

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11

SOUTH WEST WILTSHIRE AREA BOARD
7 DECEMBER 2011

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

Land adjoining Bishopstone Village Hall

Executive Summary

This report deals with an application for the transfer of land adjoining Bishopstone Village Hall to be transferred to Bishopstone Village Hall Committee in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

Proposal

The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Bishopstone Village Hall Committee for the transfer of land adjoining Bishopstone Village Hall. The applicants' proposal is set out at Appendix 2.

Reasons For Proposal

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

Recommendation

To approve the transfer subject to the matters referred to in paragraph 9 of the report.

Tom Bray
Southern Wiltshire Community Area Manager

SOUTHERN WILTSHIRE AREA BOARD
7 DECEMBER 2011

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

Land adjoining Bishopstone Village Hall

Purpose of Report

1. The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Bishopstone Village Hall Committee for the transfer of land adjoining Bishopstone Village Hall (see plan 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 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 or Parish Councils, Trusts or Charities, or Social Enterprise Groups.

The application before the Area Board

6. The application from Bishopstone Village Hall Committee is attached at Appendix 2 and relates to the transfer of land adjoining Bishopstone Village Hall for a car park extension.
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 Area Manager has consulted with Strategic Property Services, who have undertaken appropriate consultation with service departments across the Council. 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 Jose Green, 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 A public footpath crosses the southern extremity of the land.
 - 9.2 There are various services relating to Wiltshire Council's adjacent sewage disposal plant in or under the land. The transfer will be subject to the council's continued right to have, use, inspect and maintain them.
 - 9.3 Bishopstone Village Hall Committee requires the car park to be fenced off from the north. There is no objection to this provided that Bishopstone Village Hall Committee funds and erects the fencing.
 - 9.4 The village hall foul drainage system uses the council's sewage disposal plant. There does not appear to be a formal agreement for this. The land transfer should address this issue.
 - 9.5 Should the sewage disposal plant need to be replaced, it is likely that the council will need to gain access to do so from the village hall car park. The Village Hall Committee has confirmed that it would be amenable to this but it would be prudent to include this in the transfer.
 - 9.6 The land is to be transferred on the standard basis. This is that there will be a covenant restricting use of the land to community purposes. If the land should cease to be used for this purpose it will revert to Wiltshire Council.
 - 9.7 The land has no value other than as amenity land and Bishopstone Village Hall Committee will incorporate it into the adjacent car park and take over maintenance. Therefore, financial implications are limited to the maintenance cost previously incurred by Wiltshire Council being transferred to Bishopstone Village Hall Committee.

Recommendation

10. To approve the transfer subject to the matters referred to in paragraph 9 above.

Tom Bray
Southern Wiltshire Community Area Manager