

Community Centre WG Meeting - Tue, Aug 18, 2026

Present: R Wallond, V Peddle, G Merry, H Hardy

Finance and Fundraising Update

The group reviewed GM's written fundraising update. Potential funding to try for included the National Lottery 'Awards for All', the Football Foundation Facilities Fund, and continued efforts to secure a Suez container. The GM also raised questions about restrictions on the MKCF award.

Consultation Feedback and Project Scale

The group reviewed feedback from summer consultation events, noting strong adult support for the project. A participant supported a phased approach of building the first storey before potentially adding a second.

Café Visits and Operating Comparisons

RW described visits to the Red Kite Pavilion in Aston Clinton and Village Retreat in Weston Turville. The venues differed in size and approach but were both busy and successful, giving the group confidence that the proposed centre's intermediate scale could be workable. The visits generated practical observations about café operations, staffing, kitchen size, storage, and menu preparation.

Design Implications for the Café

The group identified design issues requiring further consideration, including glazing, heating and cooling, kitchen capacity, storage, and ventilation requirements. RW argued that the current kitchen-store arrangement might be insufficient for fresh food preparation and could result in a pre-packaged offer, unless additional space were found.

Revenue Activities and Venue Risks

Aston Clinton's soft-play operation was highly successful, while its experience with weddings highlighted risks involving property damage, vandalism, drugs, alcohol-related disorder, and fighting. The group also considered possible overlap with the village hall and the suitability of alternative events for different audiences.

Tenant Model and Community Programme

GM said the visits had helped clarify how to construct a future tenant specification and lease. The group emphasized that the operator should combine commercial competence with a broader community purpose and enough flexibility to develop new activities. RW stressed the importance of appointing someone passionate and invested in the centre's success.

Quantity Surveyor Preparation

HH noted that the team needed to define what was new and had submitted a series of questions for preparation before the QS meeting.

Cost Review and Value Engineering

HH outlined the need to review value-engineering opportunities, phase the building elements, and distinguish renovation costs from new-build costs. The team identified glazing, windows, and external doors as significant cost items and discussed using supplier input and material substitutions to pursue savings.

Scope Reduction and Upper-Floor Options

RW proposed assessing the cost impact of omitting the second floor, lift, and community room, with the sports hall potentially serving as a flexible alternative. HH recommended first tightening the current design and costs, then evaluating reductions such as removing the upper story, which could save approximately £70,000.

Upper Block Design

HH described revised upper-floor schemes intended to create a distinct monolithic block while retaining visual and material connections to the existing building. Participants responded positively to the brickwork, large openings, and circular detail, but the potential additional cost of approximately £200,000 raised the possibility of later-phase delivery.

Atrium, Roof Deck, and Construction Approach

The team discussed whether the atrium and upper-level elements could be lowered, deferred, or built in stages. HH explained the design rationale for the vertical element and noted that a simple structural approach could provide good value and enable rapid construction.

Façade Cost Savings

HH presented façade changes that could reduce glazing by introducing brickwork and corrugated Rodeca or an equivalent material. He noted that glazing is generally more expensive than brickwork, while emphasizing that supplier discussions are needed to confirm the actual savings.

Contingencies, Procurement, and Funding

The team reviewed contingencies, overheads, preliminaries, contractor risk, and alternative contracting arrangements. GM confirmed that S106 funds could be drawn down in phases and that an early loan application was possible.

Quantity Surveyor Meeting

The group agreed on an online meeting on Wednesday 26/8 at 1:00 p.m., with GM arranging it.

Budget, Programme, and Planning Timeline

HH described the need to separate new-build and renovation costs and provide value-engineering recommendations. The team discussed the route to a defined budget and planning application, with a provisional start target of April 2027 and an expected planning period of at least three months.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Design Development

The team confirmed that biodiversity net gain work is continuing, with a report expected on completion. HH outlined the transition from fixing scope and budget into detailed design and RIBA Stage 3 planning work.

Mechanical, Environmental, and Façade Requirements

The team identified heating, cooling, solar gain, natural ventilation, and façade design as significant factors affecting the planning application. The mechanical/electrical consultant will undertake the required analysis, while an appropriate façade designer should be engaged early; air-source and ground-source systems were considered.

Working Group Arrangements and Immediate Follow-Up

Tuesday 22/9 5:30 p.m. for the next meeting. HH agreed to update the project programme.

Actions

- * GM - Hanslope PC will clarify with James whether the £98,900 Milton Keynes Community Foundation funding is restricted to accessibility measures and how the funding would be affected if the upper level and lift are not built
- * GM - Hanslope PC will follow up with James on the status of the sports quiz
- * GM - Hanslope PC will ask James about the feasibility and status of memorial bricks
- * HH will investigate how the café design could provide more space for a proper kitchen and storage
- * RW will review the café-visit summary and related documentation for design considerations
- * HH will prepare the submitted questions for discussion with the quantity surveyor
- * HH will discuss the value-engineering items and cost phasing with the quantity surveyor.
- * HH will obtain or coordinate supplier input on façade, glazing, window, and external-door cost reductions.
- * The Parish Council will consider applying for the available S106 early in the project timeframe
- * GM will arrange the online quantity surveyor meeting for Wednesday the 26th at 1:00 p.m.
- * HH will prepare or update the project programme showing the anticipated project delivery timeframe.
- * GM will speak with James to establish a defined budget position.
- * GM will send the project images to Andrew Flatly for circulation to the cricket club.