



To: Council

On: 30 April 2015

Report by: Director of Finance & Resources

Heading: Surplus Site at Moss Road Linwood
Linwood Community Development Trust

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks to obtain Council's agreement to the Community Asset Transfer of surplus land adjacent to Clippens School to Linwood Community Development Trust.
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2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:-

- 2.1 Agree to the transfer of the surplus site as indicated on the attached plan to Linwood Community Development Trust, subject to the terms and conditions detailed within the body of this report.
- 2.2 Request the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to conclude, on the satisfaction of the terms and conditions, the transfer of the site to Linwood Community Development Trust in terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.
- 2.3 Note that should the Linwood Community Development Trust be unable to secure the necessary funding for this project or necessary statutory consents, then the ground will remain with the Council on its surplus list.

- 2.4 Agree, if the Trust is successful in securing stage 1 funding from the Big Lottery to support a full stage 2 funding submission that the Council commits to make available match funding of £50,000 to the Trust to assist in meeting the cost of developing the project proposals and Stage 2 submission.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Former playing fields at Clippens School Linwood were declared surplus by the former Strathclyde Regional Council's Buildings & Property Committee at its meeting on the 18th April 1991. This decision related purely to the school playing fields with the building at that time being allocated to Education for Clippens Special School.
- 3.2 The former Strathclyde Regional Council (SRC) did attempt to dispose of the site on a number of occasions and while developers had been identified to take forward proposed development of the site, in all instances, the proposed disposal failed to conclude due to poor ground conditions following a site and soil test.
- 3.3 The site has been used informally by youths and by the local Linwood Rangers Boys football club for training purposes.
- 3.4 Linwood Community Development Trust (LCDT) is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and was established in 2011. Its goal is of preserving the recreational, cultural, social networking, educational and personal welfare resources of Linwood. They undertake community projects for the benefit of the people of Linwood. To date they have raised funding in the order of £300,000 for a number of projects in Linwood. e.g. HELP (Health Eating in Linwood Project), Linwood in Bloom, Light up Linwood and Kit and Caboodle. They have also undertaken a community consultation with over 2,200 residents and developed a Community Action Plan to improve Linwood based on the consultation findings.
- 3.5 LCDT has identified the surplus site at Clippens School as an opportunity to develop a 3G synthetic sports pitch to serve the local community and has applied for the transfer of the fields to the Trust in terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.
- 3.6 LCDT initiated a stage 1 outline application for the site on 25 November 2013. To assist the determination of the suitability of the ground the Council undertook its own site and soil tests which confirmed the ground was not suitable for residential development. This ground report was shared with LCDT to assist in their consideration of whether to progress with a stage 2 full business case application. Following receipt of the site and soil information and consultation with their own property advisers, LCDT submitted a stage 2 application on the 19 December 2014.

- 3.7 Council will recall that the prospect of this moving forward was outlined at the Planning and Property Board at its meeting on 26 August 2014 in terms of the Community Asset Transfer Update Report.
- 3.8 LCDT in terms of their business and delivery plan have highlighted that they will require to secure upwards of £0.700 million to progress the project and they are in active discussion with a number of funding bodies in this regard.
- 3.9 The Head of Planning & Economic Development has advised that should they seek to develop the 3G sports pitch with lighting and portacabins changing facilities this will require a change of use application.

4. Discussions on Terms and Conditions

- 4.1 Council Officers upon receiving the stage 2 application have examined the business and delivery plan submitted and convened the Asset Transfer Panel in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy. The Head of Property Services chaired the panel, which met with LCDT and their consultant on the 13th March 2015 to discuss the proposal.
- 4.2 LCDT and their consultants advise they have a viable proposal which will result in additional 3G sports pitch being created for the benefit of the local community. This will augment the Council run facilities at the On-X and Ferguslie Sports Centre. The Trust and their consultants advise that they are fully aware of the existing ground conditions as detailed in the reports provided to them by the Council and that these have been appropriately taken into account in the estimated construction costs forming part of their business case.
- 4.3 LCDT is seeking a full asset transfer with the Council transferring the site to the Trust for a nominal sum. This is due in part to the level of investment required for this facility. Recognising the poor ground conditions attributable to the site, it has a current Asset value of £500; officers would recommend it is transferred for the sum of £1, if asked, in support of this community initiative.
- 4.4 LCDT had hoped to be starting on site during September 2015. However, as they have not, as yet, secured appropriate funding for this project or all of the necessary statutory consents, it is recognised that this timescale is unlikely to be achievable. It is proposed that a date of entry will be mutually agreed between the Council and LCDT, reflecting an achievable project delivery timescale and one which would only be triggered once LCDT have secured the necessary funding commitments, statutory consents and have in place a satisfactory delivery plan.
- 4.5 Should LCDT secure the funding and statutory consents prior to Clippens School closing and pupils transferring to the new build facility on the site of the former St. Brendan's High School, scheduled for summer 2016, then LCDT and its contractors will agree with the Council's Director of Children's Services and Director of Finance & Resources on an appropriate safe

working delivery plan to ensure there is no adverse effects to the day to day running of Clippens School.

- 4.6 Recognising this is a Community Asset Transfer officers would recommend that each party will bear their own professional & legal expenses with this transaction with the purchaser being responsible for meeting any stamp duties, taxes or registration dues.
- 4.7 At present LCDT are progressing a Stage 1 application to the Big Lottery seeking £50,000 of funding to support the Trust to progress the development of the project to a position appropriate for a full Stage 2 funding submission. LCDT have requested that the Council support this application by committing to provide £50,000 of funding to match any award secured from the Big Lottery.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – as detailed in the report and subject to the related conditions £50,000 of funding would be provided to the LCDT from existing resources earmarked by the Council to support the development of community facilities along with the proposed transfer of 2.4ha site for £1, if asked.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None.
3. **Community Planning** -

Wealthier and Fairer -
A key objective of LCDT is to increase opportunities for volunteering and health benefits for the residents of Linwood and to deliver affordable sports pitches.

Smarter -
Delivery through Community Asset Transfer will provide an effective approach to delivering local services by augmenting the existing sporting facilities and increasing the scale of community involvement and integration.

Developing our Organisation -
By supporting LCDT in this initiative it promotes learning and development through joint working across the third sector and enhanced, partnership working.
4. **Legal** - transfer of the Council's title to LCDT.
5. **Property/Assets** - As per this report.
6. **Information Technology** - None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

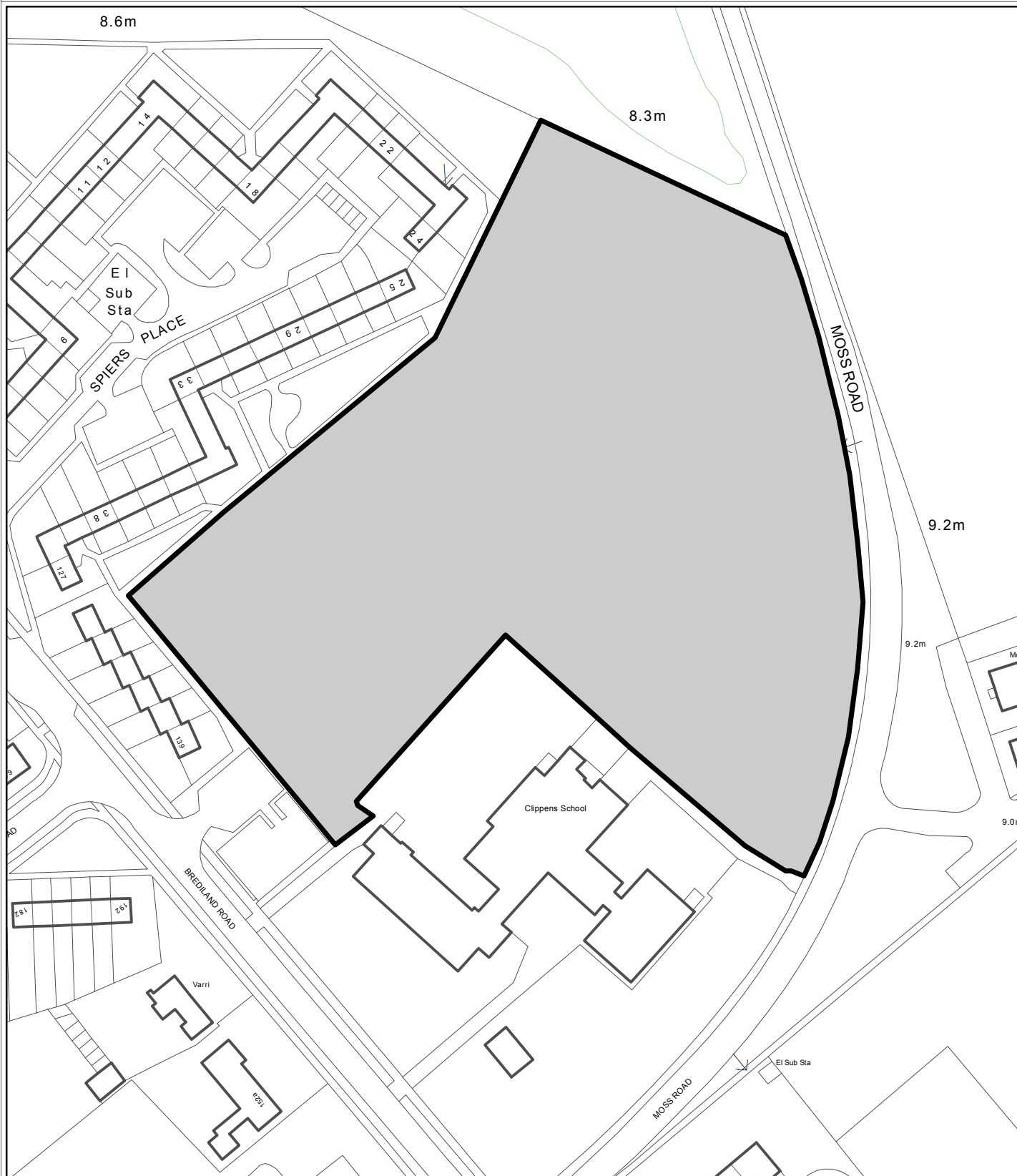
(a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because no groups or individuals have any involvement currently at the property. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - None.
9. **Procurement** - None.

10. **Risk** – There remains a risk that LCDT do not obtain the necessary funding support and as detailed in the report the site will remain with the Council. Further, that if they do succeed in securing funding, there remains a risk that the proposal does not prove to be as viable as envisaged.
 11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
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Notes:



Site area extends to 2.4 hectares or thereby.