

TITLE OF REPORT: Surplus Declaration – Oliver Henderson Bowling Green and Pavilion

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

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to Oliver Henderson Park Bowling Green and Pavilion, Meresyde, Leam Lane being declared surplus to the Council's requirements and the future proposals for the property after being declared surplus.

Background

2. The property, which is shown edged black on the plan provided, is no longer required by the Council for service delivery for the reasons set out in the Appendix.

Proposal

3. It is proposed that the property be declared surplus to the Council's requirement and thereafter dealt with in accordance with the proposals set out in the attached Appendix.

Recommendations

4. Cabinet is recommended to approve the following, subject to the proposed disposal being advertised as required by Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972:
 - (i) Declare the property surplus to the Council's requirements.
 - (ii) Authorise the Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities to grant a 35-year lease at a nil rent pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy to the Leam Lane Community Bowling Club Community Interest Organisation (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).
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CONTACT: Zoe Sharratt Extension: 3503

Policy Context

1. The proposed surplus declaration supports the overall vision for Making Gateshead a Place where People Thrive. 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 update 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 19 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. Leam Lane Community Bowling Club CIO which currently uses the facility, expressed an interest in taking on responsibility for the pavilion and bowling green. Leam Lane 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 benefit, improvement and development 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 Leam Lane Community Bowling Club CIO pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy.

Consultation

7. In preparing this report consultations have taken place with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Ward Councillors for Wardley and Leam Lane.

Alternative Options

8. 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

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 operational property portfolio and reduce 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** – Wardley and Leam Lane.

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