

Meeting: Executive
Date: 13 October 2009
Subject: Potton Community Centre
Report of: Councillor Maurice Jones - Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources
Summary: To authorise the execution of a lease document to Potton Town Council to use the premises for a Community Centre for Lifetime Learning until 31 March 2031 at a peppercorn rent. The lease will be for a balance of 22 years.

Advising Officer: Clive Heaphy, Director of Corporate Resources
Contact Officer: Matt Bowmer, Assistant Director Financial Services
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Potton
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
Exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive endorses the recommendation to execute a lease to allow Potton Town Council to occupy Central Bedfordshire Council's property for 30 years from the 1 April 2001 at a peppercorn rent.

The Constitution requires Executive approval for all leases over 15 years

Reason for Recommendations: To formalise the occupation of the Community Centre by Potton Town Council and for Central Bedfordshire to meet its community service obligation.

To meet the Council's strategy of delivering services to the community

Background

1. Potton Town Council had agreed to lease Central Bedfordshire property from 1 April 2001 for a period of 30 years at a peppercorn rent. Potton Council was to be responsible for maintaining the property and negotiations commenced on the schedule of works upon which the two authorities could not agree due to the condition of the building. This matter was settled recently and it is now possible to progress the lease

2. The maintenance responsibilities have now been agreed and all works completed therefore there will be no further costs for Central Bedfordshire.
3. The Quirk Report encourages the transfer of council assets to the community by means of freehold interest and or lease tenure. Leases are defined as being 25 years. The above lease complies with the Quirk Report by transferring an asset to a small town council for community use by means of a long lease at a peppercorn rent.
4. The proposal had been considered by CAMG with no objections and commented as follows:

CAMG were presented with a proposal to lease the building to Potton Town Council for Community use. The group discussed the ways in which CBC Property Assets could support community outcomes

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Leasing Central Bedfordshire's property fits into the Council's vision to improve the quality of life for all in Central Bedfordshire, and enhance the unique character of our communities and our environment. It meets the theme of building cohesive, strong, safe and sustainable communities.

The Council is mindful of the important role played by Town and Parish Councils, the business community and the third sector of voluntary and community groups operating across Central Bedfordshire. Community engagement and partnership working are at the heart of how Central Bedfordshire will operate and resources will be made available to undertake this effectively

Financial:

There are no financial implications as Potton Town Council will maintain the premises to a minimum standard as identified by the condition survey attached to the lease

Legal:

Conditions of the lease were viewed and accepted by Legal Services.

Risk Management:

- Risk of vandalism is reduced because the property is occupied
- Risk of the building deteriorating is reduced

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

The property is managed by Property Services through Mouchel therefore there is no impact on staffing numbers

Equalities/Human Rights:

'The building is limited by its construction and age to provide disability access which needs to be managed by the tenant as service provider. The lease to Potton Council will include a provision for them to maintain the building to its current standard and be responsible for any statutory requirements, which would include disability access provisions.

However, any improvements that are not a statutory requirement would be the responsibility of this Council'

Community Development/Safety:

Providing the building at a peppercorn rent will enable Potton Town Council to provide community services to Potton's residents

Sustainability:

The long term lease will enable the Town Council to sustain and plan for the future.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers (open to public inspection):

None

Location of papers

n/a