

Ellendune Centre Charity and CIO Options

The council is a tenant of the Ellendune Centre both for the Office and the Library.

The former Library charity number [1174785](#) is due to be closed as soon as the 2023 accounts are filed.

The Ellendune Hall Trust [305601](#) is due to be closed down as soon as its 2023 accounts are filed.

The Ellendune Community Centre CIO [1198813](#) has operated the centre since 1st April 2023.

The CIO is currently amending its constitution to allow a single trustee.

As soon as that meeting has been completed, Wroughton Parish Council should be appointed as the CIO trustee (the Council is already custodian trustee of the building) and all other trustees resign.

There is no need to wait until the year end.

The council as a body corporate will then be the trustee of the CIO.

No individual Councillor will be named on the Charity Commission website.
No individual Councillor will have any decision-making powers over the CIO.
Meetings of the CIO should be kept entirely separate from the Council.

If the Council were then to set up a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to take over the running of the Centre, the administration could be simplified;

BUT

If the council operate the Centre, business rates would come into force. It is unclear what the charge would be as no prior charges have been raised, but the Health Centre pays around £10,000 a year.

If the Council operate the Centre it would be a business activity so the Council would have to register for VAT and charge VAT to all users of the building.

The existing staff would be TUPE'd across to the Council.

ALTERNATIVELY

The CIO Trustee could agree to appoint the Proper Officer of the Council as the Administrator of the Charity with delegated authority to run the building for public benefit.

This would avoid VAT and Business rates issues and would allow the support given to the Centre CIO by the council to be clearly quantified.

User groups would still be able to have input to decision making, but objectives between the Council and the Centre would be aligned.

Current staff employment contracts would be unchanged.

Charity meetings and finances are not subject to the same transparency legislation as councils enabling more streamlined decision making.

Retaining Charity status for the building also retains access to income streams such as Gift aid and grants funding.