

Property Sub-Committee – 6 November 2019

Recommendation by Mark Deaville - Cabinet Member for Commercial

Site: Holmcroft Library, Holmcroft Road, Stafford, ST16 1JG

Location / Electoral Division: Stafford – Stafford North – Jonathon Price.

Proposed Transaction: Disposal of part of grassed are to the rear of Holmcroft Library

Recommendation

That Staffordshire County Council transfers part of the land at the rear of Holmcroft Library to Stafford Borough Council for nominal consideration to facilitate the development of sports and recreation facilities.

That the Head of Commercial and Assets be delegated the authority to agree the final terms of the sale and necessary agreements (surrender and release or variation) with the community library operator to facilitate this.

Decision Level

Property Sub-Committee.

Details

1. Current Use: Grassed land to the rear of Holmcroft library.

2. Proposed Use: Recreation

3. Proposed Purchaser:

Stafford Borough Council

4. Estimated Value: Nonimal value as use is limited.

5. Proposed Transaction Sale Price: £1

6. Implications of Transaction for County Council (Risks):

(a) Strategic: Not applicable.

(b) Financial: negligible value in the land and negligible implications for maintenance costs

6. Implications of Transaction for County Council (Risks) (continued):

(c) Operational:

The proposals will not adversely affect the operation of the library

(d) Legal: Not applicable.

7. Background Information:

Stafford Borough Council has engaged with the County Council regarding a development proposal to improve the green space and recreational facilities on land at the rear of Holmcroft Library and adjacent open spaces.

Stafford Borough is proposing to spend £400,000 as part of this project based upon a review, in 2018, of 400 residents. As a result of this survey the following key requirements were identified:

- New equipped play equipment areas for younger and older children
- A new concrete wheeled sports facility
- Natural play features including boulders and landscape features
- Refurbished tennis courts for ball sports
- The creation of new footpaths to form a circular route around the park
- Seating and picnic areas

Full scheme plan is attached (Plan 2).

Link to the proposed development scheme on the Borough Council website are below:

<https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/holmcroft-area-play-park>

Following engagement with the County Council, Stafford Borough Council have requested that an area of land at the rear of the library be included in the development and transferred to their authority in order to obtain full funding and associated grants (Plan 1).

Currently this land is predominantly a grassed area which is maintained by the Borough Council as part of the play area, part of which has recreational facilities already installed.

Requirements:

In order to facilitate the transfer of land to the Borough Council, the County Council is required to first deal with the legal aspects of removal of this land from the current lease and as such is seeking to reach agreement with Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust to agree to a surrender of the land (Plan1), at the rear, from the current lease dated 22/12/2016. All other lease terms to remain unaffected.

As part of the redevelopment and legal works, Stafford Borough Council have

agreed to meet all legal costs (circa £2,000) and to fund the installation of additional car parking spaces (circa £8,000) on the Western section of the current library car park (Plan 3)

The County Council will also ensure that a restrictive covenant is placed on any transfer of asset preventing any future use other than for recreation/play area purposes. Transfer to the Borough Council is for nil consideration as it is deemed that the intention and use of the land contributes to common outcomes and deliverables for both authorities.

8. Community Impact: Positive impact in recreation and sporting facilities contributed to by inclusion of the land.

9. Comment by Local Member: The local member is fully involved in the project and supports it.

10. Comment by SLT Member: Library staff are fully involved in the project.

11. Proposal Supported by the Head of Commercial and Property:

Signed:



Date:

28/10/19

12. Valuer Advising on this Transaction:

Signed: N/A

Date: