

## Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 12 October 2017

### Report of the Head of Asset Management

#### Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:  
Pendle Rural, Lostock Hall and  
Bamber Bridge, and  
Morecambe Central

### Proposals relating to Library Buildings and Community Asset Transfer (Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' are not for publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

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#### Executive Summary

This report outlines proposals in relation to the provision of library facilities and also considers options in relation to premises where Community Asset Transfer requests have been received.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order No. 25 have been complied with.

#### Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to agree to:

- (i) Note progress in community asset transfer of Bamber Bridge Library.
- (ii) Approve in principle the establishment of an Independent Community Library in the former Bamber Bridge Library building.
- (iii) Approve the declaring surplus and the in principle transfer of Heysham Community Swimming Pool to Heysham High School Sports College.
- (iv) The development of a feasibility study to determine the costs and implications for the provision of a library service within Earby New Road Community Centre.

## **Background and Advice**

At the meeting held on 13 July 2017 Cabinet approved a report setting out proposals for the re-opening of Libraries across Lancashire. This report provides an update on proposals in relation to two further library building. One building is subject to a live proposal for Community Asset Transfer (CAT). The proposal relating to Bamber Bridge Library has been accepted in principle however this did not include the provision of an Independent Community Library offer. Ongoing discussions with the applicant have confirmed that they are willing to include the provision of an independent community library within their proposals which are set out at Appendix 'B'.

In view of the condition of the Earby library building and following local discussions it is proposed that the library service is relocated to a different building. New Road Community Centre is an existing Lancashire County Council property and has been identified as a potential alternative site in which to accommodate a library service. Permission is sought to carry out a feasibility study taking into account the estimated costs and implications of establishing the library service within the community centre. If agree, the findings of the feasibility study will form the basis of a further report for consideration.

If the proposals set out in this report are agreed, the total number of Independent Community Libraries will be seven.

Three swimming pools in the Lancaster District (Carnforth Community Swimming Pool, Heysham Community Swimming Pool and Hornby Community Swimming Pool) based on school sites are owned by Lancashire County Council and have been leased to Lancaster City Council who provided the operational swimming pools.

During the financial year 2016/17, a decision was made by Lancaster City Council to cease operational delivery at the three sites from 31 March 2017 and hand the pools back to Lancashire County Council. As the County Council does not deliver leisure services, this would have resulted in the closure of the three community swimming pools affected. The County Council contacted the three schools within which the pools sit along with local politicians/communities about potential transfers of these buildings to enable the pools to continue as community facilities. The dates for temporary closures and the commencement of maintenance regimes are different for the three pools. Heysham and Hornby pools have now been handed back to the County Council and are currently in maintenance regimes.

This report includes a recommendation relating to Heysham Community Swimming Pool. A future report will provide more information about the situations relating to Carnforth Community Swimming Pool and Hornby Community Swimming Pool.

Appendix 'A' sets out more information about Heysham Community Swimming Pool and the expression of interest by Heysham High School Sports College to take over the maintenance and management of the pool and associated building.

As the pool closed on 30 September 2017 it is proposed that any asset transfer to Heysham High School Sports College would take place as soon as practically possible.

## **Consultations**

N/A

## **Implications:**

The timescale for the reopening of facilities that have closed, and in some cases had been prepared for sale/transfer, requires a significant amount of activity including the following considerations: recruitment of additional staff; purchase of furniture; building and equipment safety checks; building condition works; ICT facilities and infrastructure; and the securing of book stock.

Individual building surveys have been completed and used to inform works required to individual properties. At this stage it is anticipated that the timeline for re-opening library facilities will be between November 2017 and April 2018 although Cabinet should note that the practicalities of commissioning and programming works to buildings may result in a slightly longer timescale.

The use of re-instated library buildings will also be reviewed to ensure flexible use of buildings and identify opportunities for other service delivery by County Council services and third parties that will both enhance the benefit offered to communities and support their sustainability.

## **Risk management**

### **Financial**

The Government introduced flexibility for capital receipts to be used to fund revenue expenditure that meets certain criteria. As part of the County Council's budget for 2017/18 a value of £12.500m income from capital receipts is budgeted for with a further £5.000m built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19. It is important to note that the decision to approve in principle the community asset transfer of Bamber Bridge library within this report may impact on the achievement of the required value of capital receipts and consequently any associated revenue expenditure that was/is dependent upon the same. This will be monitored closely throughout this financial year.

In order to support the transition of Heysham Community Swimming Pool to the new arrangements funding of up to £27,000 will be available, as a one-off sum, to Heysham High School Sports College. As part of the revised budget proposals approved at the Cabinet meeting on 13 July 2017 funding was identified relating to the community swimming pools in Lancaster. It is proposed that this funding is split between the three community swimming pools to support the transition of any successful asset transfers.

## State Aid

There is a potential that any transfer could constitute State Aid. Whilst this risk is low, the state aid position would be assessed as the transfer progresses. In the event that it is deemed that State Aid applies appropriate steps will be taken to reduce the risk of any clawback.

## List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
The Property Strategy (Neighbourhood Centres) Response to Consultation	8&26/9/2016	Steve Browne/01772 534121
Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	7/12/2016	Mel Ormesher/01772 536966
Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	23/1/2017	Mel Ormesher/01772 536966
Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	9/3/2017	Mel Ormesher/01772 536966
Property Strategy (Neighbourhood Centres) - Community Asset Transfer and Independent Community Libraries	6/4/2017	Mel Ormesher/01772 536966
Property Strategy - Community Asset Transfer, Independent Community Libraries and vacated Children's Centres on school sites	27/4/2017	Mel Ormesher/01772 536966
Rescinding of the Deputy Leader's Approval to dispose of Fulwood and Barrowford Library and withdraw Fulwood Library, Barrowford Library, Earby Library, Freckleton Library, Whalley Library & Spring Wood Children's Centre & Lostock Hall Library & Children's Centre from the market for Sale	24/5/2017	Gary Pearse/01772 533903
Proposals relating to Library Buildings which were closed/proposed for closure as part of the Property Strategy (Neighbourhood Centres)	13/7/2017	Mike Kirby/01772 533285
Proposals relating to Library Buildings and Community Asset Transfer	10/8/2017	Mel Ormesher/01772 526966

Proposals relating to Library Buildings and Community Asset Transfer 14/9/2017

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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

Appendices 'A' and 'B' contain exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The appendices contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.