

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 18 November 2015
Report of: Executive Member for Economic Growth and Planning

Report Title

Update on the implementation of the Community Asset Framework

Summary

The report summarises the work carried out to date on the implementation of the Community Asset Framework, in particular on progress with Community Asset Transfers (C.A.T) and on the registration of any Assets of Community Value (A.C.V.).

Recommendation(s)

To note the contents of this report and progress made to date.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Background Papers:

- Report to Executive 24th June 2013 – Trafford Community Asset Strategy, Community Asset Transfer Strategy and Community Right to Bid Procedure

1.0 Background

In June 2013 the Executive approved an approach to implementing the Council's Community Asset Framework. This included approval of:

- The implementation of a Community Asset Strategy
- An approach to Community Asset Transfer
- A procedure for managing the Community Right to Bid process

2.0 Introduction and context for the update on the implementation of the Community Asset Framework

- 2.1 The June 2013 Executive Report (Section 10) set out a number of principles for the Council's approach to formalising agreements with community groups for occupation of Council premises. It was established that all groups should, as a minimum, cover costs excluding rent, and where a rent grant should be applied if the group met the approved criteria for rent subsidy.
- Complimentary processes were also put in place for where these reviews led to further discussions about either asset transfer (if the groups were in a position to take over the premises), or for registration of assets as Assets of Community Value under the Right to Bid legislation if such an application were made.
- Together, these policies and procedures formed the Community Asset Framework.

3.0 Action Plan for the Community Asset Strategy

- 3.1 The June 2013 report to Executive set out an action plan for reviewing the existing property agreements between community groups and the Council, which was key to the implementation of the Community Asset Strategy.
- 3.2 In October 2013 a report to the Scrutiny Committee detailed progress with the review of agreements to date. The Committee were informed that negotiations had completed on new agreements for 4 properties at that stage.
- 3.3 Since then, reviews have been completed on a further 33 premises (see Appendix 1) which in the majority of instances has resulted in new arrangements being put in place. Where in place, these new agreements have ensured that the premises can continue to be used by the community on a sustainable basis and have resulted in revenue savings to the Council.
- 3.3 Although the reviews have progressed well, there remains a number of properties where agreements need to be formalised. Many of these properties are subject to the review of leisure assets currently underway (see section 4.2). The One Trafford Partnership with Amey will give new impetus to the completion of these reviews as monitoring the progress of these will form part of the performance reporting requirements for the contract. Premises where the occupants are holding over (ie where the agreement has expired) will be prioritised.

4.0 Community Asset Transfer (C.A.T.)

4.1 Process

The policy and procedure document approved at Executive in 2013 contained a table showing details of the processes and timescales involved for assessing requests for transfer. (attached as Appendix 2)

4.2 Leisure assets - current position.

The Council will consider and actively promote asset transfers as an alternative to a new lease or licence where the group is in a position to take over the premises. The review of existing premises referred to above has in some cases therefore led to further discussions about potential asset transfer.

Below are examples of where discussions have taken place with the groups with a view to asset transfers. The review of leisure assets will be taken into account before discussions are concluded.:

- **Hale Moss Bowling Club** – 2 bowling greens, 1 pavilion.
- **Friends of Ashton Park** – 2 bowling greens, 2 pavilions, 1 disabled public toilet
- **Altrincham Junior Football Club** – football pitches, fields, within Longhey Park
- **Urmston Football Club** – (Pennybridge lane FC) football pitch, arena, stand, changing room & bar area – portakabin
- **Friends of Woodheys Park** – mini golf course, pavilion, community centre
- **Davyhulme Bowling Club** – 2 bowling greens, 1 pavilion.

The current review of all leisure assets following the transfer to Trafford Leisure Community Interest Company, combined with the approach to property agreements and asset transfer now provides an excellent opportunity for the Council to ensure that its assets can better meet the future sporting and leisure needs of the whole borough in a sustainable, community led way.

5.0 Registration of Assets of Community Value – Right to Bid

5.1 Summary and Legislation

The Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value in legislation) is one of a range of measures introduced in the Localism Act 2011. The Community Right to Bid allows local voluntary and community groups and parish councils to nominate publicly and privately owned buildings and land for listing by the local authority as assets of Community Value. An asset can be listed if its main use furthers (or has recently furthered) the social well-being or cultural, recreational or sporting interests of the local community and is likely to do so in the future. Examples could include community centres, libraries, parks, village shops, markets or pubs.

When a listed asset comes to be sold, a moratorium on the sale of up to six months may be invoked to enable community groups to raise finance, develop a business plan and make a bid to buy the asset on the open market.

A register of successful nominations and unsuccessful nominations is published on the Council website.

For Community Groups to nominate an asset for registration they must be one of the following :

- Parish councils or neighbouring parish councils.
- Unincorporated groups with a membership of 21 local people.
- Neighbourhood forums as defined within the Localism Act 2011.
- Community interest groups with a local connection that are:-
- A charity.
- A Community Interest Company.
- A company limited by guarantee.
- A non-profit distributing industrial and provident society.

5.2 Assets nominated and registered in Trafford to date

The two assets that have been registered in Trafford Borough as Assets of Community Value to date are as follows:

- **Manchester United Football Club** - nominated by Manchester United Supporters Trust – July 2013

- **Stretford Public Hall** – nominated by Friends of Stretford Public Hall – April 2014. The sale of the hall to the group is now being concluded.

5.3 Further asset nominations in Trafford

The Council are now in receipt of two further nominations:-

- **Altrincham Town Hall** (former) – by Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society.
- **The Old Market Tavern** Public House, Altrincham - by Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA)

The above Applications are currently being processed in accordance with the Procedures approved by the Executive. (Attached as Appendix 3)

Following the completion of the Consultation process, a report will be prepared for the Strategic Lands Group (SLG) who will make a recommendation on the application. The recommendation is then presented to the Asset of Community Value (ACV) Panel, which is made up of members and officers who make the final decision as to whether to approve the application for nomination, taking into account all relevant submissions and the criteria within the strategy.

6.0 Consultation

Ward members are consulted on individual cases and, where appropriate, the views of the Local Community Groups are sought.

7.0 Reasons for report recommendation(s)

Maintaining progress with the Community Asset Framework is key to developing a transparent and consistent approach to the Council's support to voluntary and community sector's accommodation requirements.

