

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## DELEGATED DECISION

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b><i>PENSBY COMMUNITY CENTRE</i></b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b><i>PENSBY AND THINGWALL</i></b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b><i>HEAD OF UNIVERSAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES</i></b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b><i>COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES - CENTRAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES</i></b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b><i>NO</i></b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain approval to the inclusion of an area of additional land in the lease of Pensby Community Centre to Pioneer People.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Pensby Community Centre is a purpose built facility located in the park off Fishers Lane in Pensby. It is shown edged black on the attached plan. The property was initially a Council facility which was operated by a Joint Management Committee but had difficulty operating. Pioneer People Ltd (PPL) came forward with a proposal to operate the building as a community facility and entered in to a 21 year lease, on 26 January 2009, at a peppercorn rental with them being responsible for all repairs.
- 2.2 PPL has now secured funding for a scheme called Shedheads which they hope will enhance the community offer at the facility. The scheme and its benefits to the Community are described as follows:

Shedheads is based on an Australian concept about creating a space for men to come together around practical hobbies. The idea being that men struggle to gather socially together and therefore can suffer from social isolation, but gathering around practical hobbies creates a safe and welcoming environment. It creates a space where men can teach each other skills, undertake joint projects and access equipment.

Social benefits expected to be generate by the scheme are described as follows;

- Reduced social isolation, especially amongst retired men.
- Learning and skills sharing.
- Increased physical activity.
- Cross generational activities – lads, dads and grand-dads i.e. Go Kart building.
- Community focused projects such as building planters and park furniture.
- Enhancing offer of a local park.
- Increased community involvement and ownership of community held asset.
- Provision of venue, skills and equipment to help support local Charities with repairs / basic maintenance.

- Increased volunteering by local people.
- Acting as a pilot scheme to hopefully see other similar projects established.

The funding is to enable the creation of the facility which includes a prefabricated 'shed' on a concrete base with railings around the outside. The proposed location is shown edged and shaded on the plan and forms part of Pensby Park. The Head of Parks and Countryside has confirmed that they would be happy to release this part of the park for this scheme.

2.3 The land is part of a larger area which is designated as Greenspace in the Unitary Development Plan and consequently it is unlikely that the land would have any monetary value for alternative uses. It would, however, enable PPL to add to the community facility already offered at Pensby Community Centre and deliver the activities associated with the 'Shedheads' scheme.

2.4 Whilst the land will only have a low value, Members will be aware of the Council's obligation to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable on the disposal of its land and property. However, under the General Consent, the Council does have the power to restrict the value of land by imposing restrictions as to its use on the grounds that to do so is in the interest of the economic and / or environmental and / or social well being of the inhabitants of the Borough and provided also that any such restriction in value does not exceed two million pounds, per transaction. In view of the added community benefit it is therefore proposed to add the land to the existing peppercorn lease at no cost to the tenant.

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

3.1 Without this extra land, PPL will be unable to utilise the funding secured for the scheme.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 Other locations were considered for this scheme and annexing the facility to the existing community Centre is considered to be the most suitable.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 Discussions have taken place between PPL and officers in the Parks and Countryside Section.

### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

6.1 PPL is operated mostly by volunteers whose main objective is to deliver community activities from the centre.

### **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

7.1 There are no implications arising from this report in terms Finance, IT of Staffing.

7.2 The transfer of the additional land will result in a loss of a small area of parkland with low value.

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The inclusion of the additional land in the original lease will need to be appropriately documented.
- 8.2 The land is currently open to public access and any intention to dispose will need to be advertised in the local press. Responses to the advert will be forwarded to the appropriate Cabinet Member for consideration.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?
- No because there is no relevance to equality.

## **10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no Carbon Reduction implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The site is designated as Urban Greenspace and subject to Policies GRE1 and GR1 in the Unitary Development Plan, which protect public open space and make provision for unobtrusive visitor facilities, sport or play where continued use for open air recreation, visual amenity and landscape character would not be prejudiced. Other types of new build development are not normally permitted unless alternative benefit of equivalent community benefit is made available.
- 11.2 In the absence of equivalent alternative community benefit, any future planning application would need to demonstrate that material planning considerations weigh in favour of the proposed use. This may include community benefits from the proposed use, subject to visual impact and effect on local amenity from any future development.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 12.1 That the additional land be added to the original lease on the terms reported.

## **13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 13.1 To enable Pioneer People LTD to deliver the aims and objectives of the Shedheads scheme.

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## **APPENDICES**

Location plan

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

No reference material has been used in the preparation of this report.

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>