WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL

Whitnash Community Hub

BUSINESS PLAN

Executive Version

2017-2021

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building business communities

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Executive Summary

1. Whitnash Town Council (WTC) intends to implement the wish of the town community (Neighbourhood Plan Referendum November 2015) to replace the several community facility and amenity sites with a single Community Hub to be located in Acre Close Field.

2. As a preliminary activity to this Business Plan, a detailed Option Analysis has been carried out to investigate the interests of the potential stakeholder group (Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council, Whitnash Sports and Social Club, Whitnash Primary School).

3. This Business Plan identifies the main features of the proposed Community Hub and presents outline costings and 3-year projections.

4. The initial costings produced by an earlier Feasibility Report (TFT 2015) are considered out of the affordability range of the Council – with re-engineering of design and facilities, this has resulted in a more realistic and affordable option for the new Community Hub building.

5. There are several community centre case studies in the locality. Chase Meadow Community Centre usage and building design has provided the frame of reference for this Business Plan. Their support and willingness to share experiences and user profiles is greatly appreciated.

6. The new Community Hub project has an outline cost plan of £1.66m (with new outdoor changing facilities are included). A Funding Plan is being developed in association with Warwick District Council which will include loan arrangements, developer contributions (S106 and CIL) and bids for external funding.

7. Discussions are ongoing with Warwickshire County Council with regard to possible relocation of the existing library facilities in Whitnash into the proposed Community Hub building. WCC are considering options, and if agreement is reached, then the single storey footprint of the Hub would be extended (additional capital costs to be fully funded by WCC) to include new 'Library of the Future' facilities for Whitnash.

8. The programme of 'design, procure and build' is ambitious. Subject to final approval of this Business Plan and release of preliminary works funding, it is the intention of the Council to work with Warwick District Council and other partners to move into project delivery phases i.e. secure detailed designs, specifications and confirm cost plans leading to a planning submission, and a tender and procurement process to be completed by the end of 2017 enabling construction start early 2018 and completion Autumn 2018.

Section A - Project background

Whitnash Town Council (WTC) is leading the development of a new Community Hub to host the community services, sports and social requirements of the residents of Whitnash parish. Dissatisfied with the current 'dispersed' community facilities around the town, and the poor building quality of the existing Community Centre building on Acre Close Fields, WTC has placed the development of a new, centrally located Community Hub at the top of its priority list within its Neighbourhood Plan[1].

The benefits of a new Community Hub are considered as:

- A new Centre closer to the heart of community encouraging walking
- Multi-use facility for health, sports and social activity
- Improved security (for users and for the premises themselves)
- Better use of available space on Acre Field
- No change to road access for cars and pedestrians
- Better car parking and safer pedestrian/vehicle interface
- No reduction of playing pitch areas
- Sharing of junior playing pitches with Junior School

The Council, supported by Warwick District Council, commissioned a Feasibility Study by Tuffin Ferraby Taylor (TFT) for the project which reported back in July 2015. The Study included an Option Analysis, comparing the various possible layouts and facilities that could be incorporated within the new development, along with a cost plan estimate. However, these proposal came with a high capital cost estimate of £3.632m (2015 cost basis) – and gave cause for concern to the Town Council that the project as proposed would not be affordable based upon available and accessible funds. Consequently, a Funding Review leading to this Business Plan was commissioned by Warwick District Council (WDC) on behalf of the Town Council.

Section B - Project proposal

Project rationale

The case for a new Community Centre was included as a priority within the Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan which was submitted as the community's contribution to the WDC Local Plan with overwhelming support from the local community in the November 2015 referendum (92.6% of the vote).

The Community Hub initiative is put forward as a key part of the 'Vision for Whitnash' and as included within the Neighbourhood Plan as follows:

> *"In 2029 Whitnash will have a strong, local identity of a sustainable, thriving town which serves its local residents and businesses well and continues to have close family and community support. Community facilities will be enhanced, green spaces and historical links maintained and a realistic number and mix of housing built in and around Whitnash will meet the needs of all ages and groups in the town."*

[1] Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan 2015

More specifically, the need for a new, modern and integrated Community Hub is clearly spelt out within the Neighbourhood Plan:

> ***Objective 1 - Providing a New Community Hub***
> *Whitnash has a strong local identity and the town has expanded considerably over recent years with extensive areas of new housing development. With the proposed new development in the Local Plan, Whitnash is likely to increase its population further over the Plan period.* ***However Whitnash lacks a main focus or hub for local facilities such as shopping, office space and a community centre.*** *The Town Council has aspirations for improved office and meeting space, and recognises that the existing community centre in Acre Close playing fields is dated and requires replacing or significant updating and investment. The location of the building is also isolated and located away from other facilities such as the library and shops. There is a need to bring the various facilities together to provide a focus for the town which meets the needs and aspirations of all.*

The Neighbourhood Plan also highlights the current limitations of community facilities for a town of its population size, and the need to enhance such facilities e.g. those around Acre Close, to ensure that they continue to meet local and current needs (Objective 2 - Protecting Existing Local Facilities). Behind the very positive targets for the next 15 years included within the Neighbourhood Plan lies a concern that community facilities are failing not only to service current demand but will struggle to meet the future demands created as a result of the proposed expansion of residential areas within the town's boundaries[2] (Appendix 3).

The age profile of Whitnash residents has been highlighted as having *"a slightly younger population age profile compared to England, with 24.3% under 18 years compared to 21.4% nationally (2011 Census). A lower proportion is at retirement age with 16.7% over 65 years, compared to 21.4% nationally. The town also has a mix of different ethnic groups, and a relatively high proportion of people from India; 11.2% of the population are of Asian / Asian British (Indian) origin compared to 4.9% in Warwickshire and 2.6% in England[3]."* It is important that the facilities being proposed within the new Community Hub must reflect these various needs especially of young families.

With new housing developments (circa 500 new houses) within the town curtilage proposed[4] the demand for community facilities will only increase and the case for a dedicated community hub in a single location will get stronger.

Project partners

The scope and success of the Project will be influenced by the commitment and involvement of 'project partners' and other stakeholder groups in the area. Of these, the partner organisations who could have a major 'consideration' with regard to the Community Hub Project - apart from the Town Council - will be:

- Whitnash Primary School (WPS)
- Warwickshire County Council (WCC) – school and library
- Warwick District Council (WDC)
- Whitnash Sports and Social Club (WSSC)

[2] Warwick District Council Local Plan (draft)
[3] Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan 2015
[4] Warwick District Local Plan

Project considerations

The Project Development phase has considered the following options:

- Demolition of the current Community Centre building and replacing with a new Community Hub building adjacent to Acre Close entrance.
- Refurbishment of the current Community Centre building and hard court area with change of use for a pre-school nursery facility.
- Inclusion of a new community sports hall within the Community Hub (2-court or 4-court).
- Possible relocation of the existing WCC Whitnash library to new Community Hub.
- Possible integration of the Community Hub with the redevelopment plans for the existing WSSC sports facilities.
- Re-organisation of the layout of playing fields to accommodate the new Community Hub and parking.
- Possible 'shared use' of the school playing fields for junior football.
- Options for re-routing of transport access, parking and pedestrian routes.

Section C - Current Situation

As indicated above, the current community facilities accessed and used by the public are dispersed across the Town:

- Town Council Offices / Library – Franklin Road
- Community Centre – Acre Field
- Football and rugby pitches – Acre Field
- Church Halls at St Joseph's; Whitnash Methodist Church and St Margaret's Church Centre

Community Centre, Acre Fields

None of the above are capable of extending provision due to the limitations of building size – and therefore unable to meet the expanding needs of the Whitnash community. The best example of this is the current Community Centre on Acre Close Fields. Built some 35 years ago, this building has serviced the Town quite well and provides one large hall area (used for venues, activities and indoor bowls) as well as several meeting rooms and kitchens. However, the building is now requiring substantial investment in its fabric and infrastructure if it is to provide future accommodation – especially to reduce energy costs and to provide a pleasant environment for its users.

The current Community Centre has other characteristics why it is not conducive to full community usage:

- internal layout restrictions
- location some 100m from Acre Close and the reluctance of pedestrians to access the building especially in the winter, in inclement weather and at night times.

Town Council Offices / Library – Franklin Road

This building is owned by Warwickshire County Council – and houses the Whitnash Library as well as the Town Council office. There are limited size meeting areas in the building meaning that the Council's own meetings have to take place in the Acre Field Community Centre.

Like other town councils in similar situations, WTC would like to bring together the Council's and other public services e.g. library, police, advice into a single 'one stop shop' and in an accessible, central location within walking distance of shops. **This is a prime objective of the new Community Hub proposed**. Discussions are ongoing between WTC and WCC as to how the library facility could be integrated within the proposed Community Hub at Acre Close Field, and at the same time incorporating new 'Library of the Future'[5] facilities and services. Note: This is 'work in progress'.

Community Centre current usage profile

The current Community Centre has a range of user groups on a regular or intermittent basis:

User Group	Approximate use timing	
Regular Users		
Whitnash Dog Club	Mon evenings	7.00 – 7.45pm
Leamington Hibs FC	Mon evenings	5.45 – 6.45pm
Youth Club	Tues evenings	6.00 – 8.15pm
Childminder Toddler Group	Wed mornings	9.15 – 11.15am
Short Mat Bowls	Wed afternoon	1.00 – 5.00pm
Zumba	Wed evenings	7.00 – 8.00pm
Dandy Development	Thurs mornings	9.15 – 12.15am
Martial Arts (Shaolin Freestyle)	Thurs evenings	7.00 – 8.30pm
Whitnash Town Council (meeting room)	Thurs evenings	6.00 – 8.00pm
Occasional Users		
Whitnash Residents Association	4 x per annum	
Whitnash Community Forum	3 x per annum	
Ad hoc users		
Whitnash Fund Day	1 x per annum	
Craft Fayre	2 x per annum	
Divali	1 x per annum	
Range of private hires		

[5] The Library of the Future ~ Arts Council 2013

Section D – Community Hub Project Plan

The Town Council wishes to bring together a number of currently dispersed services and organisations within a new community sports and social complex to be located on the Acre Close Field, providing an accessible, central and safe community hub. The requirements for consideration and inclusion are as follows:

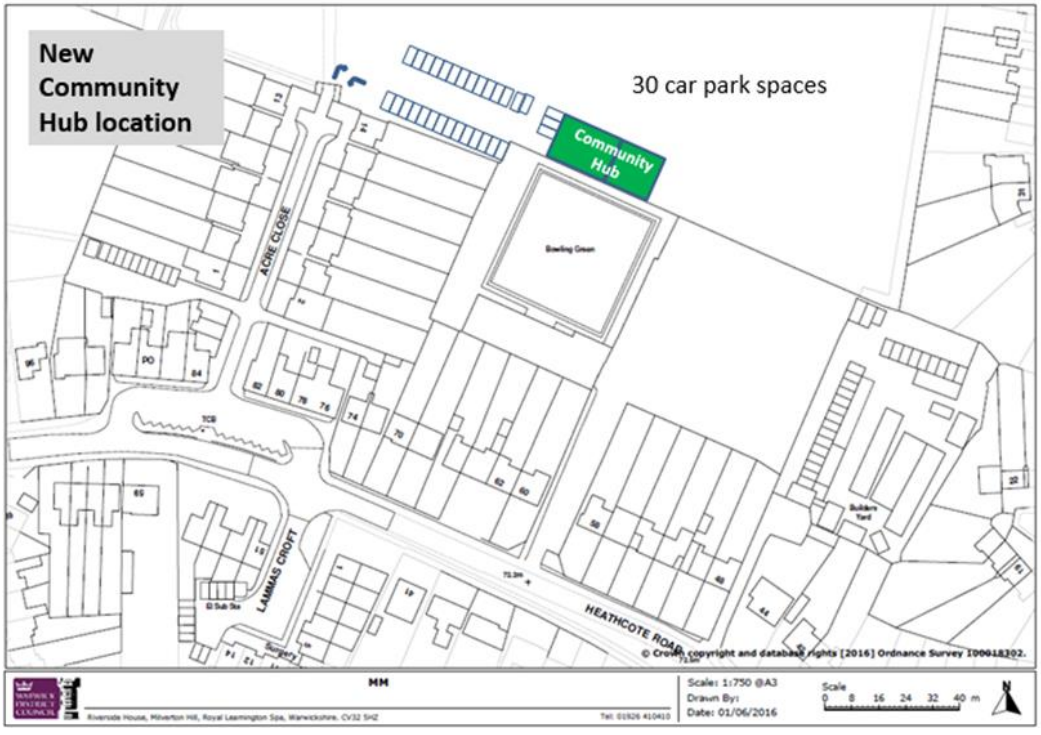
- Town Council office and meeting room
- Community and Sports Hall for events and hire
- Improved outdoor sports areas
- Drop in space for police safer neighbourhood plan
- Community organisation meeting rooms
- Café and social hub
- Library, information, one stop shop services (dependent upon WCC requirements)

Full reference has been made to the following preliminary studies carried out since 2015, namely:

- Feasibility Study - Tuffin Ferraby Taylor (July 2015)
- Funding Strategy Report – ATI Projects Ltd (December 2015)
- Partnership Scoping Paper – ATI Projects Ltd (January 2016)

Planned development

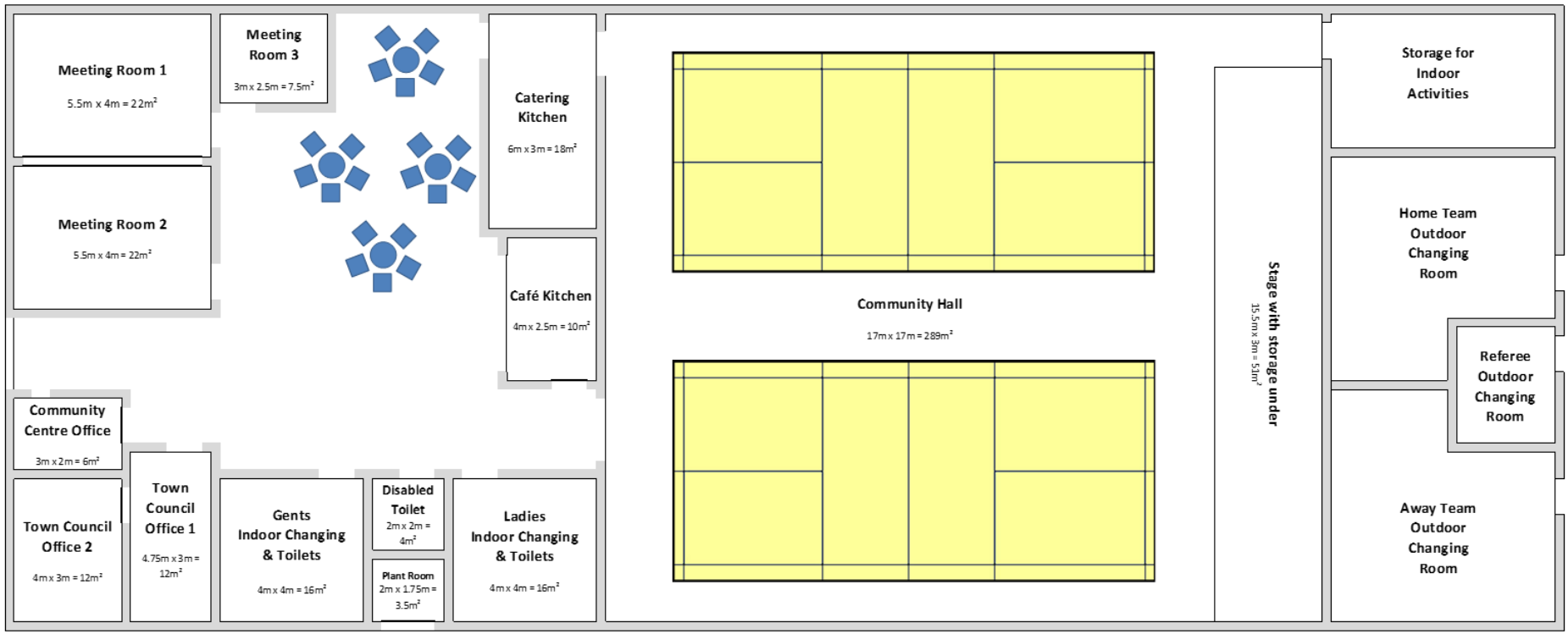
Given a detailed options investigation, WTC has decided to develop a new Community Hub building to contain a 2-badminton court size multi-use hall along with a café, council offices and meeting/activity rooms and including new outdoor changing rooms. The outline plans and costings are based upon a similar sized and purposed community centre at Chase Meadow[6] and also a similar size to that of Warwick Gates Community Centre (both with 2-badminton court halls).



[6] www.chasemeadowcc.co.uk

Community Hub Layout

The Consultants have re-engineered the original layout and costings included within the TFT 2015 Study to form a more realistic and affordable community building facility whilst retaining most of the features required by the Town Council – as shown below. The addition of the changing rooms for outdoor sports and activities remains an option and is included and costed – but is dependent upon availability of funds:



Proposed layout of new Community Hub

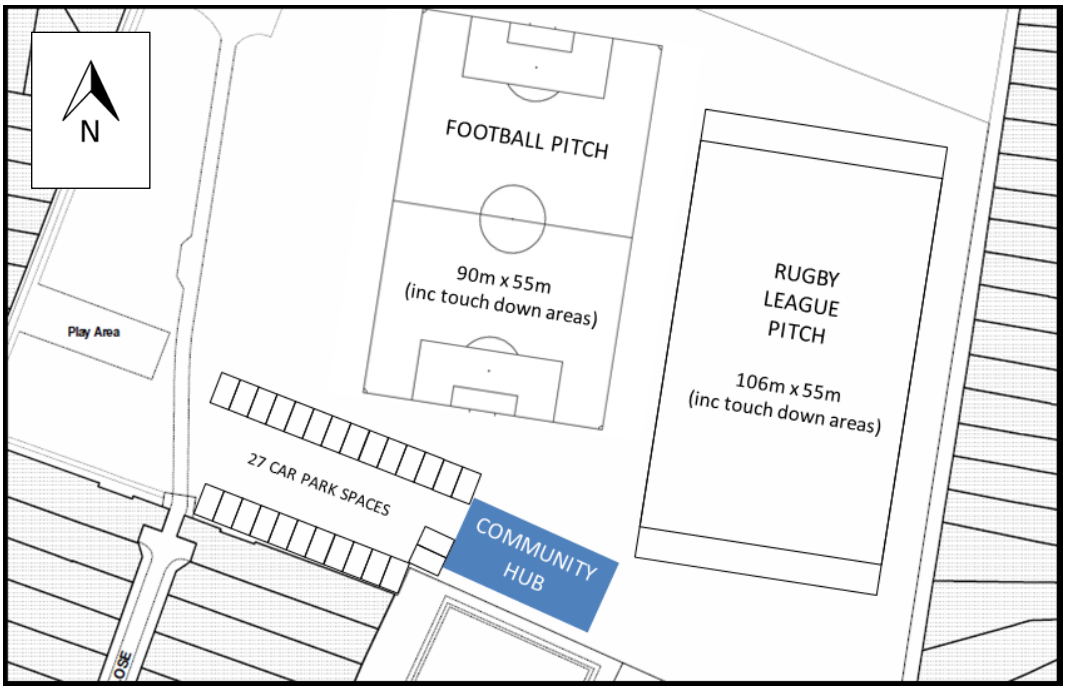
The proposed layout of the new Community Hub includes the building/room requirements as presented by the WTC for the TFT Feasibility study in 2015. Additional functionality has been added through the provision of external doors on the north side of the building to open onto Acre Close Park with a potential patio area with seating. This would add value to the café franchise and also provide seating for spectators. The two main meeting rooms will have a sound proof partition to provide additional flexibility for larger group events and activities.

The building location is moved to the north of the WSSC bowling green enabling sufficient parking and access from Acre Close. The 2-court 'Community Hall' allows for sporting and non-sporting activities to take place – providing an area that is manageable and flexible in use. Discussions with WDC Cultural Services have indicated that they would support the development of this size of multi-use sports hall.

The location of the Community Hub building will require professional drawings to ensure a suitable fit with boundaries and access routes, as well as meeting planning requirements.

Acre Field Pitches

The layout will inevitably require an adjustment of the soccer and rugby pitches as below:



This layout indicates the necessary re-alignment of soccer and rugby pitches to enable room for the new Community Hub and car park. This requires checking with sports pitch specialists e.g. WDC Cultural Services. Grants and funds e.g. developer contribution monies are available for community playing field improvement.

Organisation and Management of the new Community Hub

Whitnash Town Council should consider establishing and managing the Community Centre as a social enterprise - the definition of which is 'a business which makes its money from selling goods and services, and reinvests profits back into the business or the local community and unlike charities and community groups, social enterprises can be owned and run by paid staff, or by people who have invested money in them'.

"Social enterprise" isn't a single legal structure and can therefore adopt different models depending on the community organisation's needs and the way they work. The most appropriate for the new Community Centre would be a Community Interest Company (CIC). A CIC is a limited company with special features to ensure that it works for the benefit of the community and commits their assets and profits permanently to the community by means of an "asset lock", ensuring that assets are used for the benefit of the community. A CIC differs from a charitable company in that it can be established for any purpose which benefits the community, whereas a charity must have exclusively charitable purposes.

Funds are available to support communities wishing to establish a CIC and operate a community facility such as the Community Hub proposed at Whitnash e.g. Power to Change.

Staffing Profile

The Business Plan suggests the employment from 'Day 1' of a Centre Manager and an assistant centre manager, acknowledging that during the early months, the occupation levels will be lower than during Years 2 and 3. However this will provide the opportunity to get systems in place, for training and for promotional activities to take place.

Section E - Financial Plan

Community Centre - Present financial situation

Annual letting income for the Community Hall has increased slightly over the last 4 years:

- Year end 31.3.2014 - £8,811
- Year end 31.3.2015 - £8,878
- Year end 31.3.2016 - £9,814
- Current year income to end Nov 2016 - £7,126
- Anticipated income to year end 31.3.2017 - £10,790

Community Centre annual costs included within the Council's budget for 2016-17 are £27,094 representing an annual loss. (Source: WTC. Summary of WTC's finances 2015-16, see Appendix 6.

Construction Costs

The initial costings prepared by Tuffin Ferraby Taylor (TFT) based on plans not including the Whitnash Sports and Social Club were for a range of options ranging from £3.1m to £3.6m total costs.

However, it is now clear to the Town Council that such an ambitious capital project is highly unlikely to access sufficient funds to realise the TFT proposals. Instead, ATI Projects has been asked to produce a redesign of the original building layout and purpose to meet the core objectives and within a heavily reduced and perhaps more realistic budget.

For the purposes of this Business Plan and subsequent funding bids, only an outline cost based on construction and fit out cost estimates based upon similar community building projects has been produced. For more detailed specifications and costings, WTC will need to engage with design architects and quantity surveyors to prepare more accurate and detailed cost plans.

Source of Capital / Gap Funding

The total estimated construction costs and fees to design and build the new Community Hub is £1.647m (see table below). To match these estimated costs a range of funding streams (loans, grants, developer contributions) will be applied for to cover the design, planning, capital works and professional fee costs:

- Developer contribution (S106/CIL) via Warwick District Council[7] £590k tbc
- New Homes Bonus – via WDC £500k tbc
- Sport England Community Fund – currently at application stage £150k tbc
- Landfill trusts – currently at outline application stage £120k tbc

The above contributions to be confirmed represent a likely contribution of £1.360m – indicating a shortfall on the current design including changing rooms of £287k requiring loan funding paid back over several years through income generated by the Hub. In addition, due to the staged payments of Section 106 and CIL contributions, the project will require WTC to arrange additional short term loan funding over the first 5-6 year period. It should be noted that the Public Works Loan Board[8] no longer exists - discussions are ongoing between WTC and WDC as to possible loan funding models.

[7] Developer contributions likely to be spread across several years – therefore need to access loan funding
[8] http://www.dmo.gov.uk/documentview.aspx?docname=pwlblc2.pdf&page

Estimated project construction costs

To ensure consistency, the estimated project costs to build the Community Hub as drawn on Page 8 are shown alongside the costs proposed by the initial TFT feasibility study. The proposed Community Hub in this Report has a significantly smaller footprint than the building proposed by TFT, does not include any costs to improve the football and rugby pitches, includes outdoor changing rooms and retains the building functionality requested by the Town Council.

Whitnash Community Hub

Cost Evaluation ~ ATI Projects May 2017 with outdoor changing rooms

		Area/Item		Rate	Cost
1	**Construction Costs**			£	
1.1	Community Hub (37m x 18m)	666	m^2	£1,400	£932,400
1.2	Outdoor changing rooms (6.5m x 18m)	117	m^2	£1,400	£163,800
2	**External Works**				
2.1	Flat surface car park for 27 spaces	27	no.	£1,350	£36,450
2.2	Allowance for new access road (including lighting, signange & drainage)	20	m	£1,500	£30,000
2.3	Allowance for footpath	20	m	£100	£2,000
2.4	Allowance for paving around Community Hub	1	item	£15,000	£15,000
2.5	External lighting to building	1	item	£5,000	£5,000
2.6	Allowance for street furniture	1	item	£5,000	£5,000
2.7	New security gates	1	item	£15,000	£15,000
2.8	New security fencing to perimeter	200	m	£75	£15,000
3	**Internal fit-out**				
3.1	Enhancements to domestic kitchen	1	item	£25,000	£25,000
3.2	Extra over allowance for fit out of office space	40	m^2	£1,000	£40,000
				Sub total	**£1,284,650**
4	**Site Factors / Services**				
	Allowance for incoming power supplies:				
4.1	Electric	1	item	£10,000	£10,000
4.2	Gas	1	item	£5,000	£5,000
4.3	Water	1	item	£5,000	£5,000
4.4	Telephone	1	item	£2,500	£2,500
				Total adjusted construction costs	**£1,307,150**
5	**Other costs**				
5.1	Professional fees (Design, PM, CDM, Party Wall)			15%	£196,073
5.2	Risk contingency			10%	£130,715
5.3	Local Authority fees (Planning & Build Control)			1%	£13,072
5.4	Price escalation			Excluded	
				Total fees	**£339,859**
				OVERALL PROJECT COST	**£1,647,009**

HUB	£1,440,621
CHANGING ROOMS	£206,388
	£1,647,009

Income & expenditure forecast 3 years – Indicative Summary and Discussion

Whitnash Community Hub Income Projection 3 Year Plan	EXISTING COMMUNITY CENTRE	SCENARIO 1 *BASED ON CHASE MEADOW USAGE AFTER 3 YEARS*			SCENARIO 2 *-10% INCOME*			SCENARIO 3 *+20% INCOME*		
INCOME	2016/17	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ROOM HIRE										
Community Hall (289m^2)	Income Apr-Dec 2016 was £7772. Pro-rated for 2016/17 is therefore **£10,362**.	16,173	26,058	29,724	14,556	23,452	26,751	19,407	31,269	35,668
Meeting Room 1 (22m^2)		2,464	4,035	4,628	2,218	3,632	4,165	2,957	4,842	5,553
Meeting Room 2 (22m^2)		2,464	4,035	4,628	2,218	3,632	4,165	2,957	4,842	5,553
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2 Combined (44m^2)		10,782	17,442	19,816	9,704	15,698	17,834	12,938	20,931	23,779
Meeting Room 3 (7.5m^2)		770	1,231	1,477	693	1,108	1,329	924	1,477	1,772
Catering Kitchen (18m^2)		1,284	2,353	2,462	1,155	2,118	2,215	1,540	2,824	2,954
OTHER INCOME										
Rent for Parish Council Office - *current agreement 2016/17, based on £250 pcm fr 2018*	1,984	3,000	3,060	3,121	2,700	2,754	2,809	3,600	3,672	3,745
Café Franchise - *estimate*	n/a	8,000	8,160	8,323	7,200	7,344	7,491	9,600	9,792	9,988
TOTAL INCOME	**12,346**	**44,937**	**66,374**	**74,178**	**40,443**	**59,737**	**66,760**	**53,925**	**79,649**	**89,014**
EXPENDITURE	2016/17	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
STAFFING										
Manager + 1.0 FTE	n/a			37,871			37,871			37,871
Manager + 1.0 FTE	n/a		37,128			37,128			37,128	
Manager + 1.0 FTE	n/a	36,400			36,400			36,400		
UTILITY COSTS - VARIABLE - *2016/17 base*										
Water	827	651	1,050	1,170	586	945	1,053	781	1,260	1,404
Gas	2,778	3,255	5,190	5,850	2,930	4,671	5,265	3,906	6,228	7,020
Electricity	933	760	1,215	1,355	684	1,094	1,220	911	1,458	1,626
OTHER FIXED COSTS - *2016/17 base*										
Insurance	1,500	1,500	1,530	1,561	1,350	1,377	1,405	1,800	1,836	1,873
Hall Rates - *estimate for new building StR*	7,442	10,000	10,200	10,404	9,000	9,180	9,364	12,000	12,240	12,485
Telephone/Alarm	288	300	306	312	270	275	281	360	367	375
Hearing Loop Mtce	242	300	306	312	270	275	281	360	367	375
Hall Repairs & Mtce	4,095	3,000	3,060	3,121	2,700	2,754	2,809	3,600	3,672	3,745
Cleaning Mats/Paper Towels	508	500	510	520	450	459	468	600	612	624
Hall Security	974	1,000	1,020	1,040	900	918	936	1,200	1,224	1,248
Hall Annual Shutter Mtce	473	400	408	416	360	367	375	480	490	499
Fire Extinguisher Mtce	171	170	173	177	153	156	159	204	208	212
Hall Sundries	105	200	204	208	180	184	187	240	245	250
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**20,336**	**58,436**	**62,300**	**64,317**	**56,232**	**59,783**	**61,673**	**62,843**	**67,335**	**69,607**
PROFIT/LOSS	**-7,990**	**-13498**	**4074**	**9861**	**-15788**	**-47**	**5088**	**-8918**	**12314**	**19407**
BANK BALANCE		**-13498**	**-9425**	**436**	**-15788**	**-15835**	**-10748**	**-8918**	**3396**	**22803**

Note: The I&E forecast above does not include any costs of loan borrowing

New building occupation profile

As the Community Hub will be a new building with an increased range of facilities for community use and hire, this will impact upon the costs of operation and management. We have taken as a good local template the occupation rates currently being achieved in the Chase Meadow Community Centre – on which the new Whitnash Community Hub is based. The intention has been for the Whitnash Community Hub to match the level of occupation and income of Chase Meadow by the end of Q4, Yr 3. In Yr 1 (likely to be 2019), due to the new facilities, publicity and marketing campaign, the occupation rates build up fairly quickly to achieve approximately 80% of Chase Meadow's current usage profile by Q4. During Yrs 2 and 3 there is a steady increase leading to the 100% usage profile of Chase Meadow by Q4 Yr 3.

Section F – Marketing and Promotion

Whitnash Town Council's plan is that the new Community Hub will 'first and foremost' address the need for a community facility for those residents who live or work within the Parish of Whitnash. This includes those who are delivering activities or services into the town for the benefit of local people. However as the Community Hub will be required to attract income to cover revenue costs, the facilities will be made available for hire to other organisations e.g. Warwickshire College Trident Centre, private companies and individuals in Leamington Spa, Warwick and across Warwick District. There is however no intention to compete with other community centre and WDC sports and leisure centre offerings.

Service offer

As shown in the proposed layout (Page 8) the Community Hub would be 'multi-purpose'. Apart from the relocation of the Town Council's own office and services, the building will provide meeting and activity area for community organisations and clubs, and a multi-purpose hall suitable for larger meetings, primary school functions, sports and leisure activities. Small private meeting rooms will also be available for hire or for use by community service organisations e.g. social care, neighbourhood police.

A central foyer and café area is designed to attract community users and provide a safe, relaxing and informative meeting place. A small catering facility will be included to be run either on a local franchise basis or by volunteers.

New outdoor changing rooms is included as an option (dependent upon available funds) as the changing facilities for soccer, rugby and other outdoor users of the Acre Field are very poor. Indeed, facilities at the existing Community Hall are unfit for purpose and have now been closed - teams now have to change in cramped and poorly serviced areas in the Sports and Social Club – see right.

Market definition

The Quality of Life Report published by the Warwickshire Observatory[9] and detailed below, provide an overview of the age profile of Whitnash Town's population:

Children (0-15)	Working Age (16-64 years)	Older People (65+ years)	Total
1,900 (20%)	6,100 (64%)	1,600 (16%)	9,600

In developing the Neighbourhood Plan which highlighted the current limited facilities for community activities, sports and leisure for a town of its population size and profile , a local referendum (November 2015) gave overwhelming support >90% for a new Community Hub as a priority for the town. With proposed development of several hundred new homes in Whitnash over the next 15 years[10] there is an even greater need to provide multi-use community facilities to meet future needs.

The Town Council is confident that the new Community Hub will fill a gap and a need within the town and will reflect the experiences of other local community centres e.g. Chase Meadow; St Chads, that have generated considerable demand from existing and new user groups as a result of new facilities provided.

[9] Quality of Life Report 2013-14 ~ Warwickshire Observatory
[10] Warwick District Council Local Plan Consultation document March 2017

These could include:

- Mums and Toddlers Club (linked to the proximity of the Whitnash Primary School)
- Parent and child activities/classes/creche
- Scouts, brownies and other uniformed groups
- Youth groups / activity clubs
- Hobby or interest groups e.g. local history group, sewing group, slimming club
- Community based organisations e.g. Women's Institute; Mothers' Union
- Health and well-being groups e.g. Dementia Café; AgeUK
- Local consultation events e.g. planning applications
- Community activity base and forum hosting
- Business events and meetings
- Town council meetings
- Adult education classes e.g. IT, languages
- Exercise classes e.g. Zumba, Yoga, Pilates
- Music, bands, choral, gigs, theatre performances
- Cinema nights
- Computer user group e.g. 'Silver surfers'; AbilityNet
- Room and hall hire for birthday parties/christenings/wakes/Divali

Market penetration

Prior to building completion and opening, a programme of pre-launch marketing will take place within the town and amongst local organisations and businesses groups to raise awareness of the new Community Hub, its facilities, its availability and booking information including online bookings. Once the Centre is open, a programme of special events will be held to ensure maximum coverage – these will include the 'grand opening' event itself, open days, sports/fun activities, cinema nights, concerts hosted by the Town Council to encourage future use of the Centre.

The communication channels for marketing the Centre have been identified and include:-

- Whitnash Town Council website www.whitnashtowncouncil.gov.uk and magazine
- Social media pages e.g. Facebook, Twitter
- Local press and media e.g. Leamington Courier and Observer
- Posters in local shops, the Library, Health Centre, Primary School, nursery schools
- Council noticeboards across the town.
- A leaflet drop across the town
- Third party websites e.g. WDC/WCC council links; Warwickshire Directory; Warwickshire College; Netmums
- Direct contact e.g. email, letters phone etc. with commercial operators of children's classes, dance clubs, slimming clubs, and exercise classes.
- Local sports and social clubs
- Direct contact with local business wishing to hire the Hub for meetings or sports activities.

Target user profiles

1. **Young families and pre-school** - With the planned increase in housing in Whitnash and surrounding areas, this will increase the number of young families. The new Community Hub will not only provide a suitable environment for parents and children but will also attract commercial organisations providing services and activities for this key user group and always on the lookout for new modern venues for their activities. This will form an important day time usage profile and income opportunity for the Hub.

2. **School age users** – formal arrangements will be made with Whitnash Primary School and other local schools and pre-school nurseries and include usage by early years uniformed groups e.g. Rainbows, Beavers, Cubs, Brownies as well as youth groups and activity clubs. The Town Council is acutely aware that many school students do not have the resource to access main leisure centre facilities in Warwick or Leamington – and are keen to encourage 'walk to play' routines for local young people.

3. **Teenagers** - Whitnash Town Council is keen to ensure that there is no excuse for anti-social behaviour due to 'boredom' and lack of access for teenagers and young adults. Whilst the new Hub will provide facilities for older uniformed groups e.g. Scouts, Guides, Rangers, it will also encourage informal youth group activities. Reductions in youth services due to public sector budget cuts is encouraging the introduction of volunteer-led services – a development the Town Council are keen to promote and support. It is yet to be decided on the 'times of opening' of the new Community Hub – but this target sector's needs will be carefully scrutinised and considered in discussions with youth representatives.

4. **Working age users** – most likely to use the Community Hub facilities in the evenings and at weekends for social and leisure purposes. This category will form an important part of the income generation anticipated – and close liaison with the District Council leisure services will ensure that gaps in provision are filled.

5. **Over 65's** – WTC consider this grouping as a major user of the new Community Hub facilities during the daytime – and as such will be a key target market. Some will have a relatively high level of disposable income and access 'pay and play' facilities and services. Others however will be less well-off and find transport to other 'out of town' facilities challenging - the Council is keen to ensure that the new Hub provides affordable access for all.

6. **Business users** – whilst this is not anticipated to be a large user group for the new Hub, nevertheless the building and facilities should provide a quality and professional environment for selected hire activities and promotions.

Competition and Complementarity

The Council has no intention of opening up the Community Hub as competition with other venues in the locality – whether they are similar community centres or part of the District Council's leisure, culture and sports offerings. The demand for the new Hub is very well supported amongst the residents of Whitnash – and the Council has been careful to design a new facility that is both affordable, fit for purpose and suits the demands of the whole community. Indeed the Hub will fill a big gap in Whitnash town's provision – and will work closely with other centres to ensure mutual benefits e.g. Chase Meadow, Warwick Gates, St. Chads.

The potential to 'fill the community facility gap' can be illustrated by several situations in and around the town:

Whitnash Primary School – an expanding school servicing the town and located on the edge of Acre Close Field without its own school hall. WPS will be a major user of the Hall in particular – for daytime sports activities, assemblies, performances – and in the evenings, parents' evenings. The School is in regular communication with the Council to ensure that its requirements can be serviced through the new Community Hub.

Whitnash Sports and Social Club – a well-established private sports club provides good facilities for green bowls, petanque, tennis and indoor games as well as a social bar for members. They also host local football and rugby clubs that use the sports pitches on Acre Field and provide changing rooms – which all agree are of very poor standard and also take valuable building space in the clubhouse which is needed by the 'resident' activities e.g. bowls. The inclusion of new outdoor changing rooms as part of the new Hub and adjacent to the pitches and the club facilities will be a 'win-win' benefit for user groups.

Whitnash Library – currently owned and managed by Warwickshire County Council, as part of the re-organisation of library services across the county and reflecting the new multi-media and resource methods now being considered, there is a strong possibility that the library services could be amalgamated as part of the new Community Hub. This would benefit from the increased and multi-use footfall that the Hub is likely to attract and represent a real driver for 'one-stop-shop' provision – still in walking distance for many residents.

Trident Centre (Warwickshire College) – a major training centre within 1 km of Acre Close, with no on-site sport or leisure facility, this represents a potentially important user group especially for the Hall and team sport provision.

Section G - Risks and Issues

Risk Analysis

As part of this Business Plan and as a requirement for the funding applications planned for the new Community Hub, a risk analysis is provided below:

Risk	Level	Mitigation
Construction costs exceed estimate	Medium	Budget for the Business Plan has been prepared based on 2016 construction costs (£ per m^2). In addition a contingency of 10% (£130k) has been included in the calculations. Once the building plans are prepared by appointed architect, a detailed cost plan will be prepared (QS) and if costs exceed the budget then either additional funding will be sought or value engineering will take place to reduce cost.
VAT issue not resolved	High	WTC is not VAT registered. Professional tax advice has been commissioned to identify best mechanism to avoid VAT.
Inability to obtain funds timed to fund construction	Medium	Several developer contribution and external funding streams have been identified with majority funding coming from New Homes Bonus and S106/CIL developer contributions via Warwick District Council. An analysis has been made of the criteria to be met for each grant awarding body and the likelihood of obtaining them. Construction cost programme will be supported by a public authority loan (short term to enable construction and medium term to cover shortfall).
Traffic Issues – access and parking	High	As access to the new Community Centre will remain via Acre Close this Business Plan assumes the same level of traffic as for the existing community hall (which will be decommissioned). Pre-application advice will be sought from WCC Highways Planning team in advance and alternative entry routes to Acre Field e.g. Dobson Lane will be discussed as part of Primary School plans (WCC / WDC / Governors).
Planning Permission for the new building	Medium	Pre-application advice will be sought from Warwick DC during the detailed design stage of the planning process and any issues identified will be considered.
Insufficient income from new Community Centre to cover costs	High	The Business Plan includes a forecast of the likely income for the new Community Hub to reach the same level as similar centres in the area within 3 years. The plan also includes sensitivity models for a -10% and also a +20% income levels. The new Community Hub was a key component of the Neighbourhood Plan and well supported in the Referendum. A marketing and promotional campaign will be carried out.

Issues Log

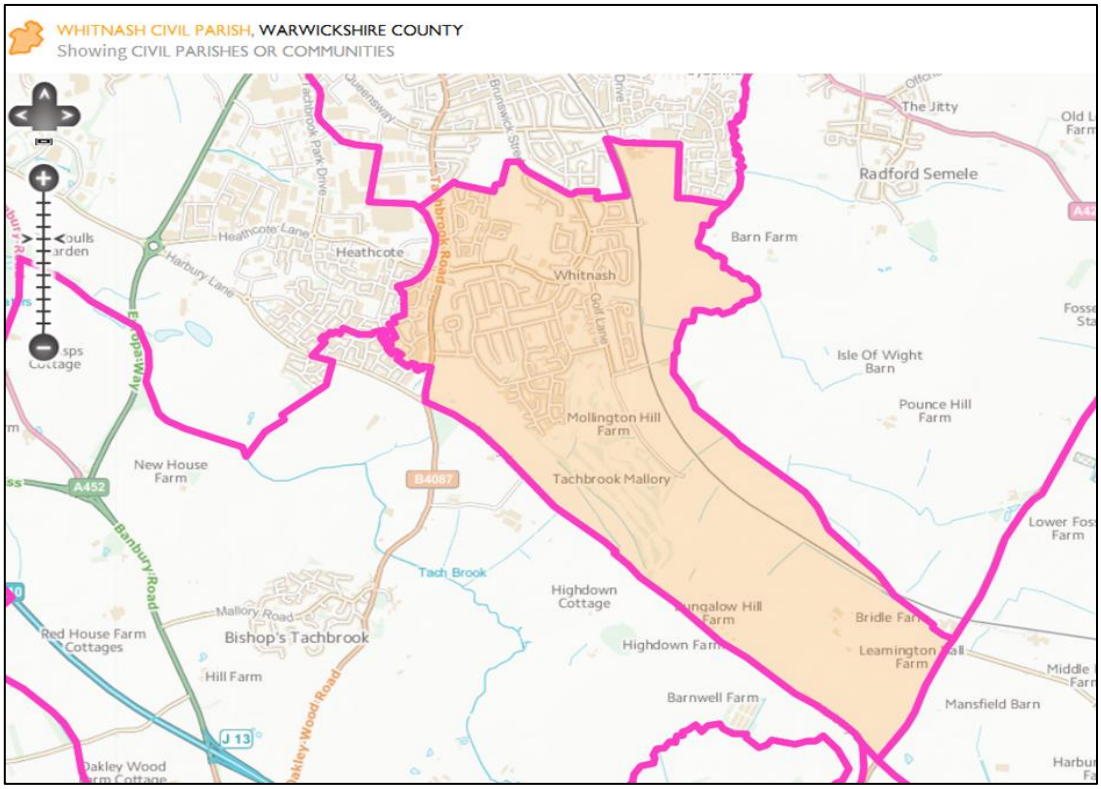
ISSUE LOG							
Project: Whitnash Community Hub						**Date:**	**March 2017**
Issue	**Description**	**Priority (H, M, L)**	**Category**	**Responsibility**	**Status**	**Date Resolved**	**Resolution/ Comments**
001	Robust Business Plan required to meet funding criteria	H	Funding	ATI	Closed	30.3.2017	Business Plan completed
002	Funding needs to be secured and confirmed from WDC	H	Funding	WDC / AJ	Open		New Homes Bonus and S106/CIL.
003	Prudential borrowing need for WTC	H	Funding	WDC / WTC	Open		Loan plan being developed
004	Access to external grants requires attention	H	Funding	ATI	Open		Sport England Community Asset Fund; Landfill Trusts main sources
005	Design and layout of new Hub building	M	Planning requirement	Architect tbc	Open		Preliminary funding required
006	Public consultation event to be arranged	M	Promotion and Marketing	WTC	Open		Concept drawings required
007	Availability of utilities for new building	H	Funding	Project Manager	Open		Significant lead time if new utilities connections are required

Section H – Project Plan and Milestones

The project timeline below is indicative and is designed to provide a clear target for 2017-18 activities. The submission of this Business Plan for WTC consideration and amendment matches the milestone shown of end January 2017. The next phase will be to identify the appropriate funding sources (grants and loans) to fund the necessary preliminaries, submit planning applications and searches and proceed with the capital works programme.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Whitnash Local Maps



Appendix 2 –Whitnash Neighbourhood Development Plan Extracts

5.1 - A Community Hub for Whitnash

5.1.1 Whitnash has developed over time without a strongly defined town centre. The population has increased rapidly from the mid-20th century, and in the space of a few decades the population increased by over five times. The town has three neighbourhood shopping areas; Coppice Road, Heathcote Road /Acre Close and Home Farm Crescent, but there is no "town centre" as such, providing a focus or hub for Town Council activities, shopping and community facilities. The existing community centre is in a poor condition, rather outdated and is sited in a rather isolated location a short distance away from the Acre Close shops and across an area of public open space.

5.1.2 New sites with development potential for such a community hub are of limited availability, as the area is experiencing strong development pressure for new housing, and several possible sites such as those around Warwick Gates / Tachbrook Road on the boundary between existing and proposed housing areas, already have planning consent for residential development.

5.1.3 Warwick District Council is supportive of investment in a new community hub / town centre type of facility for Whitnash and recognises that the future sustainable growth of the town will require improvements in existing local facilities and services. The emerging Local Plan Policy HS6 Creating Healthy Communities advises that Development Proposals will be permitted provided that they address key requirements associated with delivering health benefits to the community as:

a) good access to healthcare facilities;
b) opportunities for incidental healthy exercise, safe walking and cycling networks;
c) opportunities for community cohesion by the provision of accessible services and community facilities and places and opportunities for people to interact;
d) Access to high quality and safe green or open spaces, and;
e) Access to opportunities to partake in indoor and outdoor sport and recreation.

5.1.4 Warwick District Council recognises the need for a new community hub type facility in Whitnash and has commissioned a feasibility study for Whitnash Community Hub at Acre Close.

5.1.5 The Town Council have also identified a number of requirements for the proposed new facility. These include:

- Preferably centrally located rather than on the outskirts of the town
- A HUB (rather than just a hall / centre)
- Accommodation should be available to be utilised (not necessarily full time) by the following organisations/agencies, Town Council, Police (Safer Neighbourhood Team) Town Development Officer (not full time as shared post with Leamington Spa), Library and Internet library, meeting rooms, MP (not full time), Healthcare & Clinic facilities and Cafe.
- A large community hall of high standard that could be hired out by groups and individuals
- Purpose built for easy access with a car park
- A facility where local people can sell produce from allotments etc. / crafts / art work
- Space to be utilised by groups putting on displays etc. and also fundraising e.g. schools etc.)
- Central point to access for information
- **The Acre Close Site would be ideal**.

5.1.6 Currently, there is one doctor's surgery, one dentist and no opticians or hearing services in Whitnash. There are concerns that this may not be sufficient, both numerically and geographically, as the number of households increase as a result of the proposed new development in and around Whitnash. Local residents are dependent on Warwick Hospital for serious medical conditions and there is no direct bus service between the town and the hospital.

The Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (April 2014) identifies a proposal (H6 Leamington) for the expansion of existing medical centres in Leamington or provision of new facility under phase 2 (cost £2m). The details of this proposal have yet to be determined but including possible healthcare provision at the proposed community hub would support such a proposal in this same location as other local services, should it come forward.

5.1.7 The Town Council consider that the need for a new Community Hub is the overriding key issue to be addressed in the Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan. There is a need to identify a suitable site and planning policies to support the provision of a new, improved local community hub incorporating important local facilities such as a civic building / meeting rooms, office space and community facilities such as a library. The community hub should be centrally located to enhance and support retail facilities such as those at Acre Close and to provide complimentary environmental improvements such as improvements in local parking provision. 'Policy W1: A New Community Hub for Whitnash : Proposals for a new Community Hub for Whitnash' will be supported in principle.

The Community Hub is encouraged to include the following development:

- A new community centre to meet the needs of local residents and groups.
- A civic centre which provides office space for the activities of the Town Council.
- A new library with internet facilities.
- A police sub-station.
- Healthcare facilities
- Other suitable community and retail uses (A1 – A5).

The Community Hub will complement and enhance any existing local retail facilities and through careful siting and location and the provision of improved parking and high quality landscaping. Detailed proposals will be informed by the results of a feasibility study which will be commissioned to consider the cost implications, proposed uses, access and siting of the proposed Community Hub.

5.1.8 If the Hub is provided in the Acre Close area, a key area which would require addressing at an early stage would be the need to improve vehicular access to the proposed Hub. Access arrangements for the Community Hub should be discussed with the County Council as part of the proposed feasibility study.

5.2 Protecting Local Facilities

5.2.1 Whitnash has a range of local community facilities which serve the needs of local people and play a vital role in supporting the town's strong sense of local community and individual identity. These facilities include the following:

- Acre Close Playing Fields
- Washbourne Playing Fields (South Farm)
- Whitnash Community Centre, Acre Close

- Whitnash Library
- Whitnash Sports & Social Club (including bowling, football, rugby, petanque, tennis)
- Leamington Football Club
- St Margaret's Church Centre
- Leamington & County Golf Club
- Montgomery Road play area
- Brook Valley
- Harbury Lane open spaces
- Chapel Green

5.2.2 The Town Council recognises the importance of these facilities and would like to protect them from inappropriate changes of use. Shops in Acre Close and other neighbourhood centres at Coppice Road and Home Farm Crescent at present provide valued local retail facilities, but parking is limited and the lack of parking and problems of traffic associated with this need to be addressed.

5.3 Protection of Local Centres and Community Facilities

Within the defined local centres (see Map 4 below) of:

- Heathcote Road / Acre Close
- Coppice Road and
- Home Farm Crescent Development - retail (A1 – A5 uses) - community facilities permitted.

The loss of retail and community uses in these centres will be resisted and proposals for changes of use from retail, commercial, or community use, to residential uses at ground floor level in the defined neighbourhood centres will not be permitted. Residential uses will normally be allowed at first floor level to safeguard the vitality of the relevant centres where ground floors are retained in retail or community use.

The following local Community Facilities are to be protected for community use:

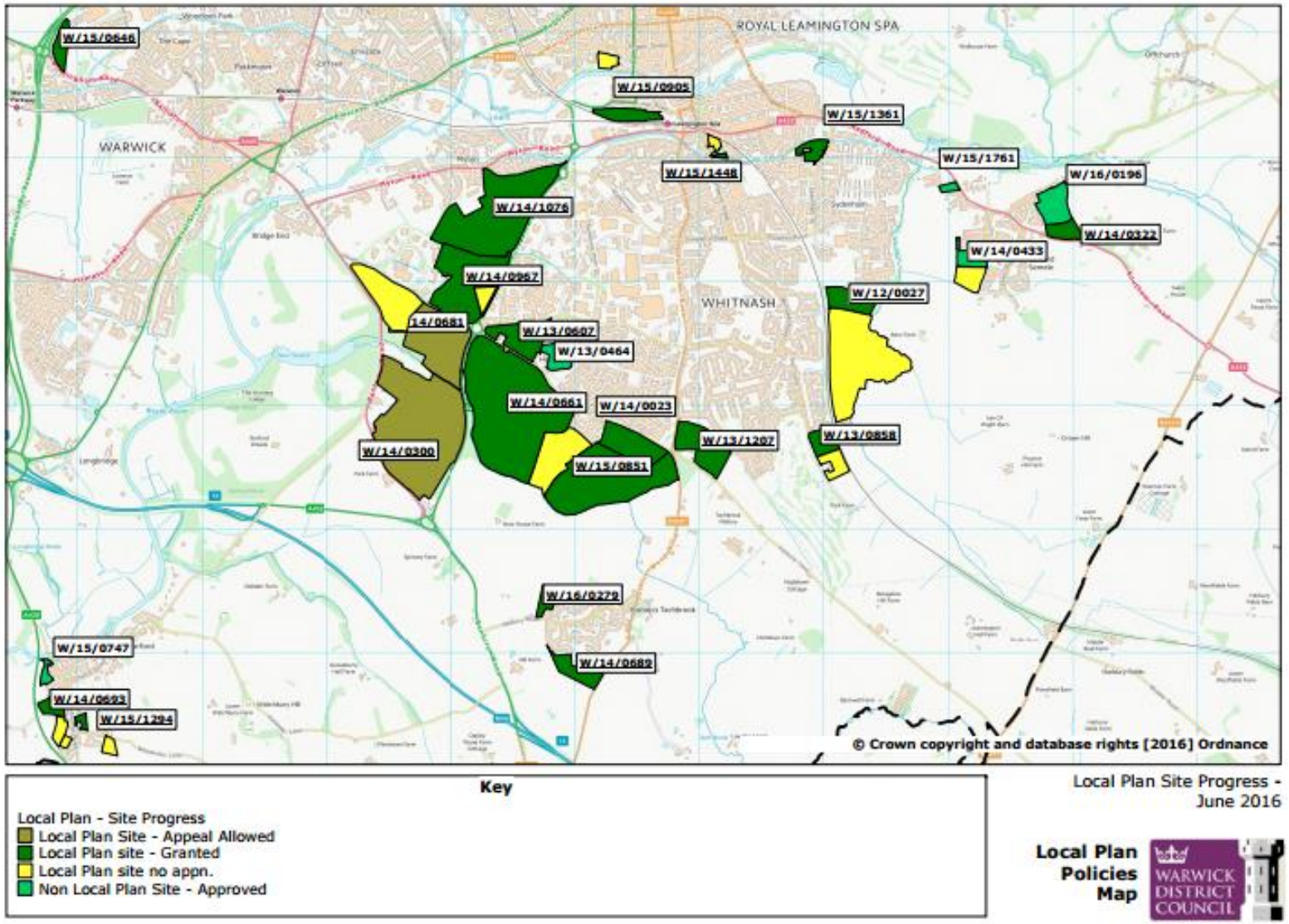
- The Whitnash Community Centre (or its replacement)
- The Whitnash Sports & Social Club
- St Margaret's Church Centre
- Whitnash Medical Centre
- Whitnash Library
- St Margaret's Church
- Whitnash Methodist Church
- St Joseph's Catholic Church

There will be a presumption in favour of the retention of any community facility for health and community uses. The change of use of the Community Assets defined above to other uses will not be permitted unless the following can be demonstrated:

(a) The proposal includes alternative provision, on a site within the locality, of equivalent or enhanced facilities. Such sites should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and have adequate car parking; or

(b) There is no longer a need for the facility, and this can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority advised by the Whitnash Town Council.

Appendix 3 – Warwick District Local Plan ~ Sites Progress July 2016



Appendix 4 – Whitnash Town Council Finance Summary

Whitnash Town Council, Franklin Road, Whitnash, CV31 2JH
Town Clerk: Mrs Jenny Mason 01926 470394

Whitnash Town Council sets an annual budget dependant on expected expenditure less expected income, this is our precept which is received from WDC.

Monies may be included in this figure that will be c/f at the year end and ring fenced in reserves for specific projects e.g. election expenses, capital expenditure and projects that have not been completed by the end of the financial year.

The Council may also receive grants which are ring fenced to be used only for the specific purpose they have been granted.

Our annual return details all income and expenditure for the financial year ending 31st March and includes grants and other specified income and expenditure.

The total of all bank balance at the yearend includes all earmarked reserves together with any grant & specified income which is c/f for on-going projects that haven't been completed during the current financial year plus 50% of our annual precept.

A copy of our accounting statements for the previous financial year to 31st March 2016 is attached. The current year to 31st March 2017 will be available following audit in July 2017.

WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL YEAR END 31 March 2016		
	1 APRIL 2015- 31 MARCH 2016	
	AUDIT FIGURES	
1	BALANCE B/F	197,926
2	+ PRECEPT	112,608
3	+ OTHER RECEIPTS	130,547
4	- STAFF COSTS	67,475
5	- LOAN REPAYMENT	0
6	- OTHER PAYMENTS	158,773
7	BALANCE to C/F	**214,832**
8	BALANCE ALL BANK ACCOUNTS	**206,955**
	RECONCILIATON BOX 7 & 8	
8	BANK BALANCES @ 31/03/16	**206,955**
	PLUS SALES DEBTORS @ 31/03/16	899
	LESS HANGING BASKET DONATIONS (rcvd March in advance for summer 2016)	-263
	PLUS PREPAYMENTS @31/03/16	3,538
	PLUS VAT to be RECLAIMED	8,211
	LESS CREDITORS @ 31/03/16	-1,561
	LESS ACCRUALS @ 31/03/16	-855
	LESS O/S PAYE/NI @ 31/03/16	-2,090
7		**214,832**

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