

Executive

8 February 2018

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy and Place
Portfolio of the Executive Leader

**Proposed Long Term Lease – Holgate Bowling Green, Pavilion and
Grounds, Holgate Road, York.**

Summary

1. This report seeks an Executive decision to grant a long term lease to the Trustees of York Railway Institute (RI) Bowls Club.

Recommendations

2. The Executive agree to the letting of Holgate Bowling Green to the RI Bowls Club, for a term of 30 years, at a peppercorn rent, in accordance with the lease terms as set out in the Council's Asset Transfer Policy.

Reason: to develop and operate social, sporting and recreational activities for club members and all sections of the local community.

Background

3. The RI Bowls Club operates on Council owned land, paying rent and rates to City of York Council. They have been responsible for the provision of all equipment and materials connected with the maintenance of the bowling green. At the same time they have developed the site, building a clubhouse that is the envy of clubs nationally.
4. Over the last three years there has been a project to transfer the care, management and development of council owned bowling greens and croquet lawns to their respective users. On 26th January 2017 the Executive approved the granting of long term leases of some of the council's bowling/croquet greens to the clubs that use them, in order to transfer the maintenance obligations of all its bowling/croquet greens to

those clubs. The RI Bowls Club is seeking parity with the other clubs operating on council greens.

5. The bowls club is a section of York RI Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registration No. 1165513.

About the club

6. The club's aims and objectives are to develop and operate social, sporting and recreational activities for their members.
 - Membership is open to all sections of the community Bowls provides the opportunity to undertake exercise irrespective of age or level of fitness, it also helps to address loneliness with participation in either social matches or representative teams.
 - Membership comprises predominantly residents of the City of York area and they operate varying levels of membership – Full bowling members (Reduced for Juniors which extends as long as they are in full-time education).
 - Non-members are able to play for an hourly fee, with free coaching and equipment for beginners.
 - The club operates a low cost (currently £2 per year) Social Membership for members of the community who wish to use the facilities.
 - The club is fully self-sufficient with any surplus from subscriptions being added to the profit from the bar, this in turn is used to maintain and develop the facilities. All day to day activities at the club are undertaken by members on a voluntary basis.
 - In addition to bowls they have domino teams, quiz nights, weekly bingo and public speaking with RI Speakers Club.

Working within the Community

7. The club's facilities are used by Holgate Allotment Association for their meetings, and also 1st Holgate Scout Group who hold an annual fundraising event. They operate an annual tournament that has provided donations to local charities including Chill in the Community Café, Special Care Baby Unit. The club has made its facilities available to local businesses for 'Team Building' activities. Residents from the nearby Springfield Court regularly use the club's facilities.

8. The club recently procured a Defibrillator and arranged training on its use, the equipment is for members, the Holgate Allotment Association and also neighbours.
9. The Council's Community Asset Transfer policy states that qualifying community groups should be offered a lease up to 99 years on a nil rent basis. The length of the lease will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, but will be long enough to ensure that the tenant can apply for any funding needed to support the use it will make of the premises, and any work it needs to repair/refurbish/improve the property. The community groups are initially offered 25 year terms.
10. The Trustees of York RI Bowls Club will be offered a 30 year lease to enable the club to apply for funding bids to the sports governing bodies and the Lottery, which will be in line with the clubs that operate at West Bank Park, Clarence Gardens, and Glen Gardens.

Consultation

11. The Operations Manager – Public Realm, Executive Member for Culture Leisure and Tourism, and the Capital and Asset Board have been consulted regarding this proposal.

Council Plan

12. Under the Council Plan these proposals will assist in supporting;
 - A prosperous city for all
 - Local residents enjoy a facility to promote creativity and the well being of those in the neighbourhood.
 - Residents can enjoy use of a building which is part of the city's unique heritage and be included in a range of activities.
 - A focus on frontline services
 - Everyone has access to opportunities regardless of their background
 - Residents are encouraged and supported to live healthily
 - A council that listens to residents
 - Engaging with the community to provide creative space for local residents

Implications

13.

- **Financial** – Under the terms of the current leases the RI bowls club pay a total rent of £896 per annum. The proposed community asset transfer will result in the loss of this income. This will be accommodated within existing budgets.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – There are no HR implications
- **Equalities** – There are no equalities implications.
- **Legal** - The Council has power under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the General Disposal Consent Order to grant a lease of General Fund (non-HRA) land for less than best consideration/full open market without needing the consent of the Secretary of State (for Communities and Local Government) provided that:
 - (i) The difference between the consideration being obtained and best consideration/full O.M.V. is less than £2 Million and
 - (ii) The Council considers that the purpose of the disposal will contribute to the improvement of the economic, environmental or social well-being of the areaIf any part of the land is 'open space' within the meaning of Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (land which is used for the public recreation or which is laid out as a public garden or a disused burial ground) then S.123 LGA 1972 requires that before any disposal (including a lease) can be completed the Council must advertise the proposed disposal in a local newspaper in two consecutive weeks and duly consider any objections/comments received.
- **Crime and Disorder** – There are no crime and disorder implications.
- **Information Technology (IT)** – There are no IT implications.
- **Property** – Contained in this report.
- **Public Health** – The provision of bowling clubs contributes to the public health agenda – including physical and mental wellbeing, social inclusion and sport.

- **Planning** – There are no planning implications.

Risk Management

8. The risk is considered to be low.

Contact Details

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Report **Date** 16th January 2018
Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s) List information for all

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Wards Affected: Holgate

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex 1 – Plan – Holgate Bowling Green.

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

RI – Railway Institute.