

TITLE OF REPORT: Surplus Declarations

REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Strategic Director Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to (i) the properties listed below being declared surplus to the Council's requirements and (ii) the future proposals for the properties after being declared surplus.
 - Crawcrook Park pavilion and bowling green, Main Street, Crawcrook
 - Ravensworth bowling green and pavilion, Cowen Gardens, Lamesley
 - Thornley Woodland Centre, Lockhaugh Road, Rowlands Gill

Background

2. The properties, which are shown edged black on the plans provided, are no longer required by the Council for service delivery for the reasons set out in the appendices.

Proposal

3. It is proposed that the properties be declared surplus to the Council's requirements and thereafter dealt with in accordance with the proposals set out in the attached appendices (1-3).

Recommendations

4. Cabinet is asked to approve the recommendations set out in Appendices 1-3 of this report.

For the following reasons:

- (i) To manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.
- (ii) To realise savings identified through rationalisation of the bowling green portfolio.

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APPENDIX 1: Crawcrook Park Pavilion and Bowling Green, Main Street, Crawcrook,

Policy Context

1. The proposed surplus declaration supports the overall vision for Making Gateshead a Place where Everyone Thrives. In particular, supporting communities to support themselves and each other, and will help deliver the Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Strategy, in particular the policy objective to create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
2. The proposed declaration will also accord with the provisions of the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015 – 2020. In particular, the rationalisation of the estate through the disposal of an uneconomic asset.

Background

3. At its meeting on 19th September 2017 Cabinet approved the rationalisation of the Council maintained stock from 27 to 14 bowling greens as recommended within the Playing Pitch Strategy (Minute No. C62).
4. Our Villages Crawcrook and Greenside Community Interest Organisation (CIO), which already assists the Council with the general maintenance of Crawcrook Park, expressed an interest in taking on responsibility for the pavilion and bowling green. Our Villages Crawcrook and Greenside CIO has worked on its business plan to use the pavilion and green to provide community activities aimed at increasing use of the park and raising funds to make improvements to the park, and is now in a position to proceed with a community asset transfer of the property.
5. The property, shown edged black on the plan, is held for Leisure purposes. The Council has the authority to dispose of land held for this purpose at an undervalue of no more than £2,000,000 provided that it is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of persons residing in the borough. The purpose of the disposal will clearly contribute to the social and environmental well-being of residents. The proposed disposal will need to be advertised under Section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, and any objections taken into account.

Proposal

6. It is proposed that, subject to the proposed disposal being advertised as required by Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the property, shown edged black on the attached plan, be declared surplus to the Council's requirements and a 35-year lease at a nil rent be granted to Our Villages Crawcrook and Greenside CIO pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that subject to the proposed disposal being advertised as required by Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, Cabinet:
 - (i) Declares the property surplus to the Council's requirements.

- (ii) Authorises the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance to grant a 35-year lease at a nil rent pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy to Our Villages Crawcrook and Greenside CIO.

For the following reason:

- (i) To manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.
- (ii) To realise savings identified through rationalisation of the bowling green portfolio as agreed by Cabinet (Minute No. C62).

Consultation

- 8. In preparing this report consultations have taken place with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Ward Councillors for Crawcrook and Greenside.

Alternative Options

- 9. The option of retaining the property has been discounted as the maintenance of the green and pavilion had been identified as an efficiency saving. There are currently no alternative viable options for the use of the site.

Implications of Recommended Option

- 10. **Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** - The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms there are no financial implications arising from this recommendation.

- b) **Human Resources Implications** - There are no direct staffing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

- c) **Property Implications** - The grant of a lease of this property will result in a reduction in the Council's operational property portfolio and reduce operational costs.

- 11. **Risk Management Implication** – There are no risk management implications arising from this recommendation.

- 12. **Equality and Diversity** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

- 13. **Crime and Disorder Implications** - The grant of a lease of this property will reduce opportunities for crime and disorder, especially vandalism and theft.

- 14. **Health Implications** – The activities provided by the tenant will provide both physical and mental health benefits to people who participate in the activities delivered.

- 15. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - The future grant of a lease will reduce the level of the Council's operational maintenance, which will subsequently result in a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint.

16. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.
17. **Ward Implications** – Crawcrook and Greenside.
18. **Background Information** – Minute No. C62(2017)

APPENDIX 2: Ravensworth Bowling Green and Pavilion, Cowen Gardens, Lamesley, NE9 7TY

Policy Context

1. The proposed surplus declaration supports the overall vision for Making Gateshead a Place where Everyone Thrives. In particular, supporting communities to support themselves and each other and will help deliver the Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Strategy, in particular the policy objective to create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
2. The proposed declaration will also accord with the provisions of the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015 – 2020. In particular, the rationalisation of the estate through the disposal of an uneconomic asset.

Background

3. At its meeting on 19th September 2017 Cabinet approved the rationalisation of the Council maintained stock from 27 to 14 bowling greens as recommended within the Playing Pitch Strategy (Minute No. C62).
4. Ravensworth Community Bowling Club Community Interest Organisation (CIO), which currently uses the facility, expressed an interest in taking on responsibility for the pavilion and bowling green. Ravensworth Community Bowling Club CIO has worked on its business plan to continue to use the pavilion and green to provide community bowling activities and is now in a position to proceed with a community asset transfer of the property.
5. The property, shown edged black on the plan, is held for Leisure purposes. The Council has the authority to dispose of land held for this purpose at an undervalue of no more than £2,000,000 provided that it is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of persons residing in the borough. The purpose of the disposal will clearly contribute to the social and environmental well-being of residents. The proposed disposal will need to be advertised under Section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, and any objections taken into account.

Proposal

6. It is proposed that, subject to the proposed disposal being advertised as required by Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the property, shown edged black on the attached plan, be declared surplus to the Council's requirements and a 35-year lease at a nil rent be granted to Ravensworth Community Bowling Club CIO pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that subject to the proposed disposal being advertised as required by Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, Cabinet:
 - (i) Declares the property surplus to the Council's requirements;

- (ii) Authorise the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance to grant a 35-year lease at a nil rent pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy to Ravensworth Community Bowling Club CIO.

For the following reason:

- (i) To manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.
- (ii) To realise savings identified through rationalisation of the bowling green portfolio as agreed by Cabinet (Minute No. C62).

Consultation

- 8. In preparing this report consultations have taken place with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Ward Councillors for Lamesley.

Alternative Options

- 9. The option of retaining the property has been discounted as the maintenance of the green and pavilion had been identified as an efficiency saving. There are currently no alternative viable options for the use of the site.

Implications of Recommended Option

10. Resources:

- a) Financial Implications** - The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms there are no financial implications arising from this recommendation.
- b) Human Resources Implications** - There are no direct staffing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
- c) Property Implications** - The grant of a lease of this property will result in a reduction in the Council's operational property portfolio and reduce operational costs.

- 11. **Risk Management Implication** – There are no risk management implications arising from this recommendation.

- 12. **Equality and Diversity** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

- 13. **Crime and Disorder Implications** - The grant of a lease of this property will reduce opportunities for crime and disorder, especially vandalism and theft.

- 14. **Health Implications** – The activities provided by the tenant will provide both physical and mental health benefits to people who participate in the activities delivered.

- 15. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - The future grant of a lease will reduce the level of the Council's operational maintenance, which will subsequently result in a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint.

16. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

17. **Ward Implications** – Lamesley.

18. **Background Information** – Minute No. C62(2017)

APPENDIX 3: Thornley Woodland Centre, Lockhaugh Road, Rowlands Gill NE39 1AU

Policy Context

1. The proposed surplus declaration supports the overall vision for Making Gateshead a Place where Everyone Thrives. In particular, supporting communities to support themselves and each other.
2. The proposed declaration will also accord with the provisions of the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015 – 2020. In particular, the rationalisation of the estate through the disposal of an uneconomic asset.

Background

3. Over the past 4 years , the café at Thornley Woodland Centre has been operated by two different organisations to determine whether their proposals for the property were viable. The current organisation Thornley Woodland Cafe CIC has worked on its business plan to use the Centre to provide community café for users of the adjacent countryside park and as a base for walking and photography activities and is now in a position to proceed with a community asset transfer of the property.
4. The property, shown edged black on the plan, is held for Leisure purposes. The Council has the authority to dispose of land held for this purpose at an undervalue of no more than £2,000,000 provided that it is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of persons residing in the borough. The purpose of the disposal will clearly contribute to the social and environmental well-being of residents. The proposed disposal will need to be advertised under Section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, and any objections taken into account.

Proposal

5. It is proposed that, subject to the proposed disposal being advertised as required by Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the property, shown edged black on the attached plan, be declared surplus to the Council's requirements and a 35-year lease at a nil rent be granted to Thornley Woodland Cafe CIC pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that subject to the proposed disposal being advertised as required by Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, Cabinet:
 - (i) Declares the property surplus to the Council's requirements;
 - (ii) Authorises the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance to grant a 35-year lease at a nil rent pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy to Thornley Woodland Cafe CIC.

For the following reason:

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

Consultation

7. In preparing this report consultations have taken place with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Ward Councillors for Winlaton and High Spen.

Alternative Options

8. The option of retaining the property has been discounted as the maintenance of the Centre had been identified as an efficiency saving. There are currently no alternative viable options for the use of the property.

Implications of Recommended Option

9. Resources:

a) **Financial Implications** - The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms there are no financial implications arising from this recommendation.

b) **Human Resources Implications** - There are no direct staffing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

c) **Property Implications** - The grant of a lease of this property will result in a reduction in the Council's overall property portfolio thus reducing operational costs.

10. **Risk Management Implication** – There are no risk management implications arising from this recommendation.

11. **Equality and Diversity** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

12. **Crime and Disorder Implications** - The grant of a lease of this property will reduce opportunities for crime and disorder, especially vandalism and theft.

13. **Health Implications** – there are health implications arising from this report, as the activities provided by the tenant will provide both physical and mental health benefits to people who participate in the activities delivered.

14. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - The future grant of a lease will reduce the level of the Council's operational maintenance, which will subsequently result in a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint.

15. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

16. **Ward Implications** – Winlaton and High Spen.

17. **Background Information** – None