

Public Consultation on Community Hubs

- 1.1 A public consultation ran from April to December 2021 to gauge public interest and feedback on a trial of regional Community Hubs. The consultation ran online with paper copies made available upon request in the hubs. 390 responses were received over the period of the consultation.
- 1.2 Respondents were asked:
- To provide the location of their nearest hub (North/South/East/West)
 - Whether they would like to see a community hub introduced in their area
 - What services they would like to see
 - How regularly they would use a hub
 - Feedback on service received (if relevant)

Consensus

- 1.3 87% of respondents would like to see a permanent community hub introduced in their area.

Location and Frequency

- 1.4 The highest number of respondents were based in the north of the Island (134 respondents - 34% of all those who responded). The most popular response when asked about regularity of a hub was monthly at 47%. Only 3% stated daily and 23% weekly.

Services

- 1.5 When asked what services respondents would like to see "financial (e.g tax)" was the most popular at 68%. Availability of Social Services (including Job Centre) at 65% and Transport ticketing at 64% were also popular answers.
- 1.6 Other suggestions from respondents included:

Assistance with online services

Housing advice

Health Visitor

MHK Surgeries

General Enquiries Service

Health/Mental Health/Multi Agency Care/Safeguarding

Support for elderly who are alone/Social interaction

Business Advice/Access to grants

Summary of Comments

190 respondents answered the question "Do you have any other comments on Community Hubs?". Table 2 (below) provides a summary of some of those comments received. Table 3 (below) provides a summary of feedback provided by those who used one of the hubs:

Table 2

Do you have any other comments on Community Hubs?
The Community Hubs should be linked to the library. The librarians should be trained to help fill in the online forms with the local residents/ help signpost them to the right services. This would make the library the centre of the community.
Delivering services locally would reduce travel to Douglas and increase footfall for local shops and businesses, it would also provide local employment. This is exactly the approach Government should be taking, there's a great town hall in Ramsey and it could easily become a northern service hub.
A community hub is useful as a drop in, especially if transport is an issue
This is a brilliant initiative which would have a number of positive outcomes. Not everyone can/wants to travel to Douglas whether it be for a service, or for work. Traffic at peak times could be reduced if workers could work closer to home, and active travel alternatives could be used more easily. It's about time that govt recognised that Douglas is not the centre of the universe!
We need to get things out of Douglas. Departments should operate outside of Douglas. Move as many government departments and functions out of Douglas as possible. The rest of the island deserves Centres of Commerce and not be merely viewed as suburbs of Douglas.
Start with basic simple things that reduces cars/traffic on the road to enable more people to gain access to the the Central Government locations.
I work in Douglas but can't access services as they are shut when I have finished work and I am at work earlier than they open. Having hubs would be much better, customer facing when needed as well as available online. Also allowing people who don't live in Douglas to maybe work and or access services from closer to home.
Brilliant idea! Having the option for easy access to services locally would be so helpful. Rather than having to trek all the way into town, pay for parking/struggling to find parking it would be so much easier to have access closer by. Also, would boost local businesses due to increased footfall in local areas.
Personally I find the online services adequate so wouldn't use a hub. Having said that for those that are not IT savvy I am sure a hub would be welcome. May also help to bring back a sense of community in some areas which is sadly lacking today

I worked in Islington when they had 24. My role meant I was solo in the area and to depend on support from officers around the borough. Might have been better together in a team.

I believe it was prohibitively expensive and the experiment was scaled back considerably from its ambitious beginnings. Just a word to the wise.

To be honest it sounds like an expensive way of managing access for a relatively small population. Having good digital ways of interacting with Government seems more the way to go.

Stop thinking that this needs to be government led. Support the community initiatives which have been left to wither for the lack of relatively small amounts of government support. I was Chair and director of the Southern Community Initiative for many years - government regularly came and applauded us for our efforts, promised much needed core funding several times but never really delivered. We then find Government set up its own version of what we were trying to do, but at significantly greater cost and more bureaucracy. Almost every case study I've read shows these initiatives work best when they're community led not government led. Government officers seem scared of losing control of their areas and so miss the real opportunity to make significant improvements to the communities they serve.

Table 3

<i>Customer Feedback Following Use of Hub</i>
Very convenient
I didn't use it I called on behalf of a patient being discharged. Very efficient
Used in professional capacity- simple, straightforward
Was very productive, thanks
Great service and staff at Castletown
Went to use the hub but only available on certain days
Renewed bus pass at Ramsey. Nice to have a friendly face to interact with we need more of face to face, not less or "community" gradually disintegrates and ability to interact.
used the western hub last week to renew a bus pass - very convenient, saved having to go to Douglas
Was great and helpful.
Very friendly, well informed staff

Easy access for everyone but not very private as some may want it to be more discreet
Friendly, knowledgeable and reassuring

Couldn't book ticket for Broadway Cinema even though they had computer in front of them. Advised me to go to Villa Marina in person.