

TITLE OF REPORT: Surrender and Re-grant of a Lease: Land at Oakwood and Wealcroft, Leam Lane

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to the grant of a new lease of land at Oakwood and Wealcroft, Leam Lane.

Background

2. The land at Wealcroft, shown edged black on the attached plan, is currently leased to the Trustees of Leam Rangers Youth Football Club (the Club) for a term of 20 years from the 16 June 2003, at a current rent of £750.00 per annum. The Club, however, now require a longer term lease to secure funding.
3. The Club's membership has grown and they now require additional pitches. The adjacent land at Oakwood, shown hatched black on the attached plan, is no longer required for service delivery and has been identified as suitable to accommodate their requirements for the Club's expansion.

Proposal

4. It is proposed that the land at Oakwood is declared surplus and that the existing lease at Wealcroft is surrendered and a new 35 year lease is granted to the Trustees of Leam Rangers Youth Football Club of the combined areas at a rent of £1,900.00 per annum, subject to 5 yearly rent reviews.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
 - (i) Declare the land at Oakwood surplus to the Council's requirements;
 - (ii) Accept a surrender of the existing lease and authorise the grant of a 35 year lease of the land at Oakwood and Wealcroft to the Trustees of Leam Rangers Youth Football Club at an initial annual rent of £1,900, subject to 5 yearly rent reviews.

For the following reason:

To manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.

Policy Context

1. The proposal supports the overall vision for Gateshead as set out in Vision 2030 and the Council Plan: In particular creating conditions for volunteering and community cohesion, and promoting a healthy and active Gateshead.
2. The proposal also accords with the provisions of the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015 – 2020. In particular, the rationalisation of the estate through disposal of an uneconomic asset.

Background and Proposal

3. Leam Rangers Youth Football Club (the Club), which was established in 1993, has a membership of over 200 and provides opportunities for youth football with teams ranging from under 7s to under 16s, in addition to 2 senior teams. The Club currently occupy the land at Wealcroft, which is shown outlined in black on the attached plan, for a term of 20 years from 16 June 2003 and are currently paying a rent of £750.00 per annum.
4. The current agreement, however, does not support the Club's long-term aspirations to secure funding to enable growth as a sport and community facility. The adjacent land at Oakwood, which is shown hatched black on the attached plan, has been identified as suitable to accommodate their growing membership.
5. Both the land at Wealcroft and the land at Oakwood are held by the Council for the purpose of the benefit improvement and development of the borough pursuant to 120(1) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The land at Oakwood is no longer required by the Council for service delivery and will be maintained by the Club, which will be of benefit to the Council.

Consultation

6. In preparing this report, consultations have taken place with the Leader, Deputy Leader, and Ward Councillors for Windy Nook and Whitehills who have raised no objections to the proposal.

Alternative Options

7. The option of retaining the land has been discounted as no alternative use has been identified and disposal by the grant of the lease will ensure that the land is maintained.

Implications of Recommended Option

8. **Resources:**
 - a. **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that that disposal of the land and provision of a lease to the Club will produce an additional £1,150 in revenue per annum for the Council.

- b. **Human Resources Implications** – There are no implications arising from this recommendation
 - c. **Property Implications** – The disposal of this land will result in a reduction in maintenance costs.
- 9. **Risk Management Implications** – There are no implications arising from this recommendation.
- 10. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – There are no implications arising from this recommendation.
- 11. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – The grant of a lease of this land will remove opportunities for crime and disorder.
- 12. **Health Implications** – There are no implications arising from this recommendation.
- 13. **Sustainability Implications** – The disposal of the land by the grant of a lease will ensure the future use of unused land.
- 14. **Human Rights Implications** – There are no human rights implications arising from this recommendation.
- 15. **Area and Ward Implications** – Windy Nook and Whitehills in the East area.