

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning & Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 21st March 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Community & Sport

SUBJECT: Community Centres

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an annual report on Community Centres for the operating period 2014/15.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) the report be noted;**
- ii) Members comment on the Community Centres service delivery.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Community Centres service consists of five buildings, Castlefields, Ditton, Grangeway, Murdishaw and Upton. The centres deliver programmes of community activity, varying models of community cafés and service outlets, i.e. children's centre, youth centre, day services. These centres provide a community hub, a central point at the heart of these communities for residents to enjoy chosen activities and receive services in their neighbourhoods. They are based in the most severely deprived wards in the Borough and are well utilised. Churchill Hall also receives grant funding to support community use.

3.2 The Community Centres are benchmarked through APSE (the Association of Public Service Excellence) against other Civic, Cultural and Community Venues owned and run by other local authorities. This provides performance data but also trend information over a number of years. The timescales for data submissions, verifications and analysis dictates that benchmarking data is not available from APSE until quarter three of the following operating year hence, the timing of presenting the annual performance information to Members.

3.3 Whilst, for the reasons set out in paragraph 3.2, there is an unavoidable delay in presenting annual performance data, any financial, operational or other matters relating to Community Centres that needed to be brought to Members' attention would be done so in the relevant operating year, either through the Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports or other specific reports as may be necessary.

3.4 Halton's community centres have progressed positively overall on their indicators in recent years earning nominations for APSE "Most Improved Centres" and "Best Performer" awards. Disappointingly, APSE withdrew their awards for civic and cultural venues for this operating year in the December 2015 awards ceremony; the model requires a minimum participation of 8 venues. Unfortunately, APSE only received benchmarking data for 7 venues 5 of which were from Halton hence, there was not enough data to effectively compare data and run quartile reports.

3.5 The Community Centres service demonstrates continuous improvement through its performance monitoring and has made significant contributions to the Council's efficiency programme; income generation is a key area of focus to support the future sustainability of the service.

3.6 The overall usage has increased steadily over the past three year period. The service has experienced an increase of attendances in the last operating year of 15,892 (2014/15) which in part can be attributed to a more robust data capture for drop in usage at our Centres to access cafés and surgeries along with increased access to activities and services:-

- 2012/13 275,526 Attendances
- 2013/14 296,980 Attendances
- 2014/15 312,872 Attendances

3.7 The Community Centres service has demonstrated increased financial efficiency over recent years:-

2010/11 Net operating costs - £462k (inclusive of £287k income)
2011/12 Net operating costs - £358k (inclusive of £318k income)
2012/13 Net operating costs - £307k (inclusive of £317k income)
2013/14 Net operating costs - £216k (inclusive of £324k income)
2014/15 Net operating costs - £212k (inclusive of £364k income)

The net operating costs for the service have reduced greatly over recent years, most notably between 2013/14 and the previous year when net costs were reduced by £108k. The combination of reduced costs and increased income presents an efficient trend for the service.

4.0 COMMUNITY CENTRE PROFILES 2014/15

The following section contains key performance indicators to illustrate centre performance over a three year period. The section includes a number of graphs which have been produced from APSE performance data that demonstrate the direction of travel on performance.

As per paragraph 3.4, it should be noted that the 'all services average' shown on each graph is based upon only 7 community venues; 5 of which are the Council's own community centres. Therefore, the 'all services average' may not be a robust comparator for measuring success or achievement and when looking at the graphs it may be more appropriate to consider the overall direction of travel for each centre against its previous years' performance.

4.1 Castlefields Community Centre

4.1.1 Castlefields had a significant increase in usage in 2012/13 of over 100%. This was a complete turnaround from the previous operating year which had a 24% reduction in usage. Usage increased by a further 3,000 in 2013/14, this trend has continued with usage in 2014/15 growing by a further 11,082.

Total annual opening hours	2960.50
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1616
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	5030
Total attendance main room	25684
Total attendance other rooms	24855
Total other attendance	6205
Total attendance	56744

4.1.2 Category of usage is at Castlefields broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	4611
Lifelong Learning	4431
Health & Healthy Living	11327
Arts Development	15887
Sports Development	1991
Statutory Agencies	2683
Events	15814
Total	56744

In previous years events have attracted Castlefields' largest attendance, in 2014/15 Arts Development activities has increased significantly and been the highest area of activity.

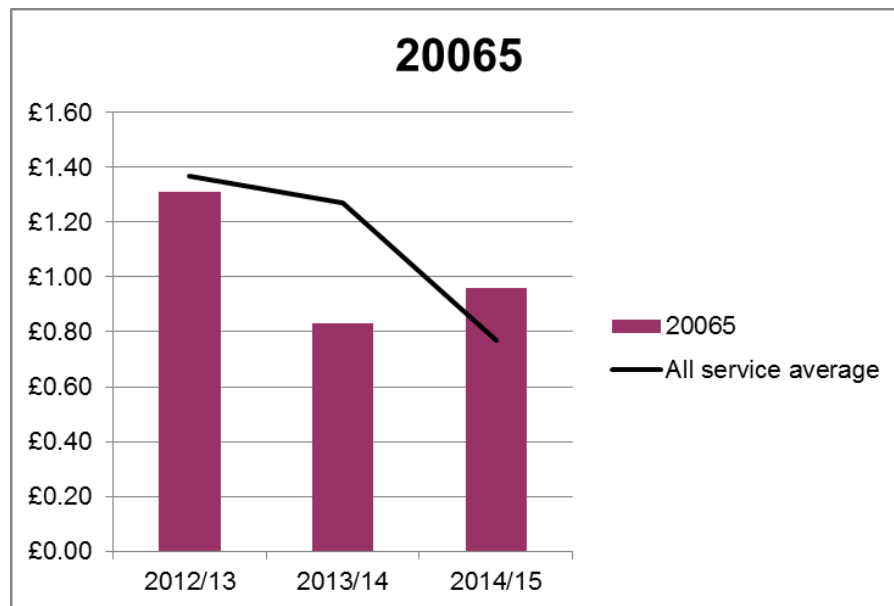
Ella performance is a special needs drama group who meet and rehearse at Castlefields Community Centre every Tuesday. The members of the group wrote, acted, directed and produced a short film about discrimination, which they filmed in and around the Centre. At a recent film festival they won the best film and best actress awards. The film has gone on to be shown at film festivals all over Europe.

In December 2014, the centre hosted a Victorian Christmas dinner for 72 local pensioners. The centre worked with a local community group and artist to produce a Victorian living room, 3D effect canvas and the staff and volunteers were dressed in period costumes. A three course meal was provided with live entertainment from a brass band.

4.1.3 Castlefields Direction of Travel Indicators

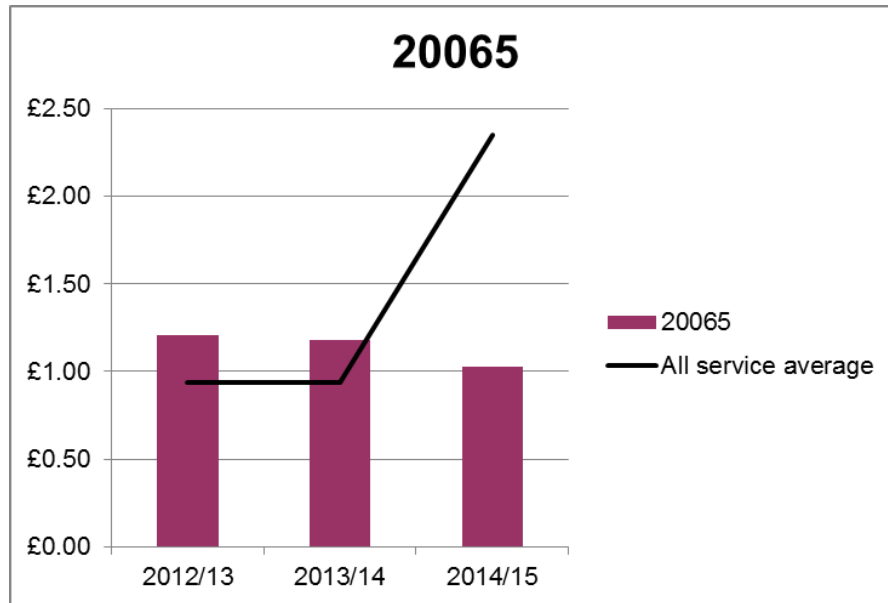
- **Castlefields Net Cost Per User**

The 20065 on the chart is Castlefields' PIN number in the APSE data set, hence 20065 references Castlefields Community Centre.



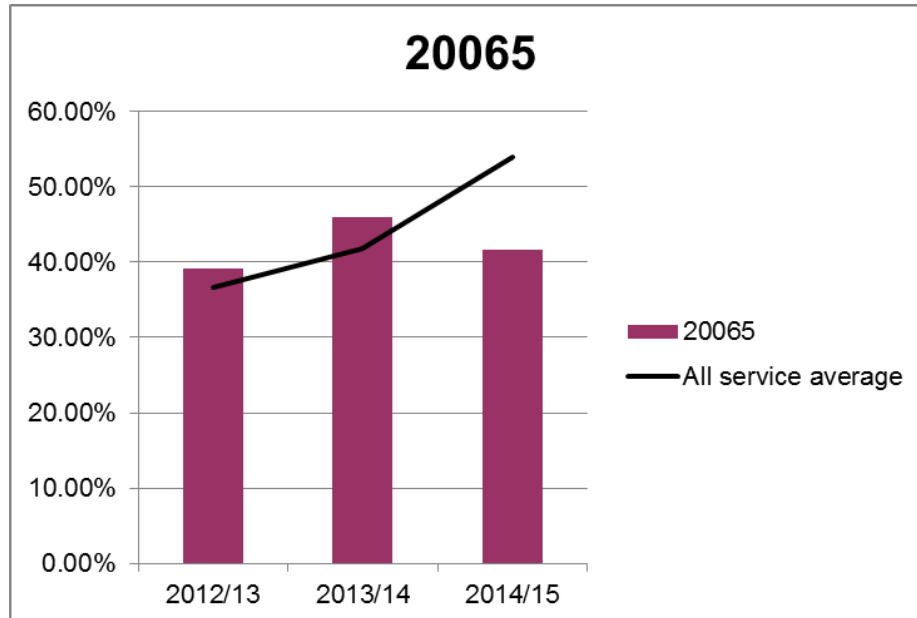
The graph shows the direction of travel of cost per user over the last three years. In 2012/13 this net cost per user had reduced significantly to £1.31 (compared to £4.79 in the previous year) and in 2013/14 this reduced further, down to 83 pence per user. In 2014/15 the net cost per user has increased slightly to 96 pence.

- **Castlefields Total Income Per User**



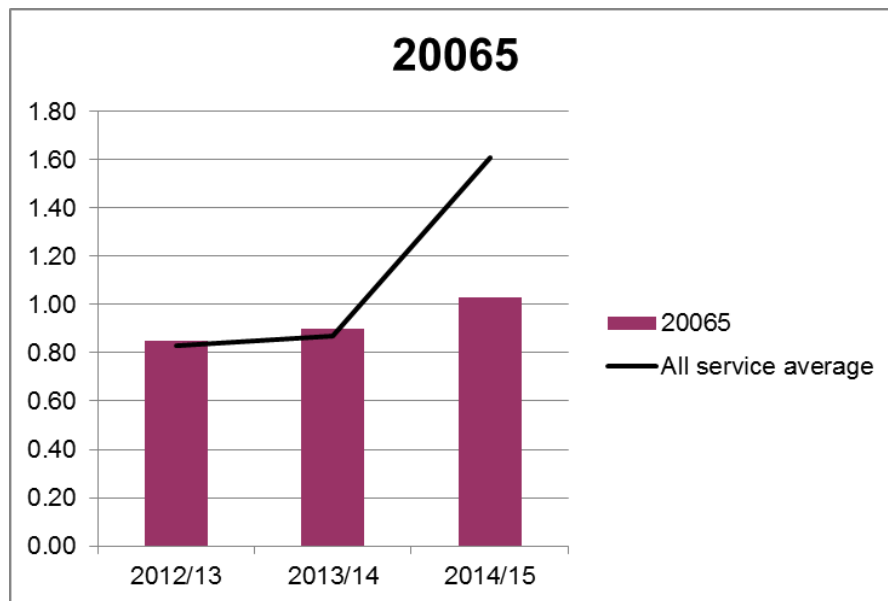
The performance in this indicator correlates to the net cost per user indicator with a slight drop in income per user of 15 pence compared to the previous year at. In 2014/15 the income per user is £1.03.

- **Castlefields Operational Recovery**



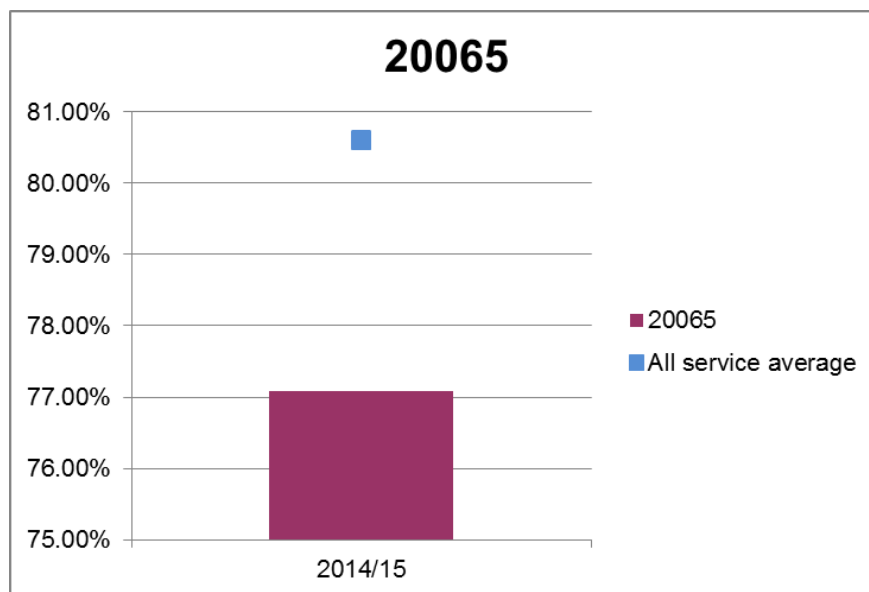
Castlefields experienced low operational recovery in recent years which recovered significantly with the move to the new centre as part of the regeneration programme achieving the “Most Improved” Performer award in 2012/13. The positive trend continued in 2013/14 with operational recovery at 45.90% however, this has dipped slightly to 41.68% in 2014/15. Again, this correlates with performance seeing a slight dip in income and operational recovery per user.

- **Castlefields Visits Per Household**



Over the past three years the centre has seen a steady increase in usage by households indicating increased local usage.

- **Castlefields Customer Satisfaction**



This indicator was introduced in the last operating years and satisfaction is 77.08% at Castlefields Community Centre. Whilst the figure is quite high this is the lowest across Halton's five community centres, the highest being Murdishaw with 86.96%.

4.2 Ditton Community Centre

4.2.1 Ditton's previous performance in 2013/14 earned the award of "Best Performer" for Civic, Cultural and Community Venues for APSE, a bumper year with the centre hosting a number of large events. In 2014/15 Ditton has had a significant dip in usage and numbers attending compared to the previous year, a key area of focus moving forward.

Total annual opening hours	3885.25
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1274
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	6234
Total attendance main room	16953
Total attendance other rooms	54742
Total other attendance	3604
Total attendance	75299

4.2.2 Category of usage at Ditton is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	13351
Lifelong Learning	3244
Health & Healthy Living	18755
Arts Development	34322
Sports Development	1810
Statutory Agencies	226
Events	3591
Total	75299

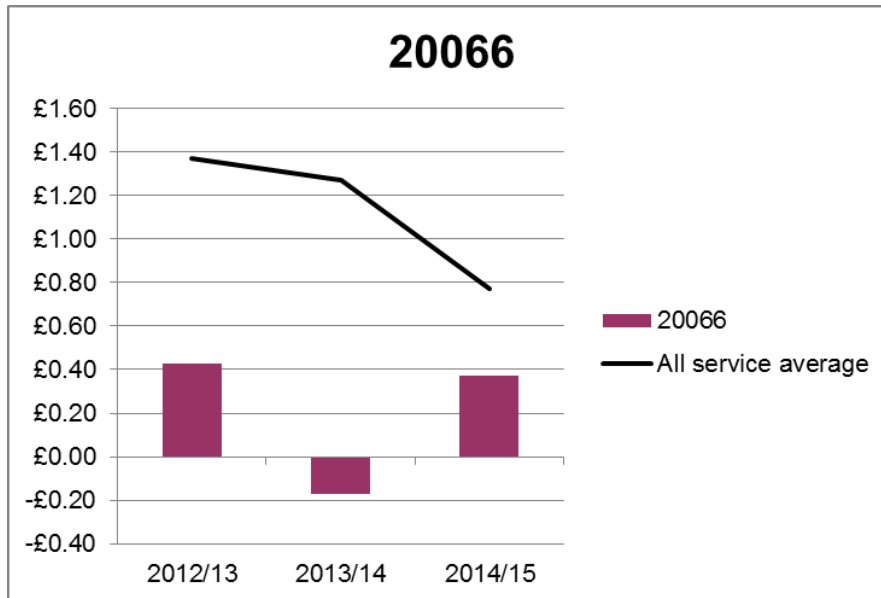
Ditton has the Children's Centre co-located in the community centre occupying approximately 25% of the accommodation with sessional use of other rooms in addition. The user numbers for the Children's Centres are not collated and do not contribute to the usage figures or APSE data.

In 2014 the 8th Widnes Scouts & Beavers relocated to Ditton Community Centre; they deliver sessions two evenings a week and will be hosting regional scouting events from Ditton in the future.

During the 2014/15 period the centre hosted a horticultural show; this is a two day event that takes place over the first weekend in September. It has been held at the Ditton community Centre annually for the last 15 years. It attracted between 600 and 700 visitors to the centre over the weekend. People of all ages can enter a range of categories for crafts and flower displays. The certificates were awarded by the panel of judges and the show was attended by the Mayor of Halton. The centre also hosted the G school of Dance annual dance competition in February 2015; the event is nationwide and has been held at the centre for a number of years. It attracts dance schools from all over the north west who compete. This event is held over a two day period and attracts over 300 visitors to the centre

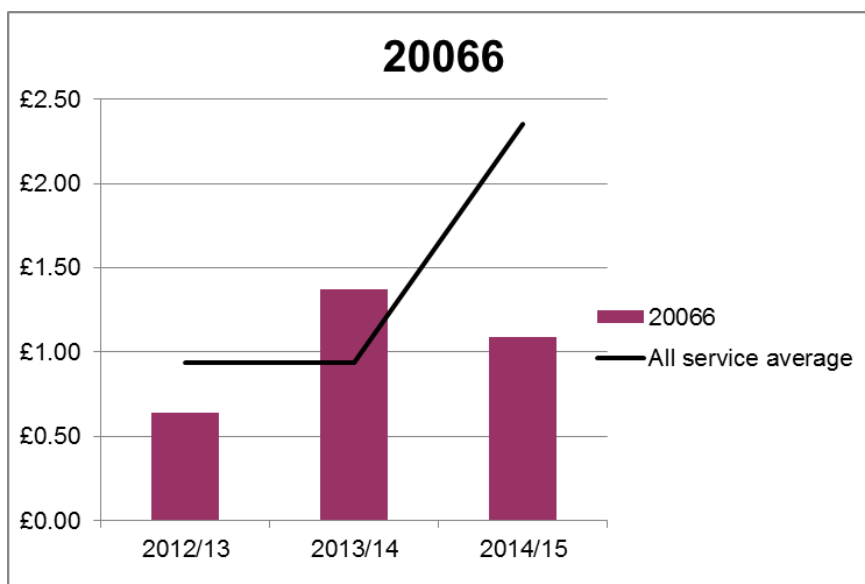
4.2.3 Ditton Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20066)

- **Ditton Net Cost Per User**



Ditton experienced an unusual position of net cost per user in 2013/14 with -17 pence hence, not a cost per user but a net gain. This was due to over achievement in income during this period. In 2014/15 the indicator has returned to a cost at 37pence per user, an overall shift of 54 pence per user. Across Halton's community centres the lowest cost per user is 6 pence and the highest is £1.20. This indicator will be a key area of focus for Ditton moving forward, we need to understand the shift and how to maintain the circumstances to reduce the cost per user as previously achieved.

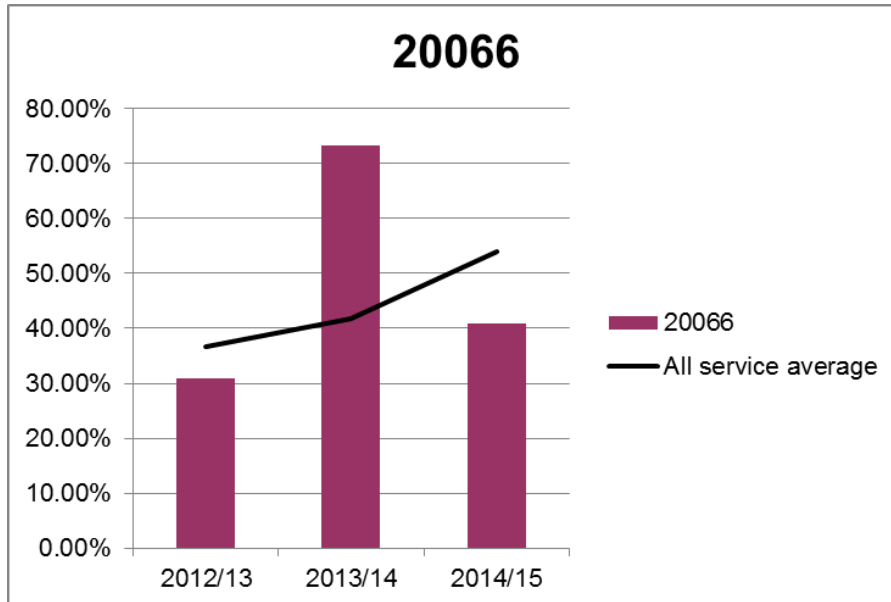
- **Ditton Total Income Per User**



In 2013/14 £1.37 income per user was achieved an increase of 75 pence compared to the previous year and correlates with the picture of net

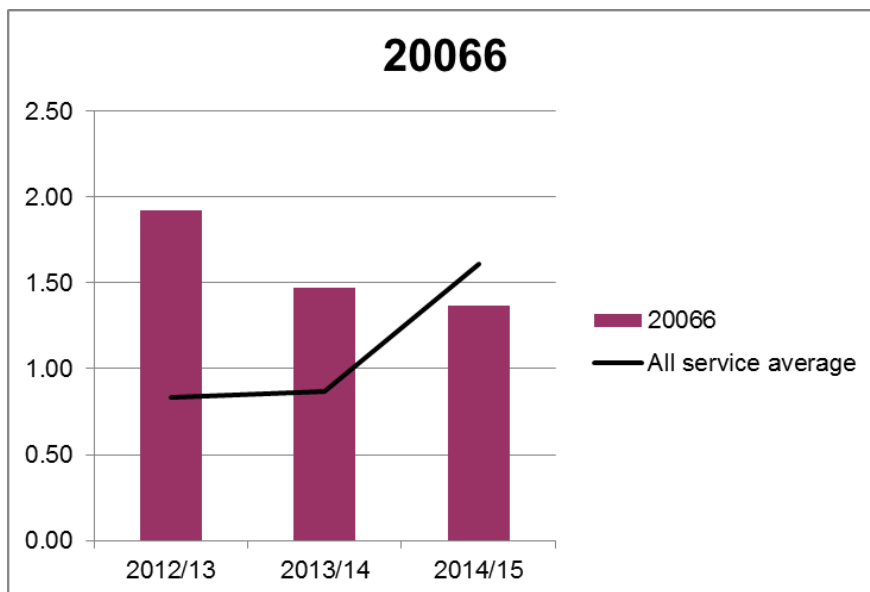
cost per user. In 2014/15 this has dipped to £1.09, the highest figure across Halton's five centres in the same period is £1.35.

- **Ditton Operational Recovery**



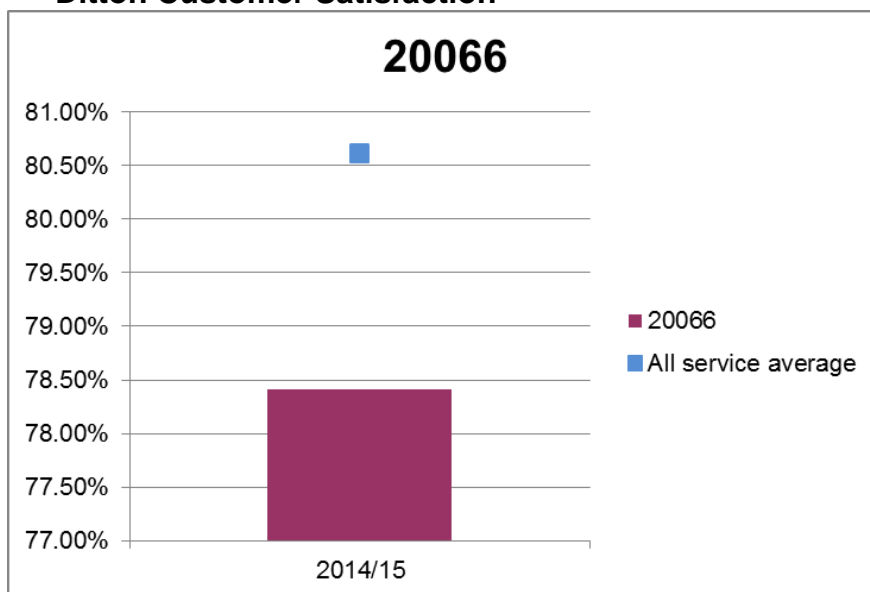
Ditton has experienced a fluctuating trend in operational recovery in recent years. In 2012/13 it was 30.90%, in 2013/14 the centre achieved 73.28%, which again fits with the picture of a bumper period and in 2014/15 this has reduced to 40.97%, a more average performance.

- **Ditton Visits Per Household**



This indicator shows a decline in visits from 1.47 to 1.37 over the three year period, the only one of Halton's centres to experience a negative performance

- **Ditton Customer Satisfaction**



This indicator was introduced in the last operating year; in 2014/15 customer satisfaction was 78.41% at Ditton Community Centre.

4.3 Grangeway Community Centre

4.3.1 Grangeway Community Centre has two distinct areas, the community centre and the hub where youth provision is delivered; a service level agreement for exclusive use exists for this space. Each of the two areas are approximately 50% of the overall site. In terms of APSE data, usage for the community centre only is collated as usage in the youth area is outside of our management; this needs to be considered when reflecting on the usage figures.

4.3.2 Some examples of activity hosted at the community centre outside of the regular planned activity are:-

In August 2014 a 'Fun Dog Show' was hosted at Grangeway. The event was organised by a dog training group who use the centre each week 'Four Paws Dog Training'. The event was to promote responsible dog ownership and offered free micro chipping and nail clipping. There were a number of stalls inside the centre and various activities and obstacle courses outside the centre for attendees to attempt. The event was well attended with over 150 people attending throughout the course of the afternoon. The success led to a further event scheduled for summer 2015.

September 2014 saw the introduction of the Work Club, established by a local tenant and resident group with funding from the 'Change the Grange' – Police & Crime Commissioner participatory budgeting initiative. The work club is free to attend and is managed by local volunteers and supported by Open 360 who provide professional support, advice on completing CV's and both online and written application forms. The club continues to run on a Thursday afternoon and has been a success with a number of attendees going on to employment.

A sole trader commenced a café provision for a six month pilot in February 2014; the pilot was extended and continues presently.

4.3.3 The overall usage of Grangeway in 2014/15:-

Total annual opening hours	3975
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1209.75
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	8386.50
Total attendance main room	23795
Total attendance other rooms	30017
Total other attendance	11586
Total attendance	65398

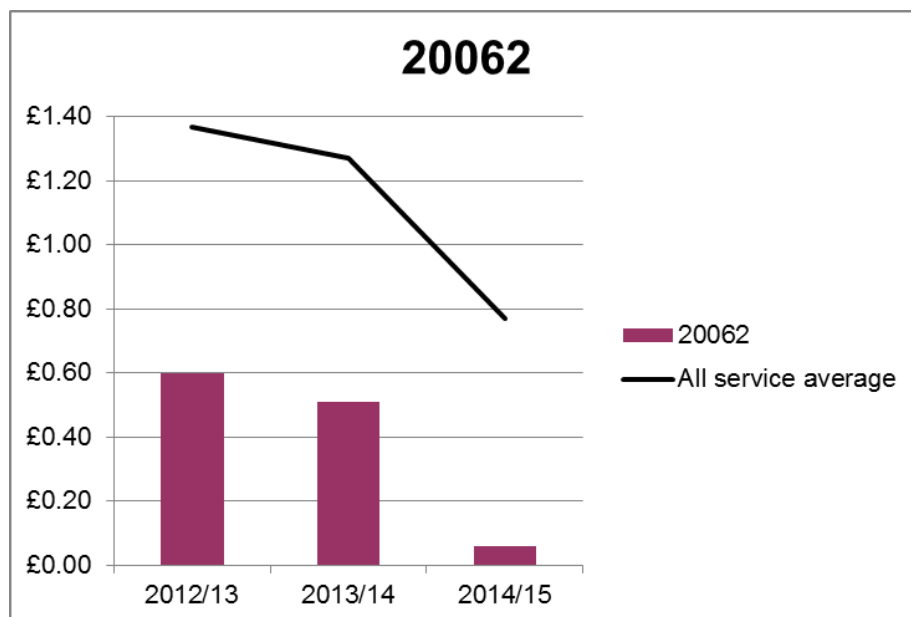
This is a significant increase of 12,746 compared to the previous operating year.

4.3.4 Category of usage at Grangeway is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	6241
Lifelong Learning	1911
Health & Healthy Living	16109
Arts Development	22368
Sports Development	7460
Statutory Agencies	5936
Events	5373
Total	65398

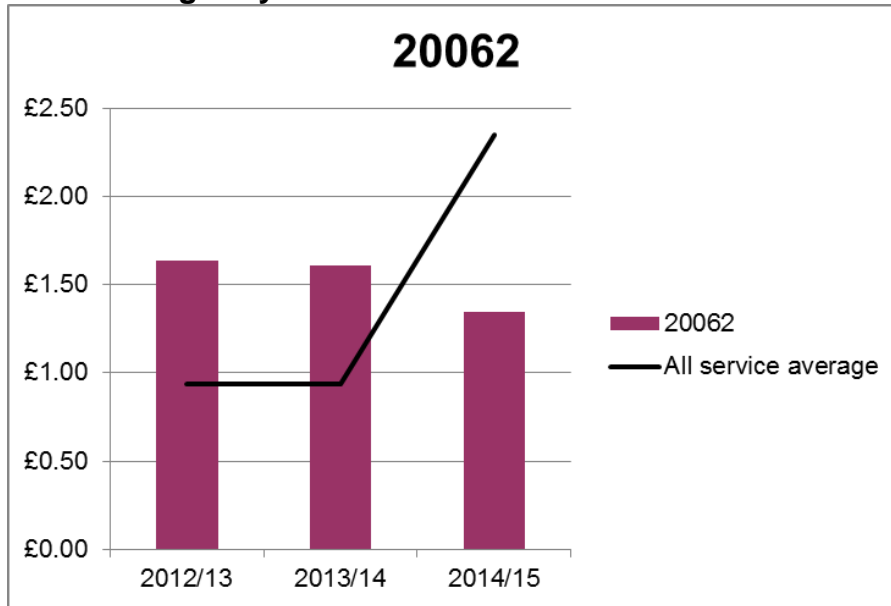
4.3.4 Grangeway Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20062)

- **Grangeway Net Cost Per User**



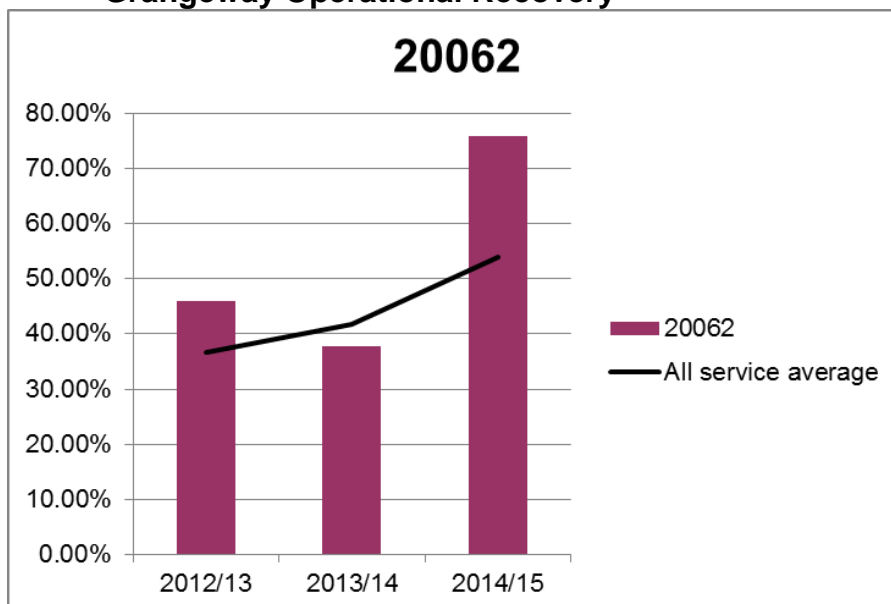
Grangeway has experienced a positive trend with this indicator since 2010/11 when the net cost per user peaked at £2.05, it reduced significantly in 2011/12 year due to overall expenditure costs reducing, this position earned the centre a Best Performer Award. In 2012/13 this reduced to 60 pence, the following year a further reduction to 51 pence was achieved, and in 2014/15 this is down to 6 pence, an extremely positive direction of travel. Indeed, Grangeway has the lowest net cost per user across Halton's five community centres.

- **Grangeway Total Income Per User**



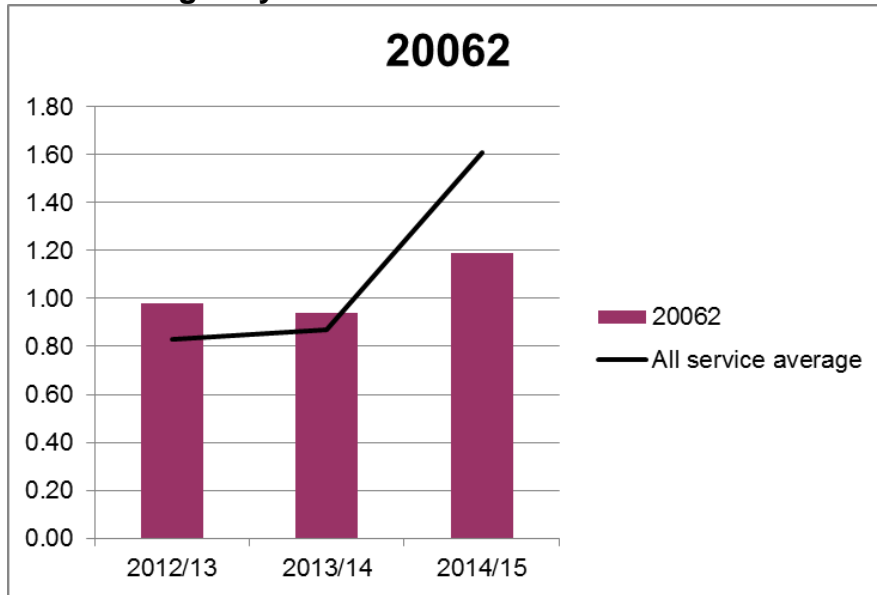
Grangeway has experienced a negative direction of travel with this indicator; in 2012/13 the income per user was £1.64, this reduced to £1.61 in 2013/14 and a further reduction to £1.35 in 2014/15. The centre has experienced the withdrawal of some services and activity hence the impact on income per user.

- **Grangeway Operational Recovery**



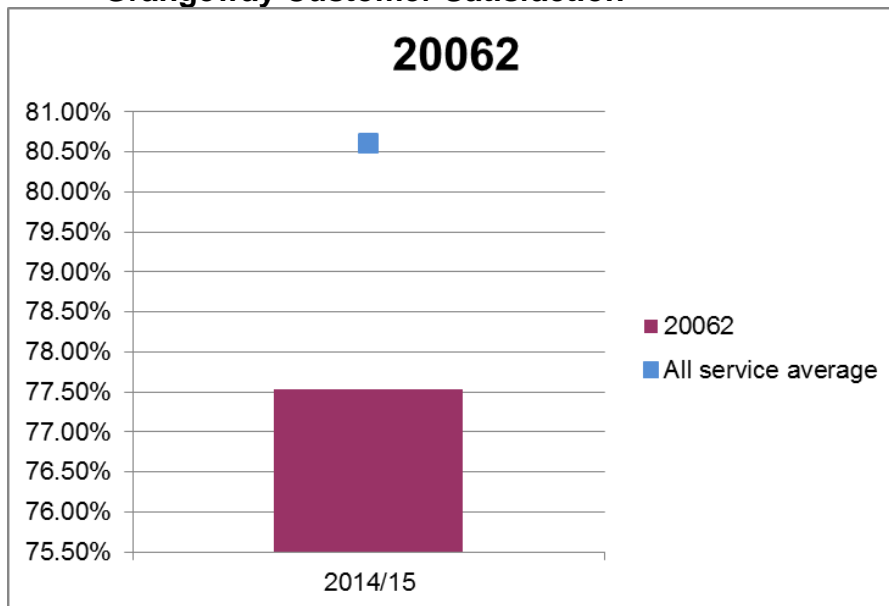
Grangeway was the first Halton Community Centre to achieve over a 50% operational recovery in 2011/12. Whilst this was a fantastic achievement this would be a difficult position to maintain. The following operating year (2012/13) the centre experienced a downturn to 45.93%, 2013/14 also had a dip to 37.80% however, in 2014/15 the operational recovery has increased significantly to 75.95%. This is a tremendous achievement, the service average is 54.01% hence, Grangeway is achieving high operational recovery, indeed the highest amongst Halton's five community centres.

- **Grangeway Visits Per Household**



The visits per household have increased steadily over the three year period from 0.98 in 2012/13 to 1.19 in 2013/14.

- **Grangeway Customer Satisfaction**



This indicator was introduced in the last operating year; in 2014/15 satisfaction is 77.53% at Grangeway Community Centre.

4.4 Murdishaw Community Centre

4.4.1 Murdishaw Community centre has a variation in its model compared to Halton's other community centres. This centre was developed in partnership with Riverside and Liverpool Housing Trust and has a Board of Directors for a company limited by guarantee. Four local Councillors currently sit on the board. This governance model enables the centre to apply for charitable funds.

4.4.2 Usage is up significantly in 2104/15, by 11,427 compared to the previous year which had experienced a reduction of 928 the centres attendance has recovered. The significant increase is attributed in part to a more robust approach in data capture.

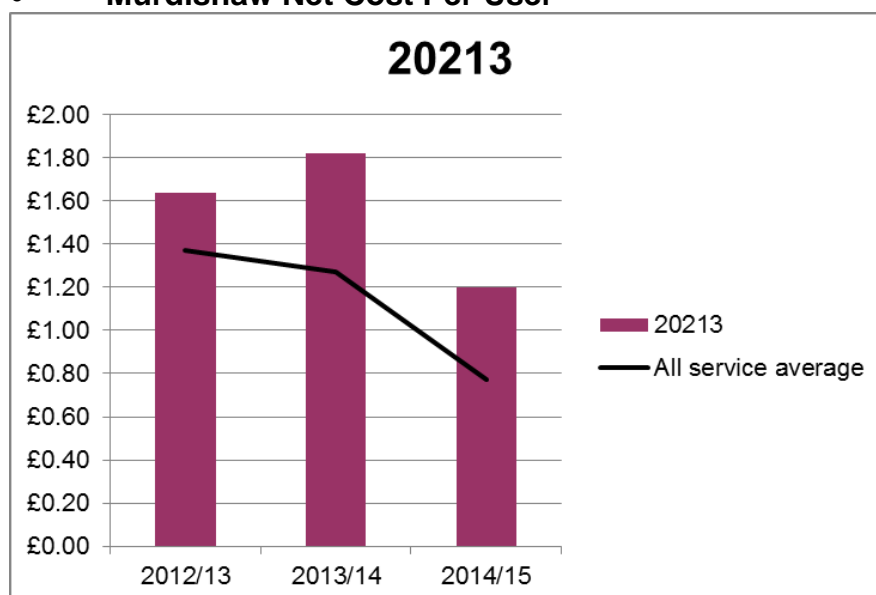
Total annual opening hours	3117
Total aggregate hours main room hired	1100.50
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	2690
Total attendance main room	13155
Total attendance other rooms	22627
Total other attendance	1065
Total attendance	36847

4.4.3 Category of usage at Murdishaw is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	1638
Lifelong Learning	948
Health & Healthy Living	9182
Arts Development	740
Sports Development	65
Statutory Agencies	21668
Events	2606
Total	36847

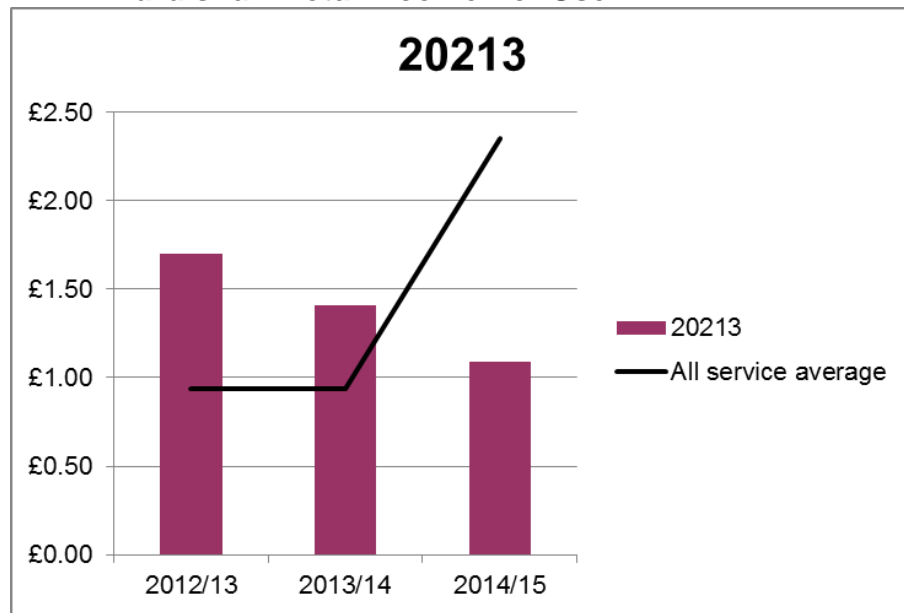
4.4.4 Murdishaw Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20213)

- **Murdishaw Net Cost Per User**



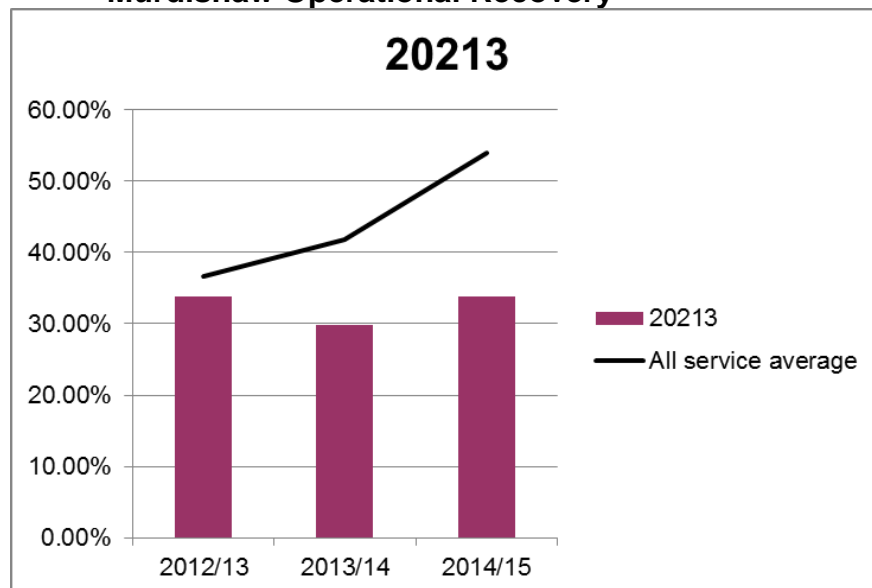
Murdishaw has had fluctuating performance with this indicator; in 2012/13 the net cost per user was £1.64, in 2013/14 this increased to £1.82 however, in 2014/15 the cost has reduced down to £1.20. This has been an area of focus for Murdishaw and the efforts are reflected in the reduced costs. It should also be borne in mind that Murdishaw's unique governance model means funds are passported through the Board of Directors and don't hit the centre budget which makes this performance an even higher achievement.

- **Murdishaw Total Income Per User**

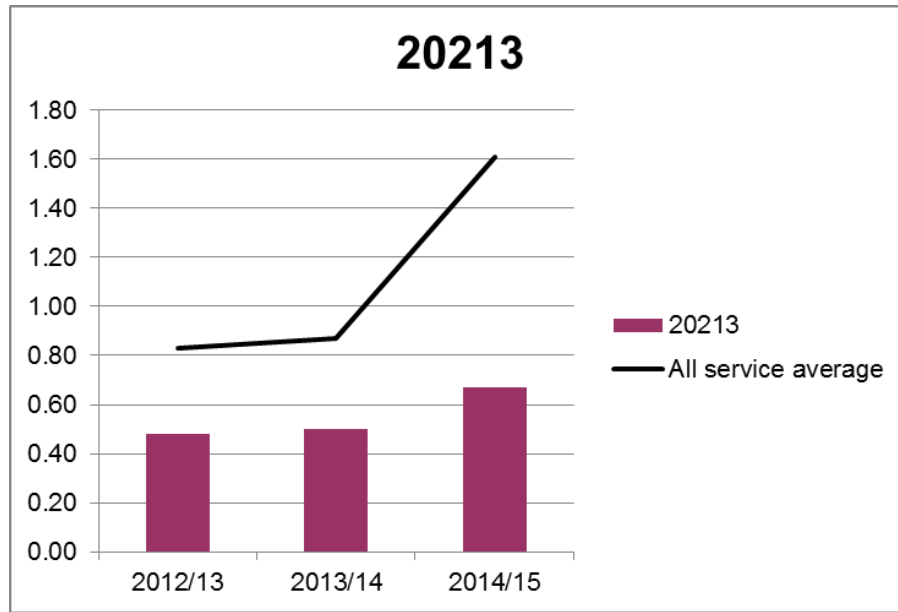


Murdishaw had a particularly high income per user in 2013/14 at £1.70, a position that would be difficult to maintain and as predicted in 2014/15 this has reduced to £1.09. Across Halton's five community centres Grangeway is the top achiever with this indicator at £1.35, the APSE service average is £2.35 hence, an area the service will be striving for continuous improvement with.

- **Murdishaw Operational Recovery**

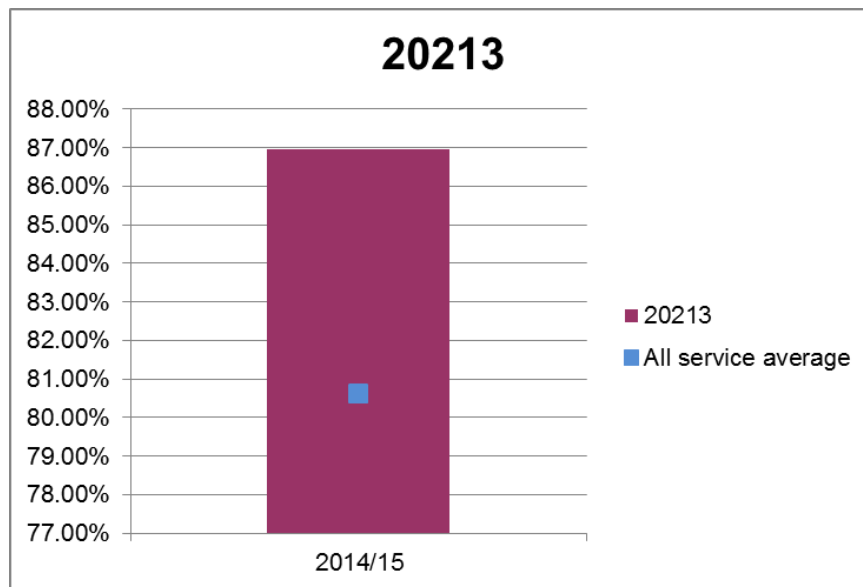


- **Murdishaw Visits Per Household**



Murdishaw has experienced a positive direction of travel over the three year period increasing from 0.48 in 2012/13 to 0.50% in 2013/14 and 0.67 in 2014/15.

- **Murdishaw Customer Satisfaction**



This indicator was introduced in the last operating year; in 2014/15 satisfaction was 86.96% at Murdishaw Community Centre, the highest level across Halton's community centres.

4.5.1 Upton Community Centre

4.5.1 Upton Community Centre is the only community centre with a Sports Hall which attracts sports teams from the local and wider community. There are a number of junior football teams in addition to senior block booking sessions that ensure the hall is booked out every night of the week between 5 and 10 pm and has a waiting list. Upton tends to have heavy demand and on average operates seven days a week.

4.5.2 In August 2014, the Upton benefitted from some significant investment from the Area Forum. The money was used to install 6 public access PC's in the café area linked through the library services allowing library users digital access in the community centre. A 7 metre high climbing wall was installed in the Sports Hall which facilitates up to 22 roped climbers at a time. Since its installation the Centre has put on 2 or 3 sessions per week, free of charge to Halton children, 2014/2015 saw 540 children attend 70 sessions.

4.5.3 Upton has had a significant increase in usage in 2014/15 of 7,940 compared to the previous year when attendances were 63,482.

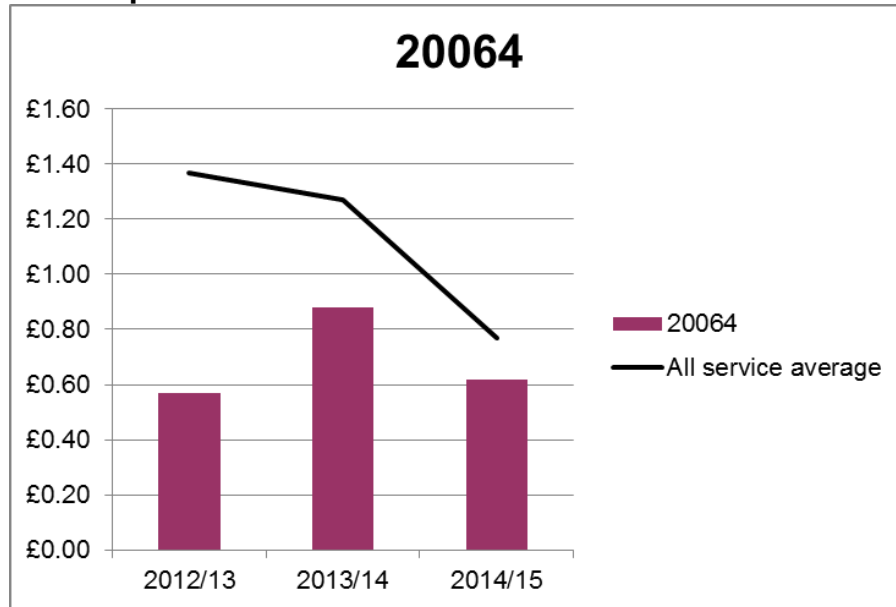
Total annual opening hours	4018
Total aggregate hours main room hired	2070.25
Total aggregate hours other rooms hired	6488.75
Total attendance main room	25844
Total attendance other rooms	45680
Total other attendance	7060
Total attendance	78584

4.5.4 Category of usage at Upton Community Centre is broken down as follows:-

Youth & Children	19382
Lifelong Learning	3141
Health & Healthy Living	23026
Arts Development	4736
Sports Development	16990
Statutory Agencies	6733
Events	4576
Total	78584

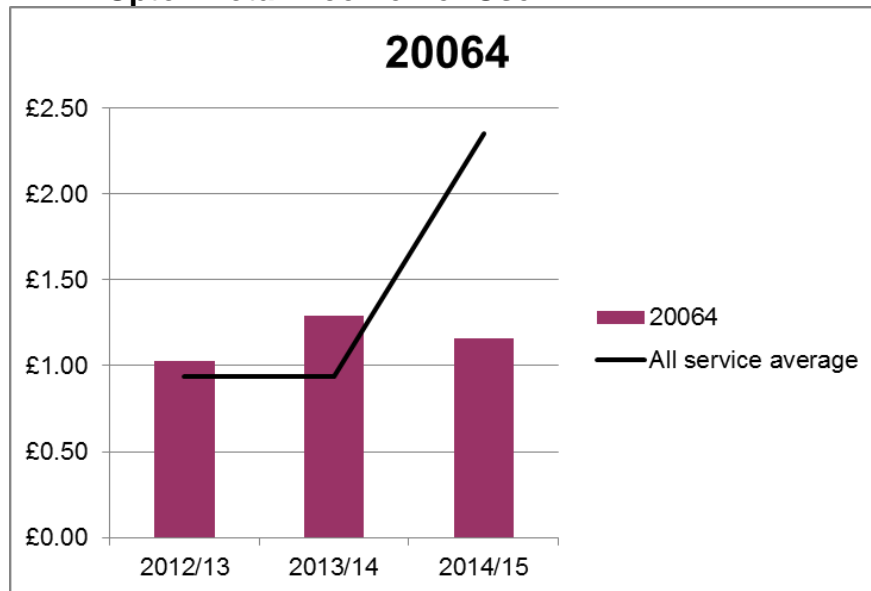
4.5.5 Upton Direction of Travel Indicators (APSE reference 20064)

- **Upton Net Cost Per User**



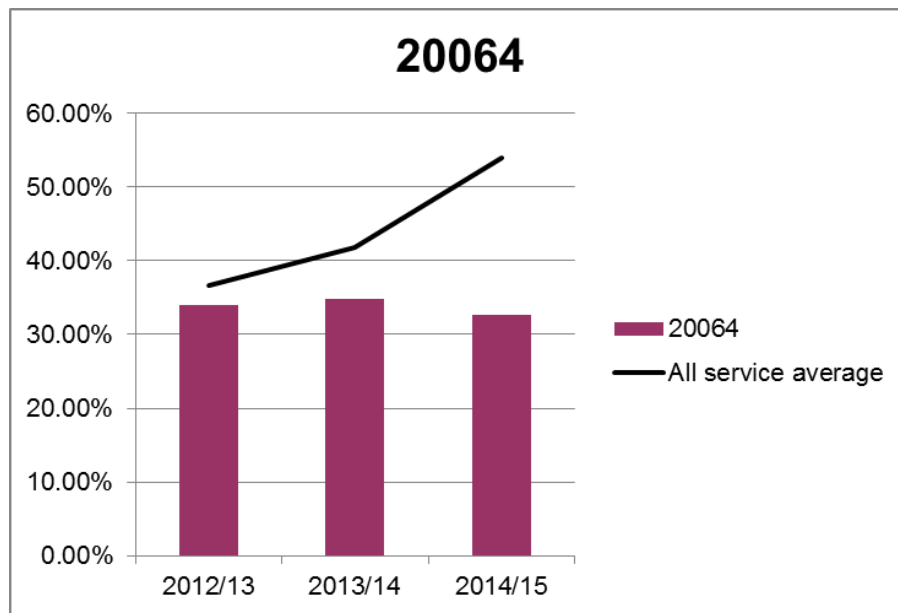
Upton has had an inconsistent direction of travel with this indicator over the three year period. In 2012/13 the cost per user was 57 pence, in 2013/14 net cost per user increased to 88 pence however, in 2014/15 this has increased to 62 pence per user, hence an improvement in the right direction.

- **Upton Total Income Per User**



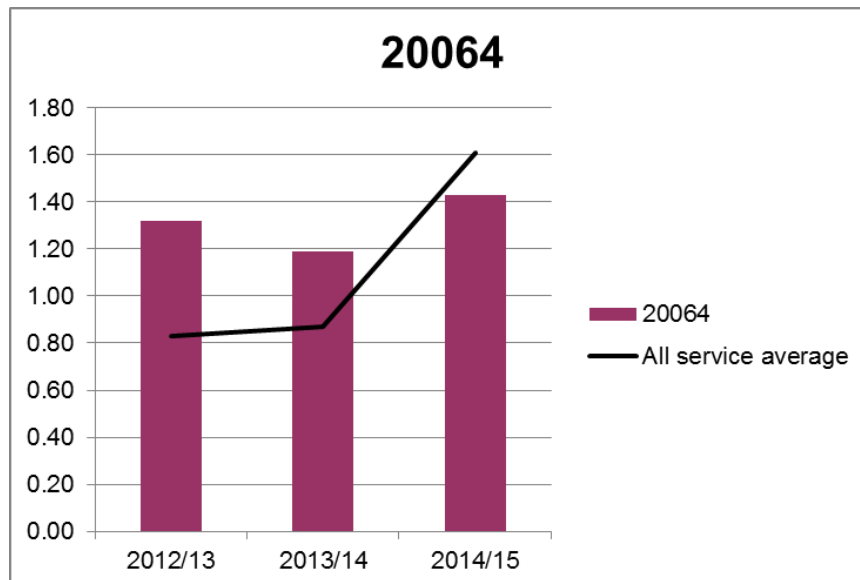
Total income per user direction of travel correlates with the net cost per user experience above. In 2012/13 it was £1.03, in 2013/14 this increased to £1.29 however, 2014/15 has seen a reduction to £1.16. This fits with the trend across all of Halton's five community centres whom have all had a reduction in the income per user in this reporting period.

- **Upton Operational Recovery**



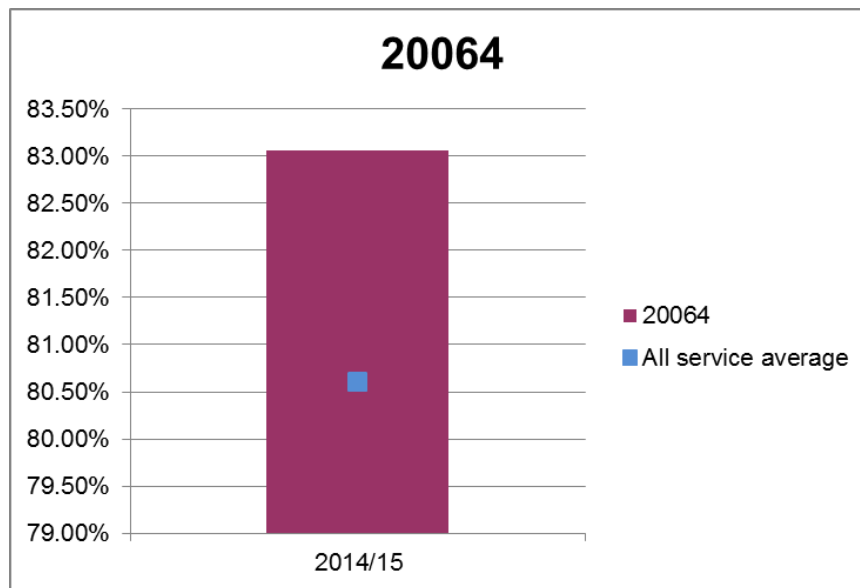
Upton had a positive trend in 2012/13 and 2013/14 achieving 34.02% and 34.82% respectively. This has reduced slightly in 2014/15 to 32.69%, only two of Halton's centre's had an increase in the same period and the all service average is 54.01% hence, a key objective for the service to focus on moving forward.

- **Upton Visits Per Household**



Upton experienced a dip with this indicator in 2013/14 dropping to 1.19 from 1.32 in 2012/13 however; this has recovered with a healthy increase in 2014/15 to 1.43 indicating increased usage from local households.

- **Upton Customer Satisfaction**



This indicator was introduced in the last operating year, in 2014/15 satisfaction was 83.06% at Upton Community Centre, the second highest of Halton's Community Centres.

5.0 SERVICE SUMMARY & FUTURE CHALLENGES

5.1 Overall, in 2014/15 the five community centres had 312,872 visits and generated income of £364k. Comparatively, the centres perform well however, the service strives for continuous improvement with key targets to increase capacity, usage and income. Securing service level agreements and fixed income for the centres is a key objective.

5.2 Since the 2014/15 operating year further improvements have been implemented in the service;

5.2.1 Plans to extend the digital access at Castlefields Community Centre have been developed; currently the centre has three public access PCs linked to the Halton Borough Council Library service. The provision is hugely popular with service users and often experiences high levels of demand for access which the current set up is unable to meet the demand of. An additional three PCs to increase the availability to digital access is underway.

5.2.2 Ditton Community Centre has benefited aesthetically in recent months. Funding was acquired (from Local Area Forum) and has enabled significant refurbishment works to take place; the majority of the centre has been painted, new furniture has been purchased and new exterior signs have been installed. Significant improvements can also be seen in the outside space at the centre, largely as a result of the partnership with the charity Night Stop and their team of volunteers.

- 5.2.3 Grangeway Community Centre has seen significant improvement in the outside space at the centre. Working in partnership with Canal Boat Project (who have been tenants of the centre since the start of 2015/2016 operating year) with the support of the National Citizens Service, some derelict land to the side and rear of the centre has been transformed into a community allotment area with designated storage facility which is intended to be used by regular service users and the youth service providers at Grangeway Community Centre to promote healthy eating. The space has been well used to date and is proving to be an attractive addition to the community centre.
- 5.2.4 Murdishaw Community Centre has seen significant improvements in the outside space at the Centre. The Centre has benefitted from the participation in the Murdishaw in Bloom Project and the continued weekly maintenance of the space as a result of the existing partnership with the charity Night Stop and their team of volunteers.
- 5.2.5 Upton Community Centre has seen an increase in the café provision, from four days per week to five days per week. The café has become a vital provision at the centre over the last twelve months particularly, attracting local residents and new service users whilst also generating income for the service. The six public access PC's in the café area has attracted many new users and allowed the centre to work in partnership with the Children's Centre and offer a weekly IT drop in clinic, which continues to be available to all Halton residents, providing free advice on CV writing skills, Job applications and general computer skills.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Community centres provide a platform for intergenerational activity, community activity and youth service delivery. The service hosts auditions for Halton's Got Talent each year engaging with hundreds of young people; signposting to culture and performing arts activities and showcasing youth hubs to increase participation.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Community centres provide employment opportunities within the service, community delivery points for training and employment initiatives and lifelong learning. Future job funds and work experience placements for young people and adults with learning disabilities are offered all year round in the community centres.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Community centres contribute to a whole area approach to health and wellbeing. They provide a nucleus to support community activity and access to services in neighbourhoods.

Community cafes, health initiatives, health based activity in community centres such as physical activity, smoking cessation, breathe easy, stroke association, community gardening, healthy eating, cook & taste, weight management. 26% of usage in community centres is directly health outcome related. Community Centres are SHOP (Safer Homes for Older People) and HELPS (Home Equipment at Low Price) outlets providing low cost safety equipment.

6.4 A Safer Halton

A sense of community and community connectedness reduces residents' fears of crime where they live, they are likely to feel a stronger sense of belonging and safety in an environment where the communities know each other, are active and there are established links to other stakeholders like police, housing, community wardens, etc. Community Centres provide a community hub and platform for this. Community centres are safe, accessible facilities located in the heart of our communities. They serve both the local and wider community and promote participation, inclusion and cohesion. All centres are designated Emergency Rest Centres, Hate Crime Reporting Centres and designated Safe in Town facilities.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Community Centres contribute to wider community initiatives and regeneration in the areas they are sited. There are numerous community gardening and local environmental projects across the service working jointly with key stakeholders.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 Community centres provide cohesion to those communities they serve. Accessing services and participating in community life contributes to resident's health and wellbeing by providing support, enhancing skills and building connected communities. Not providing community centres or reducing the services and activities provided through them could have a detrimental effect on current and potential future users and would result in poorly served and disconnected communities.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 The service is open and accessible to all Halton's residents.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 None.