School

Romanno Bridge
West Linton
Peeblesshire



01968 660211

Interim Headteacher - Keith Russell
krussell@scotborders.gov.uk

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the local Out of School Club at Newland Centre.

It has been brought to my attention the club is under threat of closure. I would like to put forward my concerns and impact that this would have on the community.

The club is set within my school which is also the local community centre. This allows it to be accessible for the residents of the Newlands community. To close the club would have a serious impact on the parents who need this club to continue with their working lives as well as to the children who have built excellent relationships with the staff and whom enjoy very worthwhile experiences through their attendance at the club.

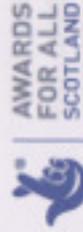
The club offers stability, continuity and most importantly a safe and secure environment for the children in this small community. These inherent rights are an entitlement that, I believe, the children should be able to access within their local community.

I urge you to consider this when you are making any decisions regarding the Out of School Club at Newlands Centre.

Yours sincerely

Keith Russell

Interim Head Teacher



AWARDS
FOR ALL
SCOTLAND

LOTTERY FUNDED

Newlands and Kirkurd Playgroup
Newlands Hall
Romanno Bridge
West Linton
EH46 7BY
07960 599420

Meeting Notes: NCDT meeting 23/11/10 at 6.15pm Newlands Primary School.

Main areas of discussion:

- Rent
- Provision of childcare/ Child care needs within the community
- Timescales

Rent

- What would NCDT be looking for as an hourly rental?
- Affordability? With PG running at full capacity we can afford to pay approx £200 per month. If numbers fell that amount would go down.
- What would the terms be of any lease? (ie duration, only rental cost or services too?)

Provision of Childcare

- Currently PG runs 5 x 2.5 hour sessions per week. Mon, Wed and Fri am. Could possibly run on 5 days and would need from 8.30 – 12.30 daily subject to agreement from parents.
- We are running at full capacity but over last 4 years numbers have fluctuated between 7 and 28. Next year 16 anticipated.
- How would NCDT anticipate the space being used? Karen talked of Wrap around Care at last meeting.
- Was a feasibility study done when applications for lottery funding were completed and if so could we see them?
- We are concerned about the need for wrap around care in the community – currently starting OOSC and though take up has been relatively good we are still only just about to break even. Unclear how many parents would use an all round provision.
- The suitability of the building for wrap around care – no sleeping area, only one room for all ages etc.

Timescales

- When would facility be ready for use
- Timescale for decisions?

Issues to be raised at the emergency meeting – Monday 26th September 2011

Following a visit to the site a number of concerns have been raised about the projected move to the newbuild. I have briefly listed the main points below to let you have a chance to consider them before we meet on Monday. I appreciate that this is short notice for a meeting but, unfortunately, the way things are unfolding at the moment we are having to make big decisions in a very short timescale.

SIZE

The maximum number of children who can be accommodated in the nursery is 25. We will be contacting Maureen Sharp on Monday morning to establish that this definitely is the correct figure as the space seems really small. We need to confirm that the area is 58m² excluding toilets, storage and office space. We are currently registered to take 28 so this will have implications for the playgroup.

TOILETS

There are three little toilets but no staff toilets, disabled toilet or baby changing facilities. The allocated staff toilet is located elsewhere in the build and would mean a member of staff leaving the facility. If this was necessary we would need to increase our staffing to maintain the correct ratio which obviously would cause increased overheads.

RENT

Rent has not been discussed as SBC say this is dependent on Thursday's meeting about the future of Newlands Hall.

NCDT claim that the space could have generated £10 800 if rented to a commercial nursery. (there is no interest from an independent party and the survey of needs shows there is not the demand for a full time nursery in the area.)

SBC are suggesting that a deal can be brokered between Playgroup and the NCDT which would involve subsidy from SBC and rent from us which would begin to approach what the NCDT are looking for or at least reach an acceptable level for them.

The council would operate a sliding scale of support which would leave us in 5 years time needing to find a substantial amount of rent ourselves.

This appears to leave us in the position of subsidizing the NCDT's newbuild and paying a potentially unreasonable amount.

At Thursday's meeting, SBC are intending to state that we are in negotiations to move to the new build. This raises the question: do we feel happy with this? Do we feel we are sufficiently far down the route of negotiation to make this statement? There is a case which would suggest we are stating our intention to move before any discussion on what this could cost us.



Meeting Notes: NCDI meeting 23/11/10 at 6.15pm Newlands Primary School

Key areas of discussion

- Fund
- Provision of additional child care needs within the community
- Transition

Notes

- What would NCDI be looking for in an early result?
- Affordability? An independent third party or an independent public address?
- 2000 members? If members feel that a report would go down.
- What would the levels be of any lease? (a duration, any rental cost or services cost?)

Proposals to Children

- Currently 193 runs 5 x 2.5-hour sessions per week. Mon, Wed and Fri are. Could possibly run on 5 days and would need from 8.30 - 12.30 daily subject to agreement from parents.
- We are running at full capacity but over last 4 years numbers have fluctuated between 7 and 25. Next year 18 anticipated.
- How should NCDI utilise the space being used? Kitchen, school of Music should this be at all meeting?
- Was a feasibility study done when applications for leasing funding were completed and if so could we use them?
- Are we concerned about the need for extra support care if the community currently running O&E and though take up has been relatively good we are still only just about to break even. Understand how many parents would use an all round provision.
- The suitability of the building for extra around care - no sleeping area, only one room for all ages etc.

Transition

- When would facility be ready for use
- Transition for children?



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Newlands and Kirkurd Playgroup
Newlands Hall
Romanno Bridge
West Linton
EH46 7BY
07960 599420

Notes from Meeting with NCDT

Date of Meeting: 27 July 2011, at Newlands Hall

Present:

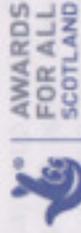
Newlands & Kirkurd Playgroup – Lizzie Reed, Rodna Angus, Tomke Ortgies-Rae, Sarah Magee
Scottish Borders Council – Karen Fagan, Susan Smith, Jean Robertson
NCDT – Sue Unwin

Circulation of Minutes: N&K Playgroup Committee, Rodna Angus

1	Background Meeting was arranged by Jean Robertson following N&K letter to NCDT of 18 May 2011 enclosing Childcare Partnership survey of needs results. NCDT did not make any contact with N&K following this letter. N&K were unsure who would be attending this meeting and no agenda was issued.	
	Introduction from Jean Robertson Following on from introductions, JR stated that this meeting should be considered the first meeting in the process of discussions on the possible move of N&K to the NCDT nursery space. SBC are undertaking review of all rural halls and there is to be a community consultation on Newlands Hall on 27 September. SBC will be looking for the community to become involved in running the hall with a view to SBC removing its support. As N&K are biggest user of the hall, this meeting was convened to look at the options available to N&K, as the status quo was unlikely to be an option.	
	Playgroup position In response to JR, LR stated that N&K's preferred option would be to move to the new premises, however this was dependent on finances. N&K currently pay no rent for the use of the hall so any rent liability at the new nursery would impact heavily on our available funds. LR highlighted that N&K currently in a good position as have high numbers, however we are unable to project numbers in 2 years time, and would not want to commit to anything that we would not be able to honour further down the line. LR stressed that N&K are very supportive of the new venture and would	

	like to be part of it, as long as this did not have a detrimental effect on the playgroup.	
<p>Discussions on rent</p> <p>JR would like to know the exact hours of use of the Hall. LR to email JR the figures.</p> <p>JR intimated that SBC would consider continuing to subsidise N&K by contributing to the NCDT rent, phasing this subsidy out over a period of 5 years. If after 5 years N&K were not in a position to pay the full rent it was hoped that NCDT would be in a position to consider a subsidy, or N&K would need to look at other funding options eg fundraising, grants. This would only be an option if SBC were no longer responsible for Newlands Hall (decision will not be made until after meeting on 27/9/11).</p> <p>N&K are currently able to pay rent but would need concrete assurances that the necessary support would be there for them in future should their financial position change. N&K will calculate how many children are needed to be viable currently (around 10-12 estimated).</p> <p>LR asked SU how much our proposed usage of the space would be. SU unable to give figure as actual running costs not yet known. JR said that if SBC were to rent nursery space (not an option) it would cost £10,800 for full time use, therefore a rough cost for half usage (as N&K would want) would be £5,400. Newlands Hall currently costs SBC around £5000/yr.</p>	LR	TOR/SM
<p>Discussions on space</p> <p>It was highlighted last year that there were potential issues with the new nursery, in particular the number of children it would be registered to take. N&K are currently registered for 28 children aged 2.5-school age. The new space can only take 20 2-3 year olds or 25 3-5 year olds. KF/SS will check to see if there is a formula to work out a figure for combined age groups as N&K currently take children from 2.5. The space cannot at this stage be changed, so this issue will need to be worked around.</p> <p>Various other points were raised by LR/SM at the meeting in July 2010 with Karen Blissett, however it is unknown which if any have been addressed. SU suggested she, LR and Hazel McIntyre (architect, Cooper Cromar) should start discussions on the layout asap. SU will email LR KM details. Suggested next meeting should be on site.</p> <p>Discussion on what other groups could use the nursery space when not in use by N&K. Not suitable for OOSC or Toddlers due to differing child sizes. Possible use for renting out for parties.</p>	SU	
<p>OOSC</p> <p>The OOSC was brought up by JR and SS as from October 2011 the room that it currently uses, the GP room, will no longer be available having been converted into 2 classrooms. The school will be using the new NCDT space instead of the GP room, however as the new space is owned by NCDT rather than SBC, rent would become chargeable. This was not N&K's understanding, as in previous meetings with SS it was made clear that schools provide space free of charge for OOSC in the Scottish Borders. This is the case in all other SBC schools with OOSCs. RA stated that as the OOSC was already running at a loss, should rent</p>		

SS/LR/RA	<p>become payable then OOSC would close. SBC keen for OOSC to continue, so SS suggested that she, LR and RA met again to go through the possible options, and to get Maureen Sharp involved as she is apparently keen to keep OOSC open. SS/JR intimated that grants could be made available to assist in rent payments and that SS would look in to this.</p> <p>N&K very concerned about this as there had been no warning that this was a possibility. In addition to rent issues, a change in venue would require an inspection by SCSWIS and alterations to existing policies and procedures. More detailed information on dates and facilities are required to enable N&K to make the necessary arrangements to ensure continuity of service.</p>
LR SU	<p>Dates and Timeframes</p> <p>SU stated that the new facility will be completed by the end of the October 2011 break. This is 6 months earlier than N&K were told at last meeting in November 2010. OOSC would be required to move in October as the GP room will no longer be available, however should the playgroup wish to move in to the new space, the date of move would be down to us, but probably not before January 2012 to allow the school to move in fully first.</p> <p>TOR suggested that the meeting with SS re OOSC should be asap, not wait for start of term. LR to contact SS to arrange a date to meet.</p> <p>SU to contact LR/HM to arrange a meeting on site. It was agreed that it would be useful for everyone to attend this meeting.</p>
	<p>Summary</p> <p>Playgroup has stated that it would like to move to the new nursery space if it is financially viable to do so. Any issues with the space would be overcome either by alterations to the building or changes to the way N&K playgroup operates.</p> <p>SBC will consider subsidising N&K to move, subject to decisions on Newlands Hall after 27/9/11. JR has noted that N&K are happy to have their willingness to move made public.</p> <p>No decisions have been made and further discussions will be required before a decision is made by either party.</p> <p>OOSC will require an additional grant to enable it to continue to run should rent become payable. Further information required urgently on this due to potential impact on OOSC parents and their childcare arrangements.</p>



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Newlands and Kirkurd Playgroup
Newlands Hall
Romanno Bridge
West Linton
EH46 7BY
07960 599420

Jean Robertson
Scottish Borders Council
Newton St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA

2 November 2011

BY EMAIL

Dear Jean

Thank you for your email of 1 November outlining the scenarios that you are currently proposing for Newlands & Kirkurd Playgroup to facilitate a move to the Newlands Centre.

Our Sub-Committee met last night and went through the options outlined. All options proposed by you have been fully reviewed and discussed at length by our sub-committee and I hope you can appreciate how much time has been expended by our voluntary committee on looking at all the scenarios proposed over the last few weeks. Having considered all the options we remain committed to finding a solution that enables us to move to the Newlands Centre.

We have reviewed our financial position and we feel that we could commit to the following, as per your Option 2 (boxed figures):

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Rent
Playgroup	8.30am – 2.30pm		8.30am – 2.30pm		8.30am- 2.30pm	£1900 per annum
OOSC	2.45pm- 6pm	2.45pm- 6pm	2.45pm- 6pm	2.45pm- 6pm	2.45pm- 6pm	£1900 per annum (to be covered by vulnerable group grant)

This would be to rent the nursery space, however the OOSC to be able to make use of the Lesser Hall or other spaces within Newlands Centre by arrangement with NCDT when no other bookings have been made. There would be no additional charge levied on the OOSC for use of the Lesser Hall in these circumstances.

We feel that this level of rent is comparable to other playgroups in the area, although some playgroups pay no rent and no other school-based OOSC in the Scottish Borders pays rent. This is a significant undertaking from a voluntary, parent-run playgroup which currently has no rent liability. We will also be running our playgroup in a smaller space, therefore limiting our future income by almost £5000 per annum (3 fully funded places).

We would be prepared to offer the above with the proviso that Scottish Borders Council rents the space on a preferential block booking basis and sub-lets to the playgroup, as per Option 3 in your email of 28 October. We would therefore pay rent to SBC, rather than NCDT. We are happy to put our time in to running this playgroup, but to do this we need SBC to provide us with adequate premises at a reasonable rent that we can afford as a long-term sustainable option within our budget. We feel that our proposal is a fair and reasonable offer taking account of our situation. The other options with new and additional financial responsibilities of up to £10,000 p/a are felt to put an undue financial pressure onto the voluntary group/committee.

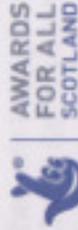
We have a committee meeting arranged for 15 November, and if you are able to come back to us with agreement to proceed on the above basis, we can put this option to the full committee. We are confident that this will be acceptable to the committee and would therefore envisage being in a position to agree to an early move date, subject to agreement with the Care Inspectorate.

We look forward to your response.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

ELISABETH REED
CHAIR



AWARDS
FOR ALL
SCOTLAND

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Karen Fagan
Scottish Borders Council
Newton St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA

5 December 2011

BY POST AND EMAIL

Dear Karen

Further to Jean Robertson's letter of 2 December we are delighted that we are finally close to an agreement on our proposed move to Newlands Centre. We are all looking forward to moving to our new home in the new year.

There were a few points in the letter that we would like to raise prior to our meeting with you next week.

The letter states that the SBC subsidy is fixed for 5 years, however the Appendix has the subsidy running for 7 years (fixed for 5 years, reducing in years 6 and 7), as discussed with Jean Robertson. We would like confirmation that the subsidy is as per the Appendix, running for 7 years. We understand that the SBC subsidy may decrease in Year 6 and would therefore plan to initiate discussions with SBC and other relevant parties during the latter part of year 3 to ensure provision was in place. We would like to make clear that the Playgroup will never be in a position to cover the shortfall in rent should SBC reduce or remove their subsidy and that other funding options would need to be found at that point.

The letter states that NCDT can increase their rent (limited to RPI), and that any increase would need to be met by Playgroup by adjusting our rent paid to SBC. However the letter also states that the rent charged by NCDT to SBC cannot be increased beyond £9120 excluding VAT. As this is the agreed initial rent rate, the implication is that rent cannot be increased. We would like confirmation that the rent payable by Playgroup to SBC will be capped for 5 years at £1969 (see next point).

The Appendix shows a shortfall in rent of £69 per year. In order to simplify the agreement we would be willing to agree to an annual rent of £1969 for Playgroup.

Newlands and Kirkurd Playgroup
Newlands Hall
Romanno Bridge
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07960 599420

We have applied for the 2011/2012 Vulnerable OOSC Grant of £3500 which we will need to use to pay the OOSC annual rent of £1900 for the initial 2 year period, as discussed with Susan Smith. After which we will need to review the financial viability of the OOSC.

The annual rent agreed for the Playgroup was assumed to include in-service days, as is the case at Newlands Hall where no additional charge is levied for these days. Our playgroup staff are required to work these in-service days and would therefore require the nursery space. Could you please check with John Currie (NCDT) to ask if they are happy for these additional 5 days to be included within the annual rent? Our Out of School Club staff do not work these days so we would not require the space for their sessions on in-service days.

We would like confirmation that the rent will include all services, utilities, maintenance and PAT testing of equipment (to include kitchen appliances owned by NCDT, cleaning, maintenance of outdoor areas (to include grass cutting), telephone and internet (playgroup usage to be charged), alarm and CCTV.

As per discussions with both Jean Robertson and NCDT the OOSC is to be able to make use of the Lesser Hall or other spaces within Newlands Centre by arrangement with NCDT when no other bookings have been made. We would like confirmation that there would be no additional charge levied on the OOSC for use of the Lesser Hall in these circumstances.

Playgroup can terminate its sublet arrangements with SBC if it ceases to be financially viable for playgroup.

We have revised your Appendix 1 to show our understanding of what we are agreeing to:

	Monday 8.30am - 2.30pm	Tuesday	Wednesday 8.30am - 2.30pm	Thursday	Friday 8.30am- 2.30pm	Annual Rent Based on 38 weeks
Playgroup						
NCDT Rent	£50		£50		£50	£5700
OOSC	2.45pm- 6pm £14	2.45pm- 6pm £24	2.45pm- 6pm £14	2.45pm- 6pm £24	2.45pm- 6pm £14	Based on 38 weeks £3420
Paid By	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6
SBC Subsidy	£5251	£5251	£5251	£5251	£5251	£3938
PG Rent	£1969	£1969	£1969	£1969	£1969	£1969
OOSC Rent	£1900	£1900	£1900	£1900	£1900	
(paid by grants)						
Other income/subsidy - tba	0	0	0	0	0	£3213
Total to NCDT	£9120	£9120	£9120	£9120	£9120	£9120

All rent payable to SBC by Playgroup will be inclusive of VAT.

We would also like confirmation in writing that we have access to the staff toilets and disabled toilet during our booked times to enable staff, parents and OOSC children to make use of suitable facilities, as they are not permitted to use the nursery toilets.

There are a number of outstanding 'snagging' items which would need to be rectified prior to our move. We would like confirmation that the outdoor space will be completed by NCDT in the Spring, so that our SCSWIS variation can be amended to allow us to use the garden.

We remain committed to resolving all outstanding issues regarding our proposed move and, should this be achieved next week, then we would be in a position to work towards a start date in Newlands Nursery on 6 January 2012

We look forward to meeting you next week.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

ELISABETH REED
CHAIR

cc Jean Robertson (by email)
Susan Smith (by email)

BY POST AND EMAIL

Dear Name

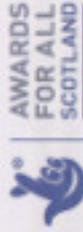
Further to Jean Robertson's letter of 2 December we are delighted that we are finally close to an agreement on our proposed move to Newlands Centre. We are all looking forward to moving to our new home in the new year.

There were a few points in the letter that we would like to raise prior to our meeting with you next week.

The note states that the SSC subsidy is fixed for 5 years, however the Agreement has the subsidy running for 7 years (fixed for 5 years, reducing in years 6 and 7), as discussed with Jean Robertson. We would like confirmation that the subsidy is as per the Agreement, running for 7 years. We understand that the SSC subsidy may terminate at year 5 and would therefore plan to initiate discussions with SSC and other relevant parties during the latter part of year 5 to ensure provision was in place. We would like to make clear that the Playgroup will never be in a position to cover the shortfall in cost should SSC reduce or remove their subsidy and that other funding options would need to be found at that point.

The note states that NCDT can increase their rent (linked to RPI), and that any increase would need to be met by Playgroup by adjusting our rent paid to SSC. However the letter also states that the rent charged by NCDT to SSC cannot be increased beyond £120 including VAT. As this is the agreed initial rent rate, the implication is that rent cannot be increased. We would like confirmation that the rent payable by Playgroup to SSC will be capped for 5 years at £120 (plus rent paid).

The Agreement states a shortfall in rent of £100 per year. In order to comply the agreement we would be willing to agree to an annual rent of £100 for Playgroup.



LOTTERY FUNDED

Newlands and Kirkurd Playgroup
Newlands Centre
Romanno Bridge
West Linton
EH46 7BZ
07960 599420

History of decision to move to Newlands Centre from Newlands Hall in January 2012

Playgroup Personnel

Moven Patton – Chair until June 2010
Jane Prady – Secretary until June 2009
Elisabeth Reed – Chair from June 2010
Sarah Magee – Secretary from June 2009-May 2011, then Group Administrator
Tomke Orgies-Rae – Treasurer June 2008-Jan 2012
Silke Isbrand – Committee member June 2008-
Caroline Milne – Committee member June 2010-June 2011
Kirsty Wells – Secretary until June 2008
Gillian Willacy – Treasurer until June 2008

Rodna Angus – Playgroup Manager
Sharon Aitken – Playgroup Play Leader
Jacqui Porter – Playgroup Play Leader
Wendy Rae – Playgroup Worker

NCDT

Karen Blissett – Chair
John Currie – Secretary
Sue Unwin – Treasurer
Bill Craigie – Director

SBC

Jean Robertson
Karen Fagan
Susan Smith

SPPA

Fiona Hughes – Field worker until June 2011

Initial Contact

When completing the Lottery application for the Newlands Centre, NCDT contacted the Playgroup to ask playgroup to provide a letter (?) confirming that they would be supportive of the new nursery and would want to move in to it. This was done by Kirsty Wells???

Once NCDT received the grant and the Centre was to go ahead, Jane Prady wrote to John Currie of NCDT to express playgroup's interest in her letter of 23 Jan 2009 -
"We would also like to express an interest in the use of space in the new community complex.

Please could we be kept informed of progress in order that we can be more involved."
No written response was received.

In 2010 Moven Patton approached Karen Blissett informally and later by email to again express our interest in the space. No written response was received.

On 8 June 2010 Sarah Magee wrote to Karen Blissett to again express interest. This approach had been prompted by speculation that another party was interested in taking the space and the Playgroup requested that we be considered for the space. KB spoke to SM and agreed a meeting would be useful. The first meeting was arranged at Lizzie's house on 29 July 2010. Meeting was attended by LR and SM. RA was to have attended but was unable to due to family bereavement.

Meetings

LR and SM met with KB on 29 July 2010 and had a general discussion on the new space. LR/SM raised a number of issues about the space, and at this point it became apparent that the space was too small for our current registration of 28 children. LR/SM also raised issues with toilets (no staff or disabled shown on plan). Positive meeting, left that KB would check up on our issues and get back to us. Playgroup stated their interest in the space. KB unable to give figures for expected rent but stated that 'Playgroup would never need to pay more than they could afford'.
See notes of meeting

KB wrote back on ? answering some of our queries. LR then responded on 5 September. At this point the size was stated as being suitable for 25 children, not the 28 we had. NCDT stated that nothing could be done about this at this stage. LR requested a further meeting to progress things.

John Currie rang LR to invite us to attend a meeting prior to an NCDT Directors meeting on 23 November 2010 at Newlands School. LR, SM and TOR attended for Playgroup. KB, Sue Urwin and Bill Craigie attended for NCDT. Prior to meeting TOR had produced note on what Playgroup would be able to afford to pay, which was given to NCDT. Playgroup again stated its' interest in the space, but that this would depend on costs as we currently paid no rent at Newlands Hall.

It became clear during this meeting that NCDT did not have a clear understanding of what playgroup was and how we ran.

Bill Craigie gave an estimate of rent at £600 per month. TOR said we could pay max of £200. Bill said they could maybe go to £400 per month.

NCDT were keen that Playgroup thought about expanding their service to bring in more money, running wrap around care and possibly a cafe. Playgroup stated that in their opinion there was insufficient demand for wrap around care (as proved by low

Afford.
200
per
month

uptake of OOSC) but that maybe NCDT could get their Development Officer to undertake a survey to assess the level of interest. It was left that NCDT would do that in 6 months time when Development Officer recruited.

We were informed that the space was due for completion in Jan/Feb 2012 with fit-out completed by Easter 2012.

Left that we would meet again following completion of feasibility study on wraparound care. See notes of meeting.

In January 2011 Fiona Hughes contacted LR to ask why we were not making ourselves available for discussions with NCDT. This is what had been reported to SBC. LR was able to update FH on all communications and FH reported back to SBC that they had been wrongly informed. FH also offered to get the Childcare Partnership to undertake the feasibility study and would ask Susan Smith to organise it.

LR then wrote to JC to inform him of our interest in the space, and give our contact details again. She also informed him that Childcare Partnership would undertake survey and that we would get in touch again once that was completed. Letter dated 31 Jan 2011

On 31 January LR also wrote to Karen Blissett to say that the Childcare Partnership would undertake the feasibility survey on behalf of playgroup and NCDT.

The survey was undertaken and the results made available in May. The survey indicated, as expected, very low levels of interest in wraparound childcare. The results of the survey were sent to John Currie by LR on 18 May with a request that JC call LR to arrange a time to meet.

LR was then contacted by Jean Robertson and asked to attend a meeting on 27 July 2011 at Newlands Hall.

Meeting on 27 July – attended by LR, SM, TOR, RA, Sue Unwin, Jean Robertson, Karen Fagan and Susan Smith. JR's role was to broker a deal between NCDT and Playgroup. Playgroup told that they could stay in the Hall, move to Newlands Centre or move somewhere else. Council would support us in whatever choice we made and that our subsidy would follow us, however that the Council would be supporting Newlands Centre in future, not Newlands Hall (they indicated that they would pull out of the hall at this meeting, although they wouldn't confirm this). At this time we were told that building would be opening in October and that they saw Playgroup moving in in January 2012. There were implications for OOSC of the new build which have been resolved separately. Issue of toilets and the need for confirmation of size raised again. See meeting notes for details.

Meeting on 22 September – met with John Currie to be shown around Newlands Centre. See notes of meeting.

Meeting on 20 October – with Jean Robertson, LR, SM, TOR, SI, RA. Apologies Susan Smith. The first time actual figures were discussed for the new nursery. Various scenarios gone through by JR. JR to write up options and email to LR in time for committee meeting on 27 October. See meeting notes for details.

Committee meeting on 27 October not well attended and JR notes not received, so rearranged from 1 November. Long discussion on options but finally agreed that we would write back to JR to say Playgroup would be happy to pay £2000 per annum for use of the space (also pay £2000 for OOSC to use it, to be covered by grant).

Although playgroup has been rent free at Newlands Hall since around 2008, JR had indicated that the subsidy we currently have will run out after 5 years, reducing from year 3, so the rent free would not continue. If we remained in Newlands Hall we would end up paying rent, and would potentially lose the support of SBC who made clear their allegiance was with the Newlands Centre. So the choice was to stay at Newlands Hall and pay rent at some point in future (no dates given, within 5 years though) or move to Newlands Centre, retain subsidy for 7 years rather than 5 but pay rent (less than we used to pay at Newlands Hall) from the start. Committee felt that it was fair to pay rent as we currently had sufficient funds and that by moving to Newlands Centre and retaining the support of SBC, when we no longer had sufficient funds to pay rent we would be in a stronger position to get help from SBC. It was made clear that if we chose to stay at Newlands Hall this support would not be forthcoming.

LR wrote to JR on 2 November to agree to move to Newlands Centre for rent of £1900 per annum on condition that we rented from SBC and paid them, rather than NCDT. This was to ensure that SBC was kept in the equation for future. SBC agreed to do this and confirmed this in writing on 2 December.

A meeting was held for all committee members and staff on 5 December to go through what was being agreed and to ensure that everyone was supportive. All committee and staff agreed with that had been arranged and were keen (staff in particular) to move asap. Date agreed was 6 January 2012. A note was sent to parents outlining the proposed move and giving them the opportunity to speak to committee members on 9 December if they had any input.

LR responded to JR's letter on 5 December to clarify a number of issues and met with Karen Fagan and Susan Smith (Jean Robertson was by now on holiday until January) on 13 December to go through these points. LR wrote back on 14 December to Karen Fagan to clarify what still needed to be done, but to confirm that Playgroup would move on 6 January 2012. Rent agreed was £1969 per annum and, as agreed by Karen Fagan with John Currie, this would include in-service days (where relevant).

The staff arranged to start moving equipment over on Wednesday 14 December and this is on-going.

Playgroup are now waiting for a Memorandum of Agreement to come from SBC to confirm the conditions of our rent. This will be checked by the committee with input from Caroline Milne prior to being signed.

Sarah Magee – 9 January 2012