

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

**SALISBURY AREA BOARD
12TH JULY 2021**

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

GROSVENOR HOUSE & RIVERSIDE, CHURCHFIELDS ROAD, SALISBURY

Executive Summary

This report deals with an application for the transfer of Grosvenor House & Riverside, Churchfields Road, Salisbury to be transferred to Rise Resound Rebuild CIC (R3) in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy (CAT).

Proposal

The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Rise Rebound Rebuild CIC (R3) (see Appendix 1) for the transfer of Grosvenor House & Riverside. The applicants' proposal is set out in their business plan at Appendix 2.

Grosvenor House & Riverside is a Council Strategic Asset which is defined in the CAT Policy as having a value in excess of £250,000, thereby affording it a Category 1 status. Therefore, if the Area Board supports the CAT application then the matter will be referred to Cabinet for a final decision.

Recommendation

For Salisbury Area Board to consider the application and either:

- Support the application and make a recommendation to Cabinet; or
- Confirm they do not support the application

Marc Read

Salisbury Community Engagement Manager

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COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

Grosvenor House

Purpose of Report

1. The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Rise Resound Rebuild CIC (R3) for the transfer of Grosvenor House (see Appendix 1). The applicants' business plan 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. The 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, City or Parish Councils, Trusts or Charities, or Social Enterprise Groups.

The application before the Area Board

6. The application from Resound Rebuild CIC (R3) is attached at Appendix 1 and relates to the transfer of Grosvenor House and Riverside.
7. The application was submitted in accordance with the Council's application process and meets the requirements for consideration by the Area Board.
8. The Community Engagement Manager has consulted with Strategic Property Services, who have previously undertaken appropriate

consultation with service departments across the Council, to ascertain whether there is an operational requirement for the Properties. Local consultation has been undertaken by the applicant in accordance with the application checklist and the outcome of the consultation is included within the application. Cllr Paul Sample the local member, has been apprised.

The views of Council officers

9. On behalf of the Council, Strategic Property Services (who have overall responsibility for the Council's estates and property) has provided the following observations to the Area Board.
 - 9.1 The Properties subject to the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) proposal comprise Grosvenor House and Riverside, Churchfields Road, Salisbury.
 - 9.2 Riverside was used as a Children's Resource Centre by Wiltshire County Council and Wiltshire Council until April 2012, when that use ceased. Since April 2012, Riverside has remained vacant and unused, save for the occasional use by the Fire Service for training purposes only.
 - 9.3 Grosvenor House has been unused since February 2017, prior to that date it was used as offices for employees of Wiltshire Council and the former Wiltshire County Council, for music tuition, training, music-based activities, accredited courses and supported youth work.
 - 9.4 Grosvenor House and Riverside were actively marketed for sale by selling agents, Myddelton & Major, from 2017 culminating in an exchange of contracts for an unconditional sale at a price in excess of £1m on 4th December 2020.
 - 9.5 Following the nomination by the City Council for the Properties to be afforded the status of an Asset of Community Value (ACV), that contract was terminated by mutual consent.
 - 9.6 The nomination as an ACV was confirmed by the Council in its capacity as Registration Authority on 11th February 2021 and the Property will remain on the list for 5 years from that date.
 - 9.7 The proposed purchaser has recently informed the Council that it would be prepared to exchange contracts on the same terms and conditions, including the price, irrespective of its ACV listing.
 - 9.8 The Council's CAT Policy emerged following the Review 'Making Assets Work – Community Management and Ownership of Public assets', by Barry Quirk for central government published in May 2007, which concluded that transferring public assets to communities leads to more responsive services that meet local people's priorities.
 - 9.9 It was recognized that some properties will represent liabilities (e.g. poor condition, wrong size/location/configuration, listed and expensive to maintain, etc.), creating a drain on resources, generate too little income

and potentially set a community group up for failure. To mitigate this risk the Council's CAT Policy obliges the community group to provide a robust business plan that is deemed to be achievable.

- 9.10 It should be noted that the Property is in a state of disrepair; it is in very poor condition with extensive dry rot and leaking roof, amongst other issues. In addition, there have been issues with trespass, graffiti, rough sleeping and antisocial activity.
- 9.11 The Property is a Council Strategic Asset which is defined in the CAT Policy as having a value in excess of £250,000, thereby affording it a Category 1 status. That means if the Area Board is minded to support the CAT application then the matter has to be referred to Cabinet for a final decision.
- 9.12 If a CAT is approved, then rather than selling the freehold, as in other cases, the Council would grant the CIC a lease of 125 years with the tenant responsible for all outgoings, repairs and other costs. The Council would be able to terminate the lease if the community use ceased.

Recommendation

10. For Salisbury Area Board to consider the application and either:
- Support the application and make a recommendation to Cabinet; or
 - Confirm they do not support the application

Marc Read
Salisbury Community Engagement Manager
