

WIRRAL COUNCIL

DELEGATED DECISION

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

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 to Overton Community Centre, Royden Road, Upton.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Cabinet, at its meeting of 17 March 2011, approved the Community Asset Transfer of Overton Community Centre. Consequently on 31 October 2011 Overton Community Centre Ltd took a lease of the centre including the land shown edged black on the attached plan for 99 years at a peppercorn rent.
- 2.2 In order to meet the transfer requirements Overton Community Centre Ltd (OCCL) developed a business plan, which aimed to establish that the business would be viable and sustainable. In order to achieve this, the business plan provided for a proportion of the income to be generated by Childcare provision.
- 2.3 In addition to the activities within the building, the nursery element uses an area within the existing leased land for outdoor play, which is a requirement for Ofsted. The demands for the nursery have grown and OCCL is hoping to increase the provision of outdoor space to include an "outdoor classroom". The company has managed to secure funding towards creating this outdoor facility and has requested that the additional land, shown hatched on the plan, be added to the existing lease agreement, on the same terms as the original lease.
- 2.4 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, assist OCCL to offer an enhanced nursery provision and, although the benefits to the nursery will ultimately support the viability of the Community Centre, any transfer must reflect the commercial element of the transaction. OCCL has therefore submitted its best offer for the land in the sum of £2,500 plus a contribution towards the Council's costs. I am advised that this offer reflects the fact the OCCL will need to meet additional costs including fencing and the provisions required to build over a drainage ditch. Under the circumstances the offer is considered to be the best achievable and it is therefore proposed that, for a premium of £2,500, the extra land be added to the existing lease area.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 Without this extra land, Overton Community Centre will be unable to offer the enhanced nursery provision, which will assist in maintaining sustainability of the centre.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 In light of the size, location and planning designation of the land there are no obvious alternative uses for the land other than to retain it as amenity space.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 There has been no consultation other than with Overton Community Centre Ltd.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 Overton Community Centre 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 The transfer of the additional land will generate a receipt of £2,500 plus a contribution towards the Council's costs.

7.2 There are no implications arising from this report in terms of IT or Staffing.

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 is 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, 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 established trees 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 assist the continued viability of Overton Community Centre, which was transferred as part of the Community Asset Transfer process.

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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)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet - Overton Community Centre - Community Asset Transfer	17 March 2011