

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

20 FEBRUARY 2020

FERNWOOD VILLAGE HALL ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Policy & Finance Committee's approval to transfer Fernwood Village Hall to Fernwood Parish Council under Asset Transfer Powers as detailed in the Council's Asset Transfer - Corporate Principles Policy.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Cabinet considered and approved an Asset Transfer Policy – Corporate Principles in December 2008 in order to guide any future considerations regarding the transfer of community assets. This Policy ensures that the Council is able to consistently consider requests or recommendations for the transfer of assets whilst also being able to treat each case individually so that the Council was able to fulfil its strategic priorities.
- 2.2 Since the adoption of the Policy the Council has exercised its powers and successfully transferred Edwinstowe Village Hall and Coddington Community Centre to respective Parish Councils and Millgate Community Centre to the Newark and Sherwood Play Support Group, a registered charity, for a nominal consideration in each case. However, each transfer has appropriate provisions within the legal documentation to protect the Council's interest in terms of capital assets.
- 2.3 Fernwood Parish Council was granted a 40 year lease by the District Council in 2008 and has managed the village hall as per the terms of the lease exceptionally well throughout its tenure. In the last 12 months the Parish Council has improved the sustainability of the hall by improving the heating system and introducing photo-voltaic cells to the roof to reduce energy consumption and improve the buildings green credentials.
- 2.4 The hall is an important part of the Fernwood community and serves as a focal point and hub facility for a wide range of community-focussed activities, which meet the needs of the local community.
- 2.5 Accordingly Fernwood Parish Council has now formally approached the District Council to request the transfer of the freehold interest in the building following resolution at its Full Council meeting on 16th September 2019.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 That Fernwood Village Hall be transferred to Fernwood Parish Council under Asset Transfer Powers as detailed in the Council's Asset Transfer - Corporate Principles Policy.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 Fernwood Parish Council is governed by the same equality law as the District Council therefore will be required to ensure compliance with the regulatory obligations. This

would include the production of an Equality Policy Statement as a pre requisite of the transfer.

- 4.2 Under the transfer the Parish Council will covenant with the District Council as deemed necessary and appropriate to ensure that the asset continues to serve the community of Fernwood and its environs as is currently the practice in accordance with the Equality Act.
- 4.3 The village hall is currently deemed to be compliant with Equality Act's disability requirements and will be maintained as such by the Parish Council.

5.0 Financial Implications (FIN19-20/4081)

- 5.1 There is no provision in the revenue budget for works to Fernwood Village Hall, therefore there are no direct revenue implications to transferring this asset to the Parish Council.
- 5.2 The asset is held on the Council's asset register with a 2019/20 brought forward balance of £752,518, the valuation basis is depreciated replacement cost which therefore does not necessarily represent a transactional market value. The asset is subject to depreciation up to the date of transfer and would then need to be disposed, off the Council's asset register.

6.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

- 6.1 The transfer of the village hall will enable the parish council to take greater responsibility for the ownership, management and future development of the village hall in terms of its ability to respond to the anticipated growth in demand from the expanding Fernwood locality. Such plans will be developed in conjunction, as necessary and appropriate, with the District Council in order to deliver positive outcomes for the local community, which align with a number of the priorities as defined with the Council's Community Plan.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

(a) Fernwood Village Hall be transferred to Fernwood Parish Council under asset transfer powers as detailed in the Council's Asset Transfer- Corporate Principles Policy; and

(b) the Director – Communities & Environment be given delegated authority to progress the transfer.

Reason for Recommendations

To ensure that corporate principles are followed to guide the consideration of the transfer of community assets.

Background Papers

Asset Transfer Policy – Corporate Principles

For further information, please contact Andy Hardy on Extension 5708.

Matthew Finch - Director – Communities & Environment