

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

COUNCIL MEETING – 27 OCTOBER 2010

Question by: Ms Ann Rosenberg

To the: Cabinet Member for Community Care

QUESTION

“I am given to understand that in any proposed relocation of services, there must be ‘like for like’ with no diminution of services.

The pottery studio in Sands End Community Centre was custom built after being relocated from Beaufort House eight years ago. Essential equipment includes four kilns, four work benches to accommodate 16 students, two surfaces for wedging clay with storage for tools, cloths etc. 9 wheels, a pug mill, extruder, a spray booth, grinder, and large double sink for cleaning equipment with sufficient drainage to cope with waste material. There is also an area to re-claim waste clay. There is separate storage for stoneware and earthenware glazes, slips, hazardous oxides, bulk ingredients for glaze making, (some hazardous), earthenware, stoneware and other specialist clays; storage for work in progress, bisque firing and separate storage for stoneware and earthenware firing, plus storage for finished work.

The space in which all this is housed is the minimum for the range of work by the students who range from the beginner to those at professional level. There is good disabled access, and health and safety issues can be easily addressed.

This is the best equipped pottery studio in London and would certainly equal any in a university which runs a ceramics degree course.

Where do you propose to relocate the studio?”

RESPONSE

This was open to a continuing consultation. Funding for the Hammersmith and Fulham Adult Learning and Skills Service (ALSS), which organises the pottery courses at Sands End, is provided by the national funding agency, the Skills Funding Agency (SfA), this funding has been significantly reduced this year by nearly 15% and it is expected that further reductions which could be the order of 40%, will be made this coming year. If the closure of Sands End Community Centre does go ahead, the ALSS will continue to seek to provide a range of pottery courses in the borough, including those for personal interest, from

either Hurlingham and Chelsea School, another venue in Sands End or the Macbeth centre. The intention is that all the existing equipment, that can be safely be re-located, will be moved to one of those venues. However the reduction in the public subsidy for much of the present type of provision is likely to mean that the course fees will have to be significantly increased in coming years.

Officers have been working for a couple of months at looking at what could be potentially different venues for the pottery equipment and there are at least two if not three in Sands End and the potential of the Macbeth Centre.