

**COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER**

**THE RISE TRUST THE OAKS**

**Executive Summary**

This report deals with an application for the transfer of *The Oaks, Chippenham, SN15 1DU* from Wiltshire Council to The Rise Trust, in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Asset Transfer Policy. The site Plan is attached at Appendix 1. The applicant's proposal is attached at Appendix 2.

**Proposal**

The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by The Rise Trust for the transfer of control and maintenance of The Oaks building from which they can run charity provisions including a youth service, pre school, contact centre, mentoring service and volunteering.

**Reasons For Proposal**

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

**Recommendation**

To consider the application at the 10 June 2024 Area Board meeting.

**Ros Griffiths**

Strategic Engagement and Partnership Manager

**COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER**

**THE RISE TRUST THE OAKS**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by The Rise Trust for the transfer of control and maintenance of The Oaks (see plans attached at Appendix 1). The applicants proposal is set out at Appendix 2.

**Background**

2. Wiltshire Council is supporting the principle of the transfer of community assets 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 in this case 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, Social Enterprise Groups, or Community Amateur Sports Associations.
6. The application from The Rise Trust is attached at Appendix 2 and relates to the transfer of the control and maintenance of The Oaks.
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 Strategic Engagement and Partnership Manager has consulted with Wiltshire Council's Estates team, the legal owner of the site, and has undertaken *appropriate consultation* with service departments across the Council including Children and Family Commissioning. Local consultation has been undertaken by the applicant in accordance with the application checklist. local member has been apprised.

**Main Considerations from Estates Service**

9. Access to the Oaks is currently through St Pauls Primary School car park, understand consultation with Education for long term access has already been agreed – but confirmation in writing is required.
10. Due to access there is no redevelopment potential for the site.

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**10 June 2024**

11. The Property was income generating and therefore a consideration for loss of income of £8,000 per annum (May 2024 annual rent figure), with repairing responsibilities under the preschools schedule (Wiltshire Council would still be responsible for the externals of the building and some compliance services).
12. Alternative uses are limited due to access to the site.
13. A valuation of this asset is required.

**Main Considerations from Children and Families Commissioning**

14. The Rise offer a valuable service which complements the commissioned families and children's services in Wiltshire specifically in Chippenham.
15. The Rise offer a much-needed early years pre-school from the Oaks building which is within reach of some of the most disadvantaged areas of Chippenham specifically Hill Rise.

**Main Considerations from Communities Service**

16. The Rise Trust works extensively with youth sector groups and organisations across the North of the county including five Area Boards and Local Youth Networks, helping to deliver a responsive and locally driven positive activities offer tailored to community need.
17. The Oaks building provides early years provision and youth services for children, young people and families in the Chippenham Hill Rise area. Hill Rise North West is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most deprived Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in Wiltshire, out of 285. Chippenham Hill Rise South East is the 10<sup>th</sup> most deprived LSOA in Wiltshire. This puts both areas in the 1<sup>st</sup> quintile or 20% most deprived in the county.
18. The Rise youth team have built trusted relationships with the local community. They are supported by the Chippenham Area Board to provide positive activities which reduce anti-social behaviour, youth engagement, mentoring and a safe space for young people.

**Recommendation**

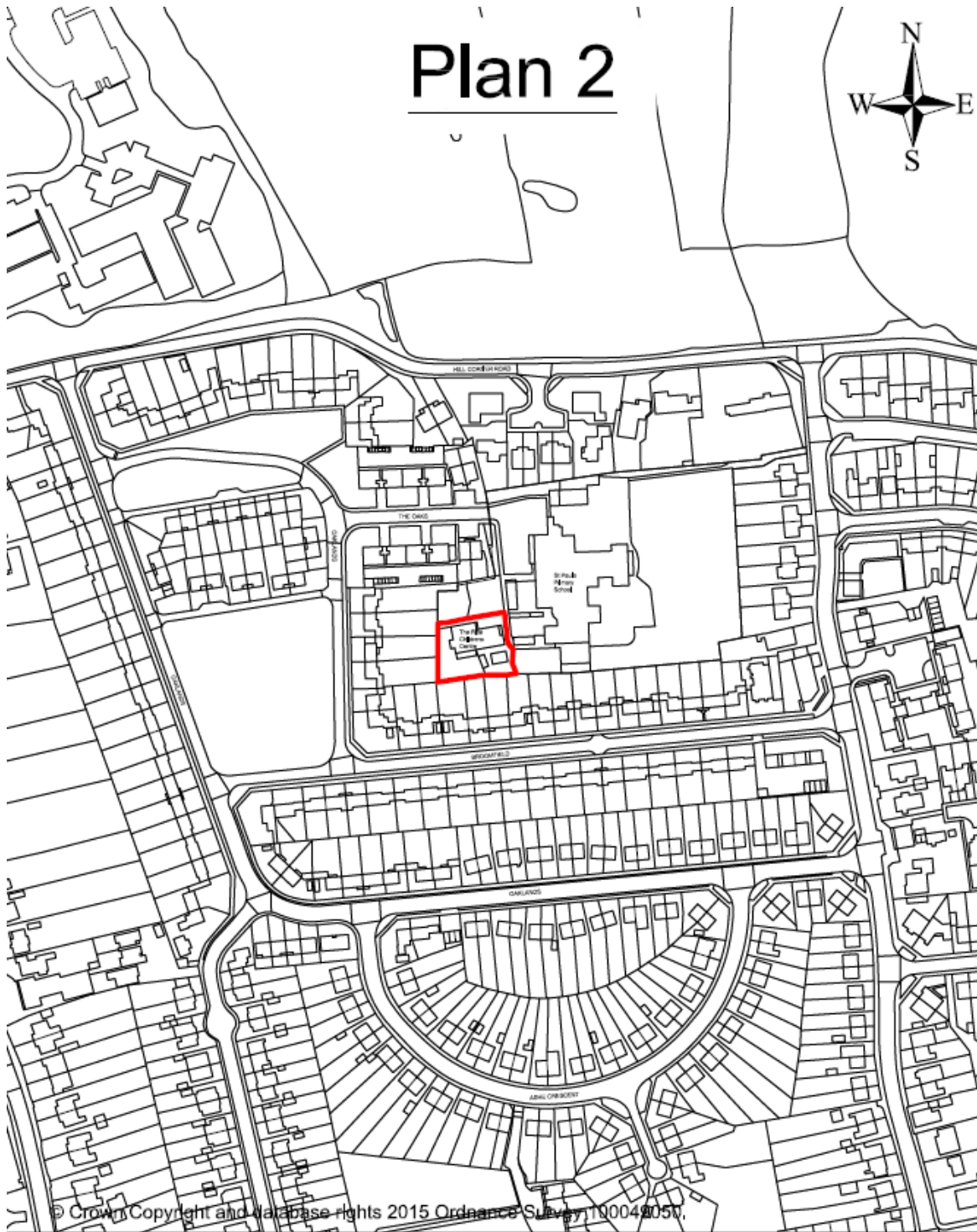
19. To consider the application at the 10 June 2024 Chippenham Area Board meeting.

**Ros Griffiths, Strategic Engagement and Partnership Manager**

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# Plan 2

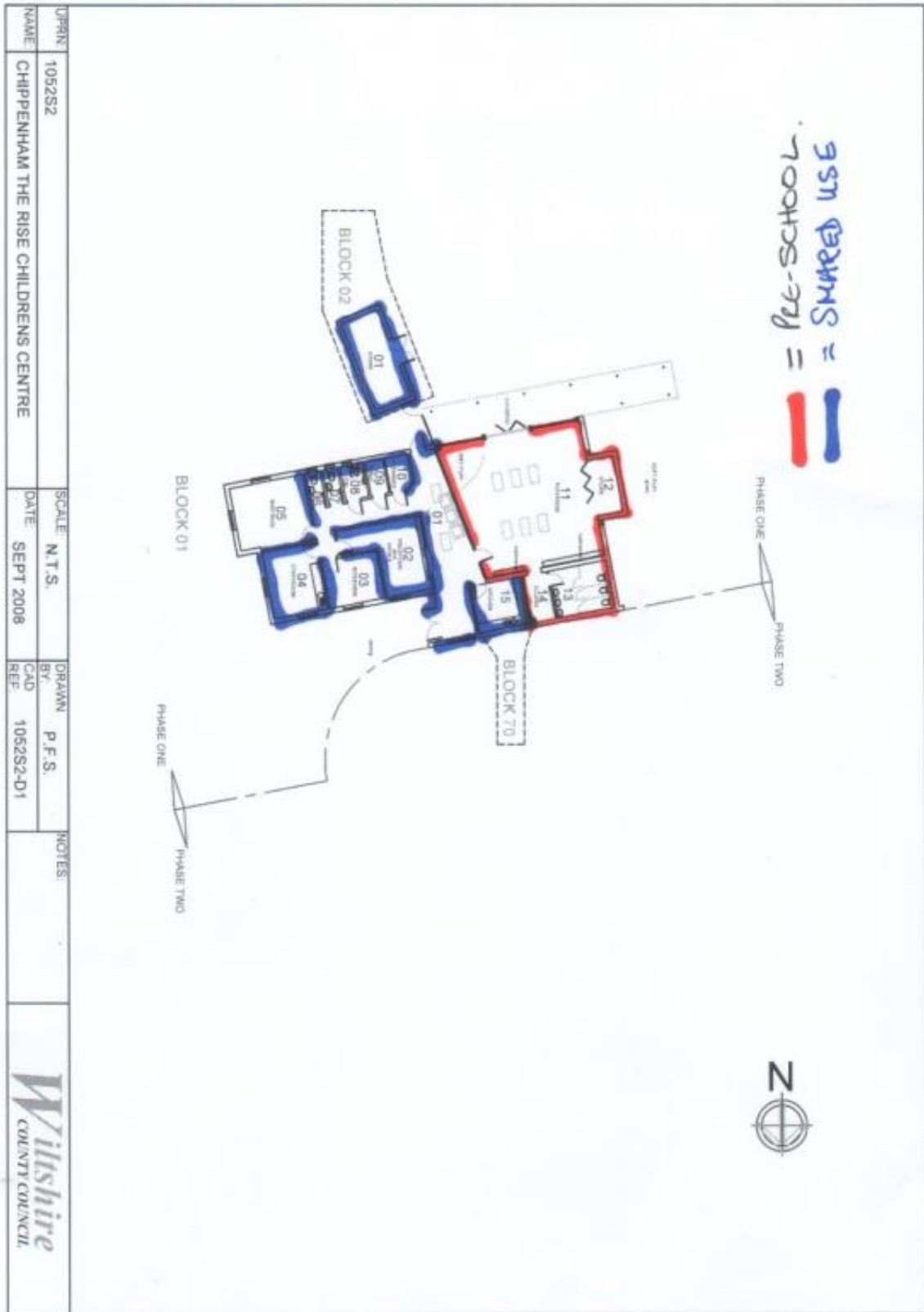


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Wiltshire Council

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PROJECT:  
Chippenham The Rise  
Childrens Centre



## APPENDIX 2

### Form CAT01 - Application for the transfer of a Council asset

#### Your details

**Your Organisation**      *The RISE Trust*

**Contact name**        *Lynn Evans*

**Position held**        *CEO*

**Address**                *The Oaks,  
Chippenham,  
Wiltshire*

**Postcode**              *SN15 1DU*

**Telephone**             *01249-463040*

**Email**                  *lynne@therisetrust.org*

#### Your proposal

**(please complete Checklist CAT02 before completing the following)**

#### Details of asset

Please include exact location, address, postcode, size, boundaries, access points and a map if possible

*The Oaks,  
Chippenham,  
SN15 1DU.  
All plans and size information sits with Wiltshire Council.  
Location map attached.  
Access is via a small drive in front of St Paul's Primary School.  
Evacuation through school playground.  
The Oaks currently is shared between the Children's Centre and the preschool (max 24 children per day) both are run by The RISE – see site plan with shared areas noted. We wish to continue to use the shared areas for RISE activities.*

## **Summary of proposal**

Why do you want the asset and how will this benefit the local community?

*The RISE Trust currently operates out of Children's Centre buildings in North Wiltshire. The trust's contract with Wiltshire for Children's Centre Services ceases on 31/03/2024. However, the charity will continue to operate to provide community services (we call our 'Provisions') for families in the local area including:*

- *Youth services/ mentoring (free of charge)*
- *Preschool provision (not for profit)*
- *Supported Contact Centre (not for profit)*
- *Primary school mentoring (free of charge)*
- *Parent Support Advisor service (not for profit)*

*As the trust's charitable work continues, we need to be able to have a base in the community for our services – our budget will be very tight as we are a charity focused on developing social capital and not a profit-making concern, hence applying for the Community Asset Transfer.*

*Most of The RISE 'provisions' have been in operation since 2006 or at least for over 10 years and are all well-established and held in high regard. Currently the staff who work in these services can 'hot desk' in existing Children's Centre buildings and the RISE leadership structure manages all The RISE services both Children's Centres and Provisions as one entity.*

*Once the contract finishes The RISE Trust will need a designated building for its remaining services and as The Oaks already hosts our pre-school, we would like to use the building as a hub for RISE services going forward. By having all provisions based in one place we would be safeguarding the children at the preschool as the staff would be familiar and known to the charity. If we were sharing the building with another provider it would add the risk of unknown people accessing the space that our vulnerable families and children attend. The offices would be used for management, administration, mentoring, youth groups, Contact Centre, a safe space for families and a sensory room for the local community. If we had to find another site, then it would mean splitting our provisions or having to relocate our well-established early years setting elsewhere which would be very unsettling for the children and families.*

*In addition to these reasons, The RISE Trust built the 'Garden Room' at the back of the site using money from fund-raising, so it owns that room outright. We would be using this room in addition for group work and/or training during the day when required. Alternatively we could possibly use it to expand our pre-school setting.*

*To continue to have The RISE Trust as a trusted presence in the community would provide continuity of support for the mental health and wellbeing of local families with young children, as well as our young people. We would aim for it to be a continued safe space for 'drop ins' as well as planned groups, sessions and meetings.*



**Community use**

Please explain how the asset will be used

*(Please refer to questions 5-8 in the checklist - CAT02)*

*The community will benefit as it already knows that The Oaks is a safe base for The RISE Trust. The pre-school is a not-for-profit setting that provides good quality early years provision for families (within the Hill Rise Super output area) many of whom have vulnerabilities. The setting staff use the existing kitchen and staff toilets located within the main body of the building as the pre-school room itself does not have these facilities built in. Pre-school families readily come into the building to ask for support and help with their wellbeing – this is something we would continue to encourage. Existing staff would then be able to signpost families to appropriate support including Family Hubs, health services and financial aid. One parent said “I really appreciate all the work you have done supporting me through very difficult times and helping my children, especially my daughter while at nursery. She always loved seeing you giving you a big hug. Thank you very much for everything.”*

*Our youth service (free of charge to the young people) has grown considerably since 2020 and now supports young people across North Wiltshire. As this service has grown, we require a designated space/ building from which we can work. This would include administration space, rooms for mentoring and group work both during the day and in the evenings.in addition we would hold meetings with other professionals such as being able to host the local youth network meetings. Our youth service is particularly focused on supporting young people from the Hill Rise area and we are supported by the area board in order to provide youth engagement, positive activities, reducing anti-social behaviour and mentoring under the priorities identified by Chippenham Area Board.*

*Currently we have 853 young people registered with RISE youth across North Wiltshire. 309 of these young people live and attend sessions in Chippenham. We see up to 25 attending our youth club sessions on a Wednesday night, which are for years 7 and 8. Our Tuesday wellbeing session reaches 15 young people and is focused on supporting young people to have access to positive activities and support to have positive mental health - this service is referral based and aims to support young people who would not be able to attend an open access session due to vulnerabilities. This group reaches a cohort of young people who are diagnosed with ASD but do not qualify for short breaks. Our community mentoring service currently has 10 young people open who meet with their youth worker to work on goals, including returning to school and improved mental health and community cohesion. Mentoring takes place in the day for non-school attendees and evenings for those in education. We have been successful to bid for the Million Hours Lottery Fund and sessions of positive activity will be starting week beginning 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024 from The Oaks building - this includes working with other organisations to offer a chance to try new activities, such as music workshops and working with a local comedian and a fitness coach. We also use The Oaks building for our young youth worker programme offering young people a chance to*

*volunteer supported by youth workers and gain valuable skills for employment.*

*The primary school mentoring is provided free of charge and The Oaks building would provide a base for volunteers, and training. Our coordinator trains volunteers to work in schools and will need an office space for co-ordination/ administration 3 days a week (term time only). Schools feedback is very positive about this free support – for example, “Our mentor has been absolutely amazing! X looked forward to seeing her each week and there has been a noticeable difference in X’s general wellbeing. X hasn’t been seeking out adults as much in school to talk to and X’s mum feels she is managing her worries more effectively.”*

*Our Supported Contact Centre is registered with NACCC and allows non-resident parents to spend time with their children. This is held every other Saturday, and we would use the building to be able to provide this service. A non-resident parent stated “The staff are friendly, and my girls know them really well – I know they are in a safe space. The ladies are very helpful and friendly.”*

**Suitability for purpose**

Please explain why this asset is suitable for the intended purpose

*(Please refer to questions 5-8 in the checklist - CAT02)*

*The RISE Trust have worked out of this building since 2008 and it is both safe and well maintained. It is regularly risk assessed and the trust will maintain this practice. The families with children under 5 already use the building and there is an established pre-school, sensory room and meeting room that is well used and resourced. The RISE already has the furniture and equipment required to continue to manage the building and these resources will remain with the trust. The pre-school outdoor space was generously refurbished by Siemens in 2023 and is specifically set up for early years.*

*Our youth service currently uses the space 3 evenings a week and the young people and the staff speak highly of the location and facilities. “I like that we can talk to the pink people, they give us a safe space to go in the evenings.” We are planning further sessions in the summer as well as cooking activities, possible free of charge holiday clubs and play schemes. We have provided a family day on the site which was suitable for both outside and indoor activities.*

*We know that youth groups can safely be hosted in the larger room as well as our Garden Room (a room built on site using RISE funding) and individual meetings/ mentoring can take place confidentially in smaller offices.*

*Having youth spaces in established community buildings with an organisation who have built up community relationships ensures that young people can have a place to come to when needed, and we have had young people drop in for support. A recent example is that a young person who left school site during the school day due to feeling overwhelmed turned up at The Oaks. Youth workers who were working there could support her, contact school so they knew she was safe and then support parents to take her back to school.*

*The RISE Trust has a very good working relationship with St Paul's School and families often are supported by the pre-school, our parent support advisor and youth team resulting in seamless support for all.*

*We have been trialling our Supported Contact Centre in the building on Saturdays and the benefits are that families have a wide variety of resources available through RISE provisions and a safe space in which to play where any conflict between parents can be prevented. There is parking available for the non-resident parent and the building can be organised so both parties do not need to have contact with each other if they want to avoid difficult conversations.*

*As the building currently has Wi-Fi and IT connectivity (to be maintained by the trust) the offices are fit for purpose for the leadership team, finance and any other administration purposes, as well as having guest Wi-Fi and allocated laptop for use of community members when needed.*

**Community support and consultation**

Please set out who you have consulted about your proposal and how you have addressed any concerns raised

*(please refer to questions 9-14 in the checklist - CAT02)*

*The RISE Trust is currently in discussion with our local councillor – Kathryn Macdermid – regarding this application for a CAT. The charity is held in high regard not only by the community but also partner organisations such as the police, health (hcr), schools, settings, housing, Fear Free, Turning Point, CEMs, and Area Boards.*

*Our Town councillor - Pete Cousins – is also involved in discussions on how The RISE can continue to support the children, young people and families of the targeted Hill Rise area in Chippenham.*

*The community are already aware of The RISE Trust's presence and as youth and preschool are located within the building then there will be no change of use except that Children's Centre outreach for families with under 5s will not happen from the building. Many of the young people who attend, and their families, live within walking distance of the centre and value its service and location.*

*The building is located next to St Paul's Primary school, and we work closely with them to support our families. Our preschool feeds into the school and at times we share ESAs on families. The headteacher and CEO have had a positive working relationship over many years and the school is well aware of the proposal to keep working from the centre.*

*One parent whose 13-year-old child is transgender and has had support through the RISE Youth mentoring service said that their mentor has been amazing and helped tremendously.*

*A preschool parent was quoted as saying "Every staff member at the pre-school are absolutely wonderful! They have gone absolutely above and beyond for me and my little ones after a breakup from a domestic violence relationship. They are so incredibly understanding and have done absolutely anything they can to ensure we are all good and have what we need. They*

*will constantly think of us if there is anything that can help. They will always check in to make sure we're good and check if we need anything. They are just incredible, they have made this process so much easier on me and my babies and are so supportive, I can always go and have a chat if I need to and always keep me up to date."*

*A young person said "I really like it here with you guys, it's a really nice vibe and I am definitely going to come back again."*

*A year 7 from Hardenhuish school states that being able to go to youth club has helped me to get use to secondary school, I can talk to youth workers about how I am finding friendships hard and they are helping me that to see I do not need to be friends with everyone'*

*'I like knowing where the session is and that the place to go doesn't change'*

*Parent from Hill RISE' I can let her go to the session on her own, knowing its just down the road, gives her some independence'*

*Another testimony is from a young youth volunteer – "When I was younger me and my brother and mum had to move away from home to a refuge. After some time, we moved to Chippenham with nothing... a lady put me in the RISE pre-school. I've realised that over the last 11 years I've been in contact or known the RISE, how much they have helped my mum in work and self-confidence. This is why the RISE is important for our community, for helping families such as mine. I am now proud to say I am a volunteer in RISE myself and I will always respect and look up to all the staff for doing the incredible job they do."*

*If there are any concerns raised The RISE deals with them immediately through liaising with relevant partner organisations such as town councils or PCSOs. Our youth workers work closely with the local PCSOs and have in the past held multi-agency meetings if there has been a concern re: ASB – especially in town centres. Attendees have included local headteachers, police, town councillors, Motiv8, and local businesses. We have not had to convene such a meeting about The Oaks site.*

### **Legal issues**

Please set out how you will address any legal, planning, insurance and health and safety matters associated with the asset (please refer to questions 15-18 in the checklist - CAT02)

*We have no legal constraints in existence and the proposal does not require any planning consent or changes to the fabric of the building.*

*The RISE Trust has public liability insurance and buildings content insurance, which it will maintain for the life of the CAT. We would discuss buildings insurance with our current provider in light of information we obtain from Wiltshire Council.*

*Rigorous health and safety checks are already a part of policy and procedure which will continue to be adhered to. A new staff member will be trained in Health and Safety, COSHH, etc and senior leadership will be responsible for ensuring all risk assessments are up-to-date and reviewed. We understand that the CAT would mean that maintenance of the building and site would be*

*the trust's responsibility and therefore the budget would ensure this was factored in for regular maintenance, repairs and statutory checks including fire and asbestos etc.*

**Financial matters**

How will you fund future running costs, repairs and maintenance?

*(please refer to questions 19-23 in the checklist - CAT02)*

*The RISE have enough reserves to maintain the building for at least a year (depending on cost implications) – if we get a peppercorn rent then we can sustain for 3 years on existing budgets. However, during this period, we will also be looking at fund raising and other funding bids in order to finance The RISE Trust's work longer term and potentially grow and expand services. We are discussing the role of a fund-raiser for the trust currently.*

*The trust been successful in bids for funding for specific ring-fenced projects such as Million Hours Fund, Safe Streets, Wiltshire Community Fund, and Chippenham Boroughlands. The expertise of managers and finance will be used for further funding applications for maintaining the building as our RISE Hub. Local charities and businesses may also be approached for projects such as the refurbishment of our outdoor play area which was kindly funded by Siemens. The RISE are also known locally and have received donations from organisations such as Chippenham Half Marathon, Coop, Screwfix, local churches, and individual community members. In order to fund the maintenance of the building we will continue to promote the charity and the need for financial support.*

**Future management**

How will you manage the asset and ensure that it continues to contribute to the wellbeing of the local community in the future?

*(please refer to questions 24-27 in the checklist - CAT02)*

*The RISE Trust has a board of Trustees, who work closely with the CEO, that oversee the services we can provide. Trustees are integral to decision making and the day-to-day management is led by the CEO and senior leaders who have a plethora of experiences in building social capital, youth work, business management and education. Trustees meet 4 times a year and hold an annual AGM. In addition, termly meetings between senior leaders and the Chair of the Trust take place. Our Chair is also involved in quality assuring the annual financial audit. The proposed staffing structure is attached which we believe would enable rigorous management of the asset. Recruitment of trustees is positive within RISE and as a result we have trustees from early years, human resources, financial management, the charity sector and health. All of these attributes will ensure The RISE Trust's values and aspirations to build a resilient community continue.*

*In addition, The RISE Trust managers are involved in many Wiltshire and local bodies including:*

- *Local Youth Networks – The RISE is a key partner*
- *Chippenham Safety Forum*
- *CFVFS membership (Wiltshire Volunteer Forum)*
- *Area board attendance*
- *Wiltshire Drugs and Substance Alliance*
- *Tobacco Alliance*
- *Chippenham Pride Working Group*

- *Partner for Chippenham Safer Streets project with office of Police and Crime Commissioner*
- *Sheldon and Hardenhuish Schools*
- *NACCC (National Association of Children's Contact Centres)*
- *MAF (multi-agency forum) member*
- *Lottery Million Hours – Chippenham project*
- *Church partnership - St Pauls and St Peters, Chippenham*
- *Wiltshire youth partnership steering group (which also involves Wiltshire Council)*

*The RISE provides staff opportunities to progress within their careers which in turn provides succession planning and continuity of the charity. Currently a manager is completing a kevel 5 Business management apprenticeship, and we have embarked on a National Apprenticeship partnership with the NYA to ensure we can sustain high quality youth provision.*

*RISE has a strong history of volunteering opportunities and successful volunteer recruitment with an aim to enable people back into education and employment – we call it the 'RISE journey'. This is embedded and would continue after the Children's Centre contract ceases so RISE volunteers can use their volunteering as a means of getting back into the world of work. One Mentor Me volunteer stated "I definitely want to help children in the future. Children are just so important because they are the future... Mentoring has helped me as well, having that time where I just had to think about the child and nothing else. It was my time out from my busy life both children were lovely, and school were really nice to me as well. I felt a part of their school as well." Another mother said "After I came into The RISE with nowhere else to go after fleeing domestic abuse you pointed me in the right direction... and now not only do I volunteer for The RISE but I have also set up my own business!"*

*Regarding Mentor Me we would aim to continue the support we currently provide - supporting on average 16 primary aged children per year with 216 face to face sessions in the past year where 90% of the children doubled their progress.*

*Our young people supported by our Youth service will have the opportunity to become ambassadors and young youth volunteers as they already do. One young person fed back "When I'm old enough, I'm going to come and get a job where you work- so you've got to make sure you stay in your job a long time because I want to work with you, us three can work together, we will be like a trio." A parent said, "They have provided my child with the most amazing support when times were very difficult for my child. Fast forward a year and my child is now a volunteer youth worker for them. The RISE Trust are amazing!! "*

*As we move forward, we would want to invite local members of the community to be part of our Advisory Board (including young people). This would be a forum where the community could help shape the development of our services and usage of the building for the community.*

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL  
CHIPPENHAM AREA BOARD  
10 June 2024

**DECLARATION**

**I confirm that the details included in this application are correct**

Signed: 

Name (please print): LYNN EVANS

Date: 19/02/2024