

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

17 January 2012

Public Participation

Statement from Mr and Mrs Hopkins

Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)

Statement

Like, we suspect, many, many others, we are appalled to read that WCC are even considering closure of Urchfont Manor (College). Perhaps, in the very short term, closing it may make financial sense for the budget of your particular department. However, we would suggest that in the long term it makes no sense at all for WCC as a whole. Recreational learning is of proven benefit to the overall well being of the elderly (and many of Urchfont's clients are elderly) in that it provides a range of outlets, interests and social contacts. Removal of such facilities can only increase the burdens (and thus impinge upon the budgets) of the NHS, of Social Services and of Geriatric Services. We would hate to think WCC would open itself to accusations of blinkered short-termism.

Furthermore these would be in addition to direct costs to WCC of compulsory redundancy payments, etc., and costs to the wider community in terms of job losses and increasing numbers of those claiming unemployment benefit.

We suggest that even in today's straightened financial climate a culture of short-term thinking it makes no sense either financially or socially and we ask WCC, "Please think again".