

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Chippenham Area Board</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup> May 2011</b>
<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Community Asset Transfer</b>

## **Executive Summary**

This report deals with an application for the transfer of allotments in Seagry in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

## **Proposal**

Chippenham Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Seagry Parish Council for the transfer of allotments. See map attached at Appendix 1. The applicant's proposal is set out at Appendix 2.

## **Reasons For Proposal**

This proposal supports and implements Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

## **Recommendation**

The Area Board is recommended to authorise the Solicitor of the Council to execute all documentation needed to implement the transfer subject to the following conditions:

1. The land is maintained for the benefit of the community and residents will be encouraged to enjoy the amenity
2. A standard 'reverter' clause is included in the title, which will ensure that if the land stops being used for the benefit of the community, Wiltshire Council will have the option to repurchase the land for the sum of £1.

## **Purpose of Report**

1. Chippenham Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Seagry Parish Council for the transfer of allotments. See map attached at Appendix 1 and the applicants' proposal is set out at Appendix 2

## **Background**

2. Wiltshire Council is supporting the principle of the transfer of community assets in order to empower and strengthen local communities. Wiltshire Council believes that transferring appropriate public assets to communities leads to more responsive services that better meet local people's priorities.
3. Transfer of an asset can also provide the opportunity to lever more resources into a community and provide a more accessible and responsive base from which to deliver local services.
4. A community group or organisation can benefit from greater financial stability and build confidence through having ownership (or long term security through a lease) of a physical asset. This financial sustainability can help the organisation become less dependent on grants, provide security for further borrowing and opportunities for further growth.
5. Typically, organisations that would be considered appropriate are Voluntary and Community Groups/Associations, Town or Parish Councils, Trusts or Charities, or Social Enterprise Groups.

## **The application before the Area Board**

6. The application from Seagry Parish Council is attached at Appendix 2 and relates to the transfer of allotments.
7. The application was submitted in accordance with Wiltshire Council's application process and meets the requirements for consideration by the Area Board.
8. The Community Area Manager has consulted with Strategic Property Services, who have undertaken appropriate consultation with service departments across the Council.
9. Local consultation has been undertaken by the applicant in accordance with the application checklist.

## **The views of Council officers**

10. On behalf of Wiltshire Council, Strategic Property Services (who have overall responsibility for the Council's estates and property) has provided the following observation to the Area Board.

11. The allotments in Seagry are a valuable community amenity, which are enjoyed by a broad range of people from across the community.

### **Main issues for consideration by the Area Board**

12. It is a requirement under Wiltshire Council's Asset Transfer Policy that there must be a clear link between the asset transfer request and local community priorities.
13. This proposed asset transfer demonstrates a direct link to the Chippenham & Villages Community Plan review 2009 "Seagry Parish Council has requested devolution of allotments from Wiltshire Council".
14. This proposed asset transfer demonstrates a link to Wiltshire Council's priorities in the Local Agreement for Wiltshire "Help local communities develop their own priorities and improvements" and "We help communities help themselves".
15. It is a requirement that a 'reverter' clause is included in asset transfer arrangements. This means that, if the site stops being used for Community Public Open Space purposes, Wiltshire Council will have the option to repurchase the land for the sum of £1.00.

### **Recommendation**

16. Having carefully considered the application and the views of Council officers, the Area Board is invited to approve the transfer subject to the following conditions:
  - i) The land is maintained for the benefit of the community and residents will be encouraged to enjoy the amenity.
  - ii) A standard 'reverter' clause is included in the title, which will ensure that if the land stops being used for the benefit of the community, Wiltshire Council will have the option to repurchase the land for the sum of £1.

<b>Appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 - Map Appendix 2 – Community Asset Transfer application
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<b>Report Author</b>	Victoria Welsh, Community Area Manager Tel: 01249 706 446 E-mail: <a href="mailto:victoria.welsh@wiltshire.gov.uk">victoria.welsh@wiltshire.gov.uk</a>
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