

RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE
23 January 2023

Item 9a: Future of Community Resource Centres

Speech by Councillor Will Rowlands, representing Mottingham Ward

“Since our last meeting, the need for the learning shop in Mottingham has remained the same and I’m sure the same applies for St Paul’s Cray.

Mr Chairman, Committee.

May I first thank you for the chance to present the amendment Infront of members tonight and I speak also on behalf of my colleague Cllr David Cartwright.

The topic under discussion presents a moment when party politics should be put to one side and our Council Motto should take centre stage. Our desire to **SERVIRE POPULO**, to serve the people is the one thing, regardless of if we are Conservative, Labour, Lib Dem, or Independent, that brought us to the point where we are here to serve our residents as their elected representatives.

Whilst we accept that the temporary change in location from the Mottingham shops current home is Both urgent and unavoidable, for us to simply sit back and watch a service, designed to serve an area of ***social and economic deprivation*** be removed indefinitely from the area without a thorough assessment of all alternatives would be in breach of our Motto. We would be failing to serve the people.

If you look in the public gallery, you will see two members of staff who currently run the MCLS, two of the most dedicated people I have ever had the pleasure to know. They work tirelessly supporting some of the most socially and economically deprived residents in the ward of Mottingham, with a wide ranging provision of services, from help finding a job, to dealing with bailiffs, from helping resolve an issue for a Social Housing tenant, to helping someone fill out an application which will help them rebuild their life, in fact, never in the Mottingham Community, was so much owed, by so many, to so few. Our most important asset within the structure of services the Council is able to provide is our staff. Without them, we wouldn’t be able to help in an area of social and economic deprivation, and in turn, they need to be as accessible as possible to the very people they are so dedicated to helping. It is our duty to **SERVIRE POPULO** and we must support our residents, staff and the wider service in order for this to be achieved. That is why, on behalf of myself and Cllr Cartwright I propose the amendment in front of you.”