



Dear friend

2016 marks the 30th year of Southside Community Centre serving the Southside and wider Edinburgh communities. Southside Community Centre Association (SSCC Assoc.) also acquired the on-going lease for the Nelson Hall in 2007 and provides a sub-lease to SCOOSH out of school child care agency.

CEC own both buildings and currently maintain and pay for the energy costs of both buildings. Community Learning and Development Dept. (CLD) staff are responsible for the day to day running of both Centres alongside supporting the management of the programme through a partnership with the SSCC Association. Additional Facilities Management is delivered by CEC's Services for Communities Dept. which provides cleaning and janitorial hours for both buildings.

SSCC Assoc. invest their income that is derived from regular and occasional lets into the Centre(s)' programme, building maintenance, renovation, equipment, furniture, extra sessional staff/tutor hours, office resources, community events, transport hire, material costs and much more.

CEC wishes to make substantial savings on their estate costs. Centre Associations have been told by CLD Managers that the partnership arrangements that have been operating for some 40+ years are no longer an option and that Associations will be asked to take on greater responsibility for the buildings they currently lease from the Council. *'...the status quo isn't an option...'*

I understand from comments made by elected reps that there is little expectation that these buildings in question (Nelson Hall and Southside) would be asset transferred but more likely offered under long term lease arrangements with CEC maintaining their wind and water tight costs.

It is assumed that CEC is looking to pass on more of the running costs of these buildings to local management organisation who would be responsible for generating/managing/investing the income from the buildings to cover all/some of these related running costs.

Both buildings generate substantial yearly energy costs. An assessment of their energy efficiency will need to be undertaken and some investment made to improve energy efficiency aimed at reducing costs. Both buildings also incur maintenance costs and health and safety costs related to fire/security and yearly/monthly building/service inspections.

There is also the substantial cost of staffing both buildings. What long term staffing arrangements CEC will meet is still unknown. However the budget just passed commits to maintaining current community centre staffing numbers.

If the Southside community wishes to retain these buildings and continue their current provision then it is essential that we muster the energies that currently exist within the local Associations/organisations/activists around the Southside to work in partnership along with CEC to

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support and establish an appropriate charitable Trust that would take on the responsibility for the long term lease of both buildings and develop a long term strategic direction, purpose and business development plan for both valued community assets.

The current SSCC Association which is an unincorporated body does not currently have the sufficient legal identity or protections appropriate to meet these future responsibilities and recognises the need to involve the wider Southside civic partners going forward in order to increase the management expertise and business skills needed to meet future responsibilities.

I surmise that an early process of negotiation with CEC Managers would be favourable and that an approach from the local community with a draft business plan/development plan would establish the beginnings of a negotiation process and illustrate the desire and intention by the local community to maintain these community assets for the future.

With this purpose in mind I would welcome your initial thoughts and an indication whether you feel it appropriate or beneficial to become actively involved in taking this forward.

Kind regards

Morag Innes
Chair of the Southside Community Centre Association

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