

Minute of Meeting Community Asset Transfer Sub-committee

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 24 May 2023	13:00	Microsoft Teams Meeting,

Present: Councillor Stephen Burns, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Chris Gilmour, Councillor Janis McDonald, Councillor John McNaughtan

Chair

Councillor Campbell, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

A Morrison, Head of Economy & Development Services, S Inrig, Programme Manager – Community Asset Transfer & Regeneration and E Shearer, Regeneration & Place Manager (all Chief Executive's Service); and N Young, Assistant Managing Solicitor (Litigation & Advice), D Pole, End User Technician, E Gray, Senior Committee Services Officer and D Cunningham and J Barron, both Assistant Committee Services Officers (all Finance & Resources).

Webcasting of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Sub-committee would be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 **Community Asset Transfer Request – Vacant Site at Lochhead Avenue, Lochwinnoch PA12 4AW**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to a Community Asset Transfer request submitted in respect of the transfer of the vacant site at Lochhead Avenue, Lochwinnoch PA12 4AW to Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The application was set out in full as an appendix to the report.

The report provided an overview to Community Asset Transfer (CAT) legislation, the site, the applicant and the Council's process for determining applications.

The CAT request was submitted on 30 January 2023 with a view to leasing the site for a minimum period of 10 years with the option to purchase the site at the end of or during the lease period. The purpose of the application was to allow for development of the site into a multi-use social space and garden with provision for the continued hosting of a number of community groups; an outdoor market space; holding workshops, classes and events; hireable space with picnic and barbeque areas; and community vegetable growing plots. Details on the expected community benefits and sustainability plan were provided in the report.

Following submission of the application, interested parties were entitled to provide written representations. A total of 112 valid representations, together with 257 valid responses to a Community Council questionnaire, were received with 74% of respondents in favour of the proposals.

The application was initially considered by the Council's CAT Officer Panel on 25 April 2023 where it was agreed to recommend that this Sub-committee approve the request.

Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust had proposed a rent of £25 per month and requested the right to erect buildings, sub-let and connect the site to services such as phoneline, water and sewage. Due to the cost of administration, the CAT panel recommended a rent of £1 per annum.

Councillor Campbell moved that:

(a) That the transfer of the vacant site at Lochhead Avenue, Lochwinnoch PA12 4AW to Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust be approved for lease period of 10 years for the discounted rent of £1 per annum;

(b) That the Head of Economy and Development and the Head of Corporate Governance be authorised to conclude the lease at the rate above, and on such terms as required to protect the Council's interest; and

(c) That a review into sale of the site be carried out after three years to:

(i) Assess whether the group's finances correlated with the projections set out in the application and to provide an updated financial projection;

(ii) Gather data on the impact which the lease had on the local community and businesses;

- (iii) Provide an update on the planning status and history of the site including any proposals for a Local Place Plan in the area; and
- (iv) Investigate potential site contamination and proposals for treatment of any contamination.

This was agreed unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That the transfer of the vacant site at Lochhead Avenue, Lochwinnoch PA12 4AW to Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust be approved for lease period of 10 years for the discounted rent of £1 per annum;

(b) That the Head of Economy and Development and the Head of Corporate Governance be authorised to conclude the lease at the rate above, and on such terms as required to protect the Council's interest; and

(c) That a review into sale of the site be carried out after three years to:

- (i) Assess whether the group's finances correlated with the projections set out in the application and to provide an updated financial projection;
- (ii) Gather data on the impact which the lease had on the local community and businesses;
- (iii) Provide an update on the planning status and history of the site including any proposals for a Local Place Plan in the area; and
- (iv) Investigate potential site contamination and proposals for treatment of any contamination.