

## THE EXECUTIVE

11 MAY 2004

### ERKENWALD CENTRE DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

<b>FINAL REPORT OF THE ERKENWALD CENTRE DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>
<p><i>Final reports of Scrutiny Panels are submitted to the Scrutiny Management Board (SMB), the Executive and the Assembly, as required by Paragraph 11 of Article 5b of the Council's Constitution.</i></p> <p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p><u>Background and current position:</u></p> <p>This report sets out the final report and recommendations of the above Scrutiny Panel, which was established in June 2001 to monitor the development of the former Erkenwald Youth Centre as a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) for primary children who are excluded from school and a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) centre. This was a joint project between the Council and the North East London Mental Health Trust (NELMHT).</p> <p>The SMB set up the Panel after being made aware of the local community's concerns about the loss of the site as a youth facility. The Panel had its first meeting on 4 September 2001.</p> <p>After significant delays, the building is now complete and the PRU commenced operation in March 2004. The CAMHS part of the development was unable to proceed, as it was not possible to secure all the necessary funding for this.</p> <p><u>Project delays:</u></p> <p>The joint project was originally due to have opened in Autumn 2002. The key factors in the delay were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A major project redesign in October 2001 to meet CAMHS' requirements</li><li>▪ The withdrawal of the CAMHS element in February 2002, which necessitated another major redesign</li><li>▪ A delay of one month in the contractor starting on site</li><li>▪ An extension of five weeks to the building programme to accommodate post-contract design changes</li><li>▪ Delays in furnishing the Centre at the completion of the building programme due to a project overspend and delays on the part of the furniture supplier</li><li>▪ Break-ins at the centre in January 2004, resulting in the theft of IT equipment</li><li>▪ Delays in resolving various issues necessary to open the Centre, principally relating to security, Information Technology and kitchen works</li></ul>	

## **The Panel's key messages**

The overall message is positive:

- The Erkenwald PRU is a groundbreaking, first class facility that will provide dedicated support and guidance to some of the Borough's most vulnerable young children and enable them to return to school as quickly as possible.
- The building's design is excellent and it will enhance the local area.
- The centre's hard area, used as a sports facility by young people for many years, will remain available for use by the local community.

However, a number of problems were encountered during the development and, in some cases, lessons can be learned from these. The difficulties were as follows:

- The delays referred to above (see Section 5 for a detailed chronology)
- The Panel felt that there were occasions when the relevant departments should have communicated and worked with each other more effectively to progress the project:
  - As mentioned above, the building contract was extended to accommodate post-contract design changes (see paragraph 5.27), some of which were quite significant. It is arguable that at least some of these should have been identified at the design stage and this delay avoided.
  - When the Panel met in January 2004, it felt that insufficient progress was being made in resolving the outstanding issues necessary to open the centre. As a result, a manager was tasked to co-ordinate the efforts of the relevant departments and drive the project forward (see paragraph 5.35).
- As detailed in Section 5, there were a number of changes in the nature/leadership of the project and the Panel felt that these detracted from the continuity of the development, as demonstrated by the need to appoint a manager to resolve the outstanding issues in January of this year.
- Arrangements for keeping the community informed and involved were not always satisfactory. As shown in Section 5, the Panel had to intervene to ensure this was rectified on more than one occasion. More positively, the Panel was pleased to note that the PRU is planning to engage and involve the community on an ongoing basis (see Section 1).
- The withdrawal of the CAMHS unit meant that the community was not able to benefit from the out-patient service it would have provided and contributed significantly to the delays in progressing the PRU. Although it is perhaps easy to say this now with the benefit of hindsight, it is arguable that the funding position should have been resolved more satisfactorily before the project was progressed.

## **Recommendations / Reasons**

1. That the Council widely publicises the opening of the PRU to ensure that this excellent service, which befits the authority's Beacon Status, is recognised both locally and nationally; and
2. That the Council examines the lessons from this project in terms of joint working and communication between departments, including the issue of continuity in project leadership, and puts any necessary improvements in place (The Management Team should take the lead on this).

3. That a local consultation strategy be drawn up as an integral part of every Council/joint building development and that the implementation of these be rigorously monitored, to ensure the local community is fully informed and consulted on all such developments.
4. That, when engaging in joint projects, the Council needs to ensure that, at every stage of the development process, it is satisfied with the funding position of its partners before proceeding further, to ensure that the problems encountered with this development are not repeated.
5. That the PRU implements its plans to engage the local community and that the Council monitors these by consulting the community on an annual basis, to ensure good relations are being maintained between the PRU and its neighbours.
6. That, given the history of security problems at the site, the Executive \* identifies funding to provide Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras at the Centre, linked into the Council's central monitoring station through a microwave link, subject to further work being carried out to confirm the capital and revenue costs of this and the alternative options (The Panel has been advised that the estimated cost is £55k, but this needs to be confirmed, together with the annual costs of linking into the monitoring station. The alternatives being looked at are (i) linking into the monitoring station via a BT line and (ii) cameras linked to on-site recording equipment. As outlined in paragraph 5.40, if the Executive is minded to support this proposal the Education, Arts and Libraries Department would look to fund it either through Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Standards Funding (Capital or Seed Challenge) or the Repairs Programme).

\* **Note:** The Executive at its meeting on 11 May 2004 agreed, in order to address security issues at the Erkenwald Pupil Referral Unit, to support the Panel's proposal for Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras and that funding be identified either through the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Standards Funding (Capital or Seed Challenge) or the Repairs Programme.

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## 1. Introduction

### Panel background and terms of reference

- 1.1 On 16 May 2001, the Executive agreed that the former Erkenwald Youth Centre in Marlborough Road be developed as a Pupil Referral Unit and Community Health Centre. The Centre was to be developed jointly by the Council and NELMHT. The Pupil Referral Unit, operated by the Council, would use the Centre to teach primary aged children excluded from school, and the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), led by NELMHT, would provide an out-patient service. The two would work together to provide a comprehensive support service to young children with complex difficulties and their families. The initial outline plans involved the conversion and extension of the single-storey building, at an estimated capital cost of £520,000, subject to exclusions such as professional fees, 60% to be met by NELHMT and 40% by the Council.
- 1.2 On 20 June, the SMB was made aware of the local community's concerns that the site was being lost as a youth facility and complaints that it had not been adequately consulted about the Centre's future. It set up the Erkenwald Centre Development Scrutiny Panel with the following terms of reference:
- "To monitor progress with the implementation of the Erkenwald Centre Development as a Pupil Referral Unit and a Community Health Centre."
- 1.3 Section 5 of the report provides a detailed chronology of the Panel's work and the development of the Centre.

### The Erkenwald PRU

- 1.4 The PRU is part of the Borough's Tuition Service, which supports pupils who are excluded from school due to emotional or behavioural problems or unable to attend for medical, personal and other reasons. The PRU is not a permanent solution for each child, but an intervention to enable them to progress and return to school as quickly as possible. A PRU for secondary school age students is already operating at a site next to Cambell Junior School. The PRU at Erkenwald provides a dedicated facility for primary children, who, until the centre opened, were being educated under interim arrangements at the Cambell site. These children represent some of the borough's most vulnerable young people; the support they get from the PRU will not only help them make the most of their education and get the best possible start to life but should reduce the need for this kind of support for older students.
- 1.5 The PRU will provide tuition for a maximum of 12 pupils at a time. This means that there will be little or no disruption to those living around the centre. It will open for normal school hours and term times. There is adequate staff parking at the site, so this should mean parking availability on local streets is not adversely affected.
- 1.6 The PRU has made a commitment to be a good neighbour: "We will always listen to local people to see if there are any ways in which we can improve on how we can become a part of the community." As a practical demonstration of this, the Centre's hard standing, which has been used as a sports area by local young people for many years, will remain available for use by the community. The PRU is also

planning to hold open events on an ongoing basis where the community will be invited to look around the Centre and meet the children.

## **2. Membership**

- 2.1 The Members appointed to the Panel were Councillors Mrs Kay Flint (Lead Member), Fred Jones and Kate Golden. Councillor Mrs Dee Hunt replaced Councillor Golden after the latter did not stand in the 2002 Local Election.
- 2.2 Former Councillor Mrs Rita Rogers also attended regularly up to the 2002 Local Election, in which she did not stand for re-election.
- 2.3 The Panel's Independent Scrutiny Support Officer was Allan Aubrey (Head of Leisure) and its Democratic Support Officer was Steve Foster.
- 2.4 The Panel's original Lead Service Officers (LSO's) were Christine Grice (Head of Children's Support and the development's project manager) and Justin Donovan (Head of Lifelong Learning) from the Education, Arts & Libraries Department (EALD). Christine Grice left the authority in Spring 2002 and was replaced, on a temporary basis, as LSO, by Steve Rowe (Principal Inspector, Community Inspection & Advisory Service). The current LSO is Justin Donovan.
- 2.5 The other officers who have attended the Panel have included:
  - Brian Bye (Construction Services Manager, Leisure & Environmental Services Department (LESD): the project architect)
  - Andy Carr (Assets Manager, EALD)
  - Melissa Hoskins (Press & PR Manager, Corporate Communications): one meeting at request of Panel to advise on publicity issues
  - Keith Ellis (Principal Architect, LESD)
  - Sandy Waugh (Headteacher, Tuition Service)
  - Jill Doyle (Deputy Headteacher, Tuition Service)
  - David Wright (Teacher in Charge of Erkenwald)
  - Derek Marney (Senior Projects Manager, EALD)
- 2.6 Martin Yates (Area Manager, Child and Adolescent, NELMHT) attended one of the Panel's initial meetings to discuss NELMHT's part of the project.
- 2.7 Phil Bass, a consultant Quantity Surveyor employed by the Council, also attended one of the initial meetings.

## **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 The Panel's first meeting was attended by members of the Erkenwald Tenants & Residents Association (ETRA), led by Roy and Sheila Reeves, respectively the Chair and Secretary of the Association. The residents expressed their opposition to the Council's plans; they had prepared a bid to operate the building as a youth and community centre. The Panel advised that this matter was outside its terms of reference but asked them to assist with its task. Since then, Roy Reeves has attended the Panel whenever he could and Members are extremely grateful for his contribution; his advice on how best to consult residents on progress has been particularly invaluable.

- 3.2 Details of the consultation carried out during the development are included in Section 5 of the report.
- 3.3 This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant officers from EALD, DLES and NELMHT.

#### **4. Equalities & Diversity and Health Issues**

- 4.1 The key equalities and diversity issue has been physical access to the Centre. The building has good access for disabled people.
- 4.2 The CAMHS unit would have provided significant health benefits had it been built and it is a matter of considerable regret that this did not prove possible.

#### **5. Chronology of Events**

##### September 2001

- 5.1 The Panel first met on 4 September 2001, receiving a background/progress report and agreeing how it would approach its task. The key developments were that the NELMHT Board had approved the scheme (July 2001) and that two joint Council/NELMHT officer groups had been established, one to look at the model of care and the other to oversee the building's development. The Panel also held the discussions with ETRA referred to above.

##### October 2001

- 5.2 The Panel met again on 2 October. It was advised that, having considered a petition from ETRA, the Assembly had agreed that the development should go ahead as planned. EALD had also held two meetings with ETRA to discuss alternative arrangements for providing community facilities in the area.
- 5.3 The Panel considered a further progress report, together with sketch plans, a feasibility estimate and an indicative project programme. The plans were based on the original single storey conversion and extension concept; the joint officer group had made some revisions, but the overall estimate was unchanged. A planning application was due to be made by January 2002, tenders would go out in mid-January, work would start in April and be completed by 4 October 2002.
- 5.4 The Panel made the following key recommendations to officers at this point:
- That, in addition to the ongoing discussions with ETRA, regular press releases be issued to keep the community informed
  - That security measures at the site be reviewed and that the possibility of installing Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) be investigated.

The Panel also discussed the possibility of the Centre being used for community activities in the evening, but, at this stage, concluded that this would be impractical as it was advised that the building was likely to be fully utilised throughout the day and during some (and possibly all) evenings and also that the design was not ideal for such activities.

- 5.5 The Chair and officers visited the site on 23 October 2001. Vandals had broken into the building shortly before the visit and ruptured the water tank, causing flooding and associated damage.

#### November 2001

- 5.6 Following the October meeting, the development faced its first significant challenge. NELMHT requested additional accommodation to meet service needs. This led to a revised design, including the addition of a second storey above the ground floor extension. The new design was submitted to the Panel's meeting on 26 November, together with a new estimate of £770,000, exclusive of fees. The Panel was advised that the Council and NELMHT were negotiating how these additional costs would be met and that there was likely to be some slippage, although it was difficult to assess the extent of this. The Panel agreed to meet again in March, when the situation would be clearer.

- 5.7 The Panel made the following recommendations at this meeting:

- Consultation: that a public meeting be held so that residents could discuss any concerns about the development and that further steps be taken to continue to engage residents after this.
- Security: to examine the installation of electrically operated door and window shutters. Although there was no budgetary provision for this, it was felt that it would be more cost effective to include these in the design rather than adding them further down the line when the Council might also have to pay for repairs that the shutters might prevent. In the event, it was not possible to install these shutters due to the design of the doors and windows.

- 5.8 The Panel submitted an interim report to the SMB advising of the above and asking that it be allowed to complete its task by meeting at one or two key points during the remainder of the development process; this was agreed.

#### March and April 2002

- 5.9 The most serious setback occurred in Spring 2002. Planning permission having been granted, the Panel met on 4 March to be advised that the CAMHS element of the project could not be funded. The Panel expressed profound disappointment about this: NELMHT had advised in the previous July that it had approved the scheme and, until then, had not informed the Council of any problems; it asked that this message be conveyed to them. At the time, the Panel had understood that there was a shortfall in capital funding. However, in commenting on this report, NELMHT advised that, while it had had no desire to cause any delay or inconvenience to the partners associated in the project, it had not been in a position to go ahead because it had not been able to secure revenue funding.
- 5.10 The officers advised that working with NELMHT remained the preferred long-term option but that the Council had to ensure the provision of a PRU as soon as possible after the start of the next academic year. The Panel supported the officer's recommendation, which the Executive subsequently agreed, that the Council proceed on schedule to convert the Centre into a PRU and enable the CAMHS element to be added at a later date if the funding position changed.

- 5.11 The Panel asked that local residents be informed, in writing, of the Executive's decision and kept updated/consulted as the project continued.
- 5.12 Christine Grice had recently left the authority and line management responsibility for the PRU passed to Steve Rowe on a temporary basis pending a management reorganisation in EALD. Panel Members had not been informed of this and expressed their concern to the Director.
- 5.13 The Panel met again on 25 March. It was confirmed that the Council had sufficient funding within the Capital Programme to provide the PRU: £611,000 had originally been allocated and the revised estimate was £465,000 inclusive of fees and exclusive of fittings, furnishings and the construction of the pitched roof referred to in paragraph 5.15.
- 5.14 The scheme approved by the Development Control Board had included a pitched roof costing £60,000. The Panel made it clear that this had to be included in the revised scheme, principally for reasons of security. It was confirmed this could be met within the overall budget.
- 5.15 The Panel reminded officers to advise residents of the Executive's decision (to be taken the following day) and re-emphasised the general need to continue keeping residents informed.
- 5.16 On 30 April, the Panel was advised that EALD had circulated an information leaflet on the Centre to local residents. Unfortunately, they were not delivered to all the relevant households and the Panel gave instructions that this be rectified. The leaflet confirmed that the Centre's hard area, used as a sports area by young people, would remain available for community use as ETRA had requested. The Council had also given a presentation on the scheme at a public meeting organised by ETRA on 19 April and answered residents' questions. Mr Reeves supplied the Panel with a copy of ETRA's written comments on the PRU, in which ETRA welcomed the chance to have its say, stated that residents seemed to accept that the PRU would be built and emphasised that this must take place with minimal disturbance to residents.
- 5.17 The Panel was advised of the revised timetable for the project. Tenders were to be sought in July, the contract awarded in September, works to commence at the end of that month and to complete by January 2002. The Panel asked EALD to send a letter to local residents setting out the project timetable and other relevant information and answering ETRA's written comments on the PRU and any other relevant concerns.
- 5.18 The Panel also looked again at whether the Centre might be used for community activities when not in use as the PRU. It seemed unlikely that the Centre would be suitable for large-scale activities but that it might be possible to use it for smaller meetings, such as ward surgeries and Residents Association committee meetings. It was agreed, however, that it would be necessary to look at the final layout of the building in more detail and examine factors such as security and the confidentiality of PRU clients before this could be confirmed. The Panel agreed to return to this topic in due course.



### June 2002

- 5.19 The Panel met again on 10 June to check progress and examine the building plans. There had been slight slippage in that work was now due to begin in the first week of October and finish by the end of January 2003.
- 5.20 There had also been an unacceptable delay in distributing the leaflets and letter referred to at the April meeting. The Panel received assurances that the leaflets would be delivered by 16 June and that the letter would also be delivered without delay; these requirements were met.

### October 2002

- 5.21 The Panel met on 28 October. Tenders had been invited on 16 August and returned on 17 September. The Panel received a report analysing the tenders, which was to be submitted to the Executive in mid-November, and supported the officer's recommendation on the company to be appointed. Works were to start before Christmas and finish by March 2003.
- 5.22 It was confirmed that the tender price was well within the budget agreed for the project, that the 17 week programme included snagging, inspection and commissioning and that, on this basis, the Centre would be a finished product ready for occupation at the beginning of April 2003.
- 5.23 The plan was to open the Centre at the beginning of the summer term. In the interim, work needed to be done to develop the Centre's curriculum and policies, ensure staff were in place and make the other necessary preparations. The Council was having difficulties in recruiting a head teacher and was examining various options to resolve this.
- 5.24 The Panel agreed to meet again if necessary and to agree its final report once its work was completed. The Lead Member was kept regularly updated on progress during the ensuing months.

### November and December 2002

- 5.25 The Executive appointed the recommended contractor on 26 November and the order, to the value of £494,402, was placed at the end of the Call-In period on 4 December.
- 5.26 The contractor was due to start work in January 2003 but there was a delay of one month in them starting on site. The Education, Arts & Libraries Department held a meeting with the contractor, on 19 December 2002. Despite their written confirmation that they would commence work in January 2003, the contractor informed the officers that they could not start work until 5 February. The officers protested about this but the contractor's position remained unaltered. EALD decided to press ahead with the contract, as the alternative would have been to seek the Executive's approval to cancel and re-award the contract, which would have delayed progress even further. EALD was confident that the contractor would deliver the project on time and according to the requirements of the contract. However, the contractor's actions had been carefully recorded. The Panel

Members were informed of the situation after the Christmas break. The contract completion date was now 2 June 2003.

### February-September 2003

5.27 Work started on site on 3 February 2003 and final handover took place on 18 July 2003, 7 weeks late. The Council agreed a 5 week contract extension because of post contract design changes and there was a further delay of 2 weeks in completing these. There would only have been one week's extra slippage, but there was vandalism again at the site even though a security guard was employed there 24 hours a day, and this meant another week's delay. The main areas of post-contract design changes were:

- Increased Information Technology provision including dado trunking – End User Change Post Contract
- Changes to layout of reception – End User Change Post Contract
- Changes to kitchen layout and materials used – End User Change Post Contract
- Boundary fencing works – End User Change Post Contract
- Additional roof light and associated works – Design Change by Architects Post Contract
- Video Door Entry System – Design Change Post Contract
- Gutter outlets – Design Change by Architects Post Contract
- Firebreak to roof space – Design Change by Architects Post Contract
- Washing machine and cleaners sink – End User Change Post Contract
- Water tank in roof space to comply with water by laws – Design Change by Architects Post Contract

The end user also required that the building be connected to the Borough's IT network; this cost an additional £15,000. In addition, they required that the site's boundary fence be replaced for security reasons – it was not originally intended to re-fence the property – and this cost £16,500.

5.28 These changes, together with the extension of the building programme, put the contract and overall project over budget. On 30 September, the position was as follows:

The contract value was £494, 402 – but additions had put this up to £513,701.

The original capital budget was £611,000 but the predicted spend was now £619, 418.

5.29 Following handover, the main tasks that needed to be completed were replacing the boundary fence (this was finished by 8 September 2003) and furnishing the property. Unfortunately, there was no money left in the budget for furniture so this has had to be found from elsewhere. The furniture was ordered on 24 September 2003 and should have been delivered by 24 October 2003. The supplier failed to meet this delivery date and continued to delay despite being chased by the Council on several occasions.

### October and November 2003

- 5.30 The Lead Member asked that a site visit be arranged and, after some delay in finding a convenient date, this took place on 4 November. The furniture had still not been delivered and the Council was continuing to chase the supplier.
- 5.31 Overall, the Panel was delighted with the Centre. The building is very pleasing from the outside and fits in well with the surrounding environment. Inside, the rooms are well laid out and attractive and will make an ideal environment for the teachers and young children.
- 5.32 The Panel was concerned about the potential vulnerability of the Centre's glass windows and doors, this point being illustrated by the fact that, as a temporary measure until the Centre opens, they were being protected by wooden boards. The Panel asked that the glass be protected by installing shutters (as it had originally recommended) or be replaced with security glass. The officers advised that there were no funds for this, but agreed to try to secure these from other budgets.

### December 2003

5.33 At 1 December 2003:

- Officers had confirmed that the design of the windows did not lend themselves to roller shutters. They were looking at grilles and/or toughened glass options. Funding had been found from outside the Capital Programme to complete this work (from the insurance settlement from the Thames View Youth Club).
- The furniture was due to be in place by the end of the Autumn Term. The Information Technology equipment had begun to arrive.
- All staff were in place
- The Centre was due to open on the first day of the Spring Term (5 January 2003)

### January 2004

5.34 The Panel met on 27 January and was advised of the latest position:

- The Centre was still not open as several significant items/issues required completion/resolution (these related principally to security, Information Technology and kitchen works), some of which had to be completed before pupils could be admitted safely.
- There had been a security guard on site 24 hours a day since July 2003. Despite this, there had been a couple of break-ins in recent weeks. In one incident, which took place in daylight, IT equipment was stolen worth £6,000. In response, the officers were looking at protecting the windows/doors with grilles and enhanced CCTV provision. The guard who had been on duty at the time of the break-in had been replaced.

- Funding was available to take forward some of this work.

5.35 The Panel expressed great concern about the continuing delays and also the break-ins, particularly as security had been repeatedly highlighted as a key issue since the project began. It agreed:

- that Derek Marney (Senior Project Manager, Education Arts & Libraries) be tasked to take the project forward
- that he work with the other officers involved in the project to determine which of the outstanding work had to be completed before the centre opened
- that he prepared a timetable for the completion of this work and presented this to the Panel's next meeting, together with a progress update

5.36 There was also some discussion about the use of the centre for community activities; Mr Reeves asked particularly about the centre's hard sports area. The officers indicated that they would like a representative of the Residents' Association to sit on the centre's management committee and discuss this issue. The Panel noted that, in the information leaflet that it distributed to local residents in June 2002, the Council stated that the hard area should remain available for use by the community.

#### February 2004

5.37 The Panel met for the last time on 23 February 2004. Mr Marney provided an update, the key points being:

- The centre was on target to open by mid-March.
- Kitchen redesign. The teacher-in-charge had requested a change of layout to allow the kitchen to be used for training as well as meals and thereby improve the service. The design had been finalised, the contractors were on site and the works were due to be completed within 2 weeks.
- Security:
  - Since the last meeting, there had been further security incidents: youths had climbed on the roof on one occasion and stones had also been thrown at the building.
  - An order had been placed to install security window shields for all external windows and skylights; the external doors would have roller shutters. These works were due to be completed by mid-March 2004.
  - It is estimated that it would cost £55k to provide CCTV cameras linked into the Council's central monitoring station and there was insufficient funding for this (the revenue costs were not identified). Officers were looking at alternative options, including cameras linked to recording equipment on site (the costs of this were not identified). Once the centre opened and until this was resolved, a security guard would still be required during locked hours.

➤ The whole building was alarmed and a panic alarm had been ordered for reception.

- IT: The stolen equipment had been replaced and would be installed on site once the Council was satisfied that the building was fully secure (estimated date for installation of IT and telephones: mid-March 2004)
- When the above works were near completion, there would be an on site meeting to ensure that the centre was ready for opening.
- There might still be some works outstanding after mid March 2004 such as landscaping, but these should not interfere with the opening or running of the centre.
- Arrangements would be made shortly for an official opening.

5.38 The Panel was very pleased with the progress that had been made since the last meeting. It thanked Mr Marney for the outstanding work he had done in progressing the project in the short time since he had been appointed.

5.39 Mr Reeves was in attendance and the Panel discussed with him the issue of community involvement. Mr Marney emphasised that the community would be able to use the hard area once the centre was open and that he would be consulting the community on how this activity would be supervised. Mr Reeves suggested that a community meeting be held and the Panel asked Mr Marney to take this forward.

5.40 The Panel agreed:

- to recommend that additional funding be provided to install CCTV cameras linked into the central monitoring station, given the history of security problems at the site. It feared that, if CCTV is not installed, there will be heavy ongoing repairs and maintenance costs from vandalism. There is also the need to prevent young people gaining access to the roof. (The Education, Arts and Libraries Department has indicated that, if the Executive approves this recommendation it would seek competitive quotes and work with the Centre in respect of funding and installing a system either through Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Standards Funding (Capital or Seed Challenge) or the Repairs Programme)
- to undertake a site visit shortly before the centre opened

#### March 2004

5.41 The Members' site visit took place on 16 March 2004. The kitchen, security and IT works listed above had been largely completed and the building was nearly ready for occupation.

5.42 The PRU commenced operation on 7 April and the official opening is on 14 May.

#### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Executive, Scrutiny Management Board and Erkenwald Centre Development Scrutiny Panel papers.