

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

**Future Lease Arrangements
Full Council – 20 June 2018**

1. Introduction

Due to the financial pressures to providing statutory services, Swindon Borough Council continues to move to being a primarily 'strategic authority'; absolving itself of its physical assets and in turn the internal support infrastructure to manage such assets. This can and has in cases placed a 'de-facto' pressure on the Parish Council to provide support to facilities where it does not hold the legal authority. The Parish Council has also been restricted in providing support to assets in our Parish where we could be best placed to do so.

This reduction of support from SBC has been considered by the Parish Council to be a significant risk to Parish residents. CSNPC holds comparatively more assets than any other parish in Swindon and our residents would be disproportionately affected by such a move. With the current SBC financial trajectory there is a probable risk of building closures and potential displacement of users relying on locally provided services.

2. Report Details

- 2.1** In March 2018 Councillors expressed an interest in taking on further assets and tasked the Parish Manager to negotiate further asset transfers with SBC. Due to the election there has been some delay in agreeing a workable 'bulk' agreement of asset transfers whereby individual authority is not required on each asset. Whilst negotiations for the transfer of 32 The Circle took place, the Parish Council were concerned at the clause for a market rent payable to SBC. Given the extensive liabilities that community assets hold and their lack of marketable value, the Parish Council found this stance alarming.
- 2.2** Currently, the process for agreeing assets is that the Parish writes to SBC's Head of Property Assets, the SBC Officer then makes a judgement based on whether this can or cannot be recommended based on rental rates, current tenancy arrangements and backlog maintenance within the SBC R&M Budget. Once the officer agrees a 'Briefing Note' is drawn up to be signed by the Cabinet Councillor responsible for the property portfolio. Currently this is Cllr Fionuala Foley.

Due to the volume of potential transfers the Parish Council does not consider this to be a suitable mechanism as each asset transfer can take several months to process.

2.3 It is proposed to take on the following land and assets:

ASSET	PERIOD	SUB LET	SUBLET TERMS
EVEN SWINDON COMMUNITY CENTRE	25 YEARS	YES	NOT AVAILABLE
GORSE HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE	25 YEARS	YES	NOT AVAILABLE
WESTERN COMMUNITY CENTRE	25 YEARS	YES	NOT AVAILABLE
MANNINGTON PLAYING FIELDS	25 YEARS	NO	
MOREDON PLAYING FIELDS & BUILDINGS	25 YEARS	NO	PAVILION IN POOR STATE
PEMBROKE PLAYING FIELDS & BUILDINGS	25 YEARS	NO	
SOUTHBROOK PLAYING FIELDS & BUILDINGS	25 YEARS	NO	
PENHILL PLAYING FIELDS	25 YEARS	NO	
REDUNDANT BOWLS PAVILION PENHILL	25 YEARS	NO	TO BE SUBLET TO PRIVATE NURSERY PROVIDER
FORMER LIBRARY THE CIRCLE PINEHURST	25 YEARS	YES	
LAND E OF PICKARDS LEASED TO HBUF	25 YEARS	YES	BREAKCLAUSE 2019

2.4 Following a meeting with SBC Officers it is proposed at current sub-let tenants will continue in the current format, in the same way we have managed for the Pinetrees Community Centre. Provision will be made in all leases to allow the Parish Council to sublet to the Central Swindon North Leisure & Libraries Trust at any time the Trust & Parish Council may see fit to do so.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That agreement is made for the Parish Manager to negotiate the transfer of the above assets and delegate the management of this process to the L&A Committee.

3.2 That the Parish Manager be tasked to report back to the L&A committee with:

- i. Detailed dilapidations reports from SBC outlining liabilities
- ii. Negotiate with SBC a transfer of existing R&M budgets to allow the Parish to conduct works
- iii. Return to Full Council if combined Code D1 works on the dilapidations show significant risks greater than £20,000 per site.

3.3 That the Parish Manager liaises with existing tenants to extend their current terms of tenure without further approval.