

Northstowe Phase 1 Asset Transfer Opportunities

Motion:

1. To receive a report from Cllr Littlemore on Asset Transfer opportunities in Phase 1.
2. To discuss the items highlighted in the report.
3. To form a working group to investigate stewardship options of the Phase 1 Sports Pavilion

Background

1. Currently the Town Council has a very limited number of assets, mostly limited to equipment such as IT provision for staff, though the Section 106 agreement for Northstowe Phase 1 made provision for the Town Council to become potential stewards of several different assets over time, potentially the next 20 years.
2. The Asset and Asset Transfer committee was paused due to a lack of business, with relevant items to be brought to Full Council until such time that the committee has a suitable volume of business to transact.
3. There is currently no Asset Transfer policy adopted by the Town Council.

Opportunity register

4. Appendix A has been prepared to give Councillors a view of the potential items that have been identified through the Phase 1 Section 106 agreement, as well as others. This appendix has only considered Phase 1 at this time. It is anticipated that a further report will be presented to the council to consider items in Phase 2, Phase 3A and 3B as well as Digital Park and Endurance Estates where relevant.
5. The most immediate of the asset transfer opportunities identified is the Phase 1 sports pavilion which looks likely to complete and open in 2023.
6. A draft terms of reference is in Appendix B of this report and is envisaged to help start conversation within the Council and with the District Council on asset ownership models for the future sports pavilion and wider western park.

Recommendations

7. For the council to adopt Appendix A as a working register of asset transfer opportunity, and reviewed at least quarterly.
8. To setup a Sports Pavilion Asset Transfer working group based upon the draft terms of reference in Appendix B to report back to Full Council (or the Asset and Asset Transfer committee if it reconvenes before the conclusion of the Working Group's work)

Appendix A: Asset Opportunity Register

Description	Likely date(s)
Strategic Public Realm in Phase 1	S106 Trigger 2031/32
<p>The strategic public realm includes The Green, Pioneer Park, the Greenway's (Northern and Southern) and the L&Q delivered LEAPs but not necessarily the Western Park - this is covered separately under #4. These areas are those delivered by L&Q, not individual house builders.</p> <p>The S106 agreement states that the public realm will be transferred to the management company (Greenbelt) as leasehold for 10 years. At the 10 year mark, the Town Council have an option to take the freehold from L&Q and enact alternative maintenance arrangements should it so wish.</p>	
Housing Developer Public Realm in Phase 1	Unclear.
<p>Following confirmation from Greenbelt at an open spaces steering group meeting, land transferred from individual housebuilders to Greenbelt is not covered in the same way as #1. H1 (Bloor Homes) and H2 (Barratt Homes) have already transferred the freehold to Greenbelt, which would mean that any public realm would need to be transferred by agreement with Greenbelt or under their consumer choice policy which would be subject to the same expression of wish from a majority of residents in each parcel.</p>	
Phase 1 Sports Pavilion	2023
<p>The plans for the Sports Pavilion have been approved by SCDCs planning committee, this is likely to be the first area of permanent community facility to be constructed. Conversations with SCDC, who are the current land owner and developer of the site, would need to be conducted to understand if the Town Council could be considered as a future custodian.</p>	
Phase 1 Western Park (inc Bowls Green)	2022/2023
<p>The western park is part of the overall sports offering in Phase 1 and active use is linked with the availability of the phase 1 sports pavilion. Currently responsibilities are split with Greenbelt providing a basic service on the grassed sports pitches and the MUGA. The bowls green looks likely to be transferred to Greenbelt, with a sublicence for another organisation to maintain this specialist facility.</p> <p>Greenbelt have confirmed that they do not offer "sports grade" maintenance so this would need to be arranged separately for the sports pitches and these arrangements could be considered as a combined Sports Pavilion and Western Park asset opportunity.</p>	
Phase 1 Community Building in Local Centre	2024/2025
<p>The Phase 1 Community Building had funding confirmed by South Cambridgeshire District Council in their July council meeting. Whilst the plans are still some time in the future, early dialog with the District Council on ownership models would be beneficial as the facility is designed and delivered.</p>	
Street Furniture	As delivered
<p>Items such as Bus Stop shelters have recently been identified as the County Council work with Stagecoach to identify a local bus route through the town. Adoption of these installations should be considered as and when they are being planned.</p>	

Appendix B: Draft Terms of Reference for proposed Sports Pavilion Asset Transfer Working Group

Purpose:

To investigate ownership models for the Sports Pavilion and Western Park to maximise the community benefit of the facility and make a recommendation to Council on a desired ownership model and the likely impacts on Council resources of any such recommendation.

Reports to:

Full Council (or Asset and Asset Transfer Committee if it reconvenes before the conclusion of the Working Groups activities)

Membership:

2 x Councillors

1 x Staff Member

Responsibilities

To work with South Cambridgeshire District Council to evaluate ownership models, including direct ownership and operation by the Town Council of the facility. Options considered should include at least the following:

1. Costs associated with asset transfer (inc. estimated legal costs).
 - a. Financing options available should it require more than the council's reserves.
 - b. Any projected appreciation/depreciation of the facility over time
2. Liabilities included with any transfer
3. Impact assessment of council expenditure, including but not limited to:
 - a. Insurance premiums
 - b. Utility bills (Water, Sewerage, Gas, Electricity etc)
 - c. Periodic maintenance
 - d. Replacement / Renewal at the end of asset lifespan.
 - e. Staffing requirements
 - f. Licences that may be required
4. Potential revenue streams the council may have access to:
 - a. Consideration of hire / rental fee's, and offsets against items in #3
5. Direct and indirect benefits to the community

Frequency of meetings

The working group should meet at least monthly, typically in advance of full council to afford an opportunity to provide a meaningful update. The timing of these meetings can be determined by the membership once allocated.

It should be noted that membership of this working group will require regular meetings with officers at South Cambridgeshire District Council which will need to be held within their business hours.