



## **FRAMLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Framlingham Community Centre – Public Briefing Document – August 2017**

The Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan clearly identified the construction of a community centre for the town as a high priority, reflecting local residents' need for such a facility. There have been many projects over recent years aimed at providing a community centre for Framlingham but for various reasons these were frustrated. However, a number of factors have come together recently that have made the project viable and a Working Group composed of Framlingham Town Councillors and local people has been formed to deliver a community centre project.

Project development is now well advanced to deliver a community centre for Framlingham.

On completion of the Community Centre it is proposed that a new charitable organisation will be established responsible for the management of the Centre. It is envisaged that the membership of that organisation will be made up of stakeholders from organisations in the town.

This note will provide an outline of the project's progress to-date and the work still to be done to deliver the Community Centre. It will be supplemented with a formal briefing for Framlingham residents on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm in The Headmaster Porter Theatre at Framlingham College

The Community Centre will provide a much-needed space for health, well-being and leisure activities as well as functions and meetings. The aim is to ensure that the centre provides a venue for a range of the town's social groups and clubs promoting activity to support local people whilst at the same time providing a large space for social and family gatherings and theatre style functions as well as providing low cost hire where needed. Locating the centre close to the town centre will allow people to walk and cycle to the venue.

The proposed accommodation will comprise:

A main multi-functional hall accommodating 200 people seated at tables. A typical configuration could be 20 round tables seating 10 people per table. The seats and tables are removable providing for a flexible multi-use space. It will be able to accommodate temporary staging for productions and a linear seating arrangement for audiences. The main hall will be divisible if required

The hall will include audio-visual equipment, such as sound and lighting for events and projection facilities.

A plant room and equipment storage area will be designed to contain temporary stage equipment and general items. There will be a green room adjacent to the stage.

A large foyer will include a kitchen, servery, bar (for functions), cloakroom and toilet facilities together with a reception and administration office/meeting room. Stairs and a lift from the entrance lobby will lead to a function room and two further administrative/meeting rooms which will be let to public/charitable organisations.

**Car Parking:** Space for up to 65 cars and include bike racks for minimum 10 bicycles.

(A plan of the community centre and artist's impressions of the final building are attached)The proposal is to construct the community centre on land located between Brook Lane and Vyces Road subject to agreement with The Mills Charity on a long-term lease.

(A plan showing the proposed positioning of the community centre is attached)

Currently it is planned to open the community centre in the autumn of 2020.

The projected cost of for planning, designing, building and equipping the community centre is in the region of £1.6 million. The intention is to fund the community centre using money drawn from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) paid to Suffolk Coastal District Council by developers, local Neighbourhood CIL funding, fund raising and, if necessary, a loan from the Public Work's Loan Board. Towns and parishes need to bid for CIL money, but Framlingham probably has a better case for grants of CIL money now than at any other time. Both current and planned new housing developments in Framlingham will generate CIL money (some £3.86m, payable to SCDC between 2017 and 2021). This money is to be used for the single purpose of infrastructure improvements which we all know that Framlingham needs. New developments will increase that need.

### **Where is the project now?**

- A Working Group was established in 2016 composed of Town Councillors and local people. This group has:
- Gained authority from Framlingham Town Council (at the full council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017) to proceed with feasibility studies for a community centre;
- Produced an outline architectural design that corresponds to the potentially available funds and the Mills brief.
- Produced a draft costed business plan;
- Submitted pre-application project planning to Suffolk Coastal District Council to which we have received a positive response;
- Identified sources of legal advice to support the development;
- Submitted an application to SCDC for funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This funding will be critical for the success of the project and construction of the community centre.
- Begun briefing the people of Framlingham on the plans for the community centre.

### **Next Steps:**

- Agree the terms of the lease with The Mills Charity.
- Deliver a formal briefing on the development of the community centre and progress to-date on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm in The Headmaster Porter Theatre at Framlingham College
- Await the outcome of the C.I.L funding application.
- Consider suggestions from local residents and shape plans accordingly.
- Submit a formal planning application and secure permission to begin construction of the community centre.