



CABINET - 27TH MARCH 2019

SUBJECT: PROPOSED COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE IN TY-SIGN, RISCA

REPORT BY: INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of a proposal presented by a newly created Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the Tŷ Sign Community Hall and Resource Centre, to develop a new Community Centre in Tŷ Sign, Risca.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet's approval in principle to support the delivery of a purpose built community resource centre on land at Holly Road, Tŷ Sign (shown edged black at Appendix 1) subject to full consultation.
- 1.3 To authorise officers to enter into further discussions and to undertake the necessary consultations.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has been approached by a newly created CIO, the Tŷ Sign Community Hall and Resource Centre, to work in partnership with them to explore the feasibility of developing a new purpose built Community Centre in Holly Road, Tŷ Sign, Risca on land also held by the HRA. The Tŷ Sign Community Hall and Resource Centre are seeking a lease period of at least 21 years (necessary to meet the requirements of the Big Lottery), and at a low, non-commercial, rent.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet agree in principle to support the delivery of a purpose built community resource centre on land known as "Spar Field" at Holly Road, Tŷ Sign and authorise officers to enter into further discussions and undertake the necessary consultations with a further report being brought to Cabinet for final determination.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To support the development of a new purpose built community resource centre in Tŷ Sign, Risca.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Tŷ Council has been approached by a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the Ty Sign Community Hall and Resource Centre, seeking the Council's support to develop a new purpose built Community Resource Centre in Holly Road, Tŷ Sign, Risca on land held by the

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) (on the land shown edged black at Appendix 1). The CIO includes the Agape Community Church and the 5th Risca Scouts, and its constitution allows for trustees to be nominated by the Risca East Community Council and the Channel View Management Committee, although neither position is actually occupied at the moment. The proposal would reduce the need for residents from Tŷ Sign to travel into the centre of Risca for events and services.

- 5.2 The Tŷ Sign Community Hall and Resource Centre have applied to the Big Lottery 'People and Places Grant' for £500,000 and to the Welsh Government Community Facilities Grant for £250,000.
- 5.3 The site of the proposed new community resource centre shown at Appendix 1 is currently a park known locally as "Spar Field" and is held by the Housing Revenue Account. The Tŷ Sign Community Hall and Resource Centre are seeking a lease period of at least 21 years (necessary to meet the requirements of the Big Lottery), and at a low, non-commercial, rent. The Authority may wish to consider restricting the permitted use and sale or transfer of any lease by absolute covenants.
- 5.4 Since the proposed letting of the land is a disposal of land held under the Housing Revenue Account, consent to the disposal under sections 32-34 of the Housing Act 1985 will need to be first obtained prior to entering into any lease. Such consent would be sought from Welsh Government following agreement of Head of Terms.
- 5.5 Where a council is considering disposing of any land consisting or forming part of an open space under s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 they must give notice of their intention to do so in a newspaper circulating in the area in which the land is situated, and consider any objections to the proposed disposal which may be made to them. Should Cabinet be minded to support the proposal in principle any material objections as a result of the public notice procedure will be brought to Cabinet in a further report.
- 5.6 The Channel View Community Centre management committee currently licence the Channel View Community Centre (Appendix 2) on a peppercorn rent. The current site is also held by the HRA. Access to the site is through the Council's Hafod-y-Bryn Sheltered Housing Scheme. The Channel View Community Centre building is not currently fit for purpose as a result of structural, locational, and functional problems that cannot adequately be addressed by further investment in the building.
- 5.7 At its meeting of 21st February 2019 Council agreed its 2019/20 budget and in doing so agreed £13.9 million of savings. A proposal to close 4 community centres, including Channel View Community Centre, was deferred for 2019/20 only. This is to allow a period of time for the Community Centres to find alternative funding or consider alternative delivery models that do not involve funding by CCBC. It was noted in the report to Council that failure to secure additional funds (outside of CCBC) may result in the closure of Centres. The proposed new building would replace this facility.
- 5.8 The Channel View site currently houses another building that is leased to the Scout Association Trust Corporation. This lease was signed on 1st July 1999 for a 30 year period and it is anticipated that this would be surrendered should the Scout Group relocate to the proposed new community centre. There are currently 10 years remaining on this lease and the building is in a very poor condition. As it would be a constraint on any redevelopment at Channel View the Authority could consider making any lease for the new site conditional on the surrender of the Scout hall site.
- 5.9 By vacating the existing site at Channel View there is an opportunity to redevelop the site, subject to a feasibility study being undertaken. This may provide an opportunity to increase the provision of small unit residential accommodation in the area. It should be noted however that the demolition of the existing buildings at Channel View will need to be costed and, as such, may impact upon any capital receipt achieved.

5.10 Subject to valuation, an option exists to dispose of the existing Channel View site to develop affordable housing. The associated capital receipt would go into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Alternatively the land could be earmarked for future development of Council housing. The HRA is a ring-fenced budget that is funded from tenants' rents to support the delivery of an effective and efficient housing service through maintaining and improving the Councils housing stock.

5.11 **Conclusion**

This proposal represents an opportunity for the development of a new community resource centre funded by external grant and which would replace existing facilities that are no longer fit for purpose and represent a liability for the Authority. Cabinet are therefore recommended to support the proposal in principle.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 It is assumed that any material objections as a result of the public notice procedure required under s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 where a council is considering disposing of any land consisting or forming part of an open space will be brought to Cabinet in a further report. It is also assumed that consent to the disposal under sections 32-34 of the Housing Act 1985 will be obtained from Welsh Government prior to entering into any lease.

7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 Community facilities support the Council's Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-29. Quality of life and fit for purpose assets within imposed financial constraints is the main consideration of the Council's Asset Management Strategy 2016-26

7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023**

The availability of good quality community facilities contributes to Wellbeing Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

8. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

8.1 The issues outlined in this report make a contribution across the seven well-being goals, but in particular to the following areas:

1. **A healthier Wales:** There is significant evidence to support the view that undertaking an active lifestyle has significant benefits in terms of reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease along with positive impacts upon mental health and body weight control. The role of community centres is significant in terms of supporting the integration of physical activity into everyday lifestyles.
2. **A Wales of cohesive communities:** Caerphilly County Borough Council have communicated a vision to place its facilities at the heart of the community, ensuring it's effectively placed to deliver a well-connected, socially inclusive hub.
3. **A globally responsible Wales:** There is significant evidence to support the positive impact that leading a healthy, physically active lifestyle has upon the economic, social and cultural well-being of Welsh residents.

4. **A more equal Wales:** There is significant evidence to support the positive role that engaging in community activity can play in supporting people to fulfil their potential from both an educational and socio economic perspective.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will not be required at this stage however should the recommendations outlined below be approved then an EIA will be required in accordance with the Authority's Strategic Equality Plan.
- 9.2 The proposed development to build a Community Centre will have a positive impact on the wider community and benefitting many different groups through the delivery of various activities and interest groups.
- 9.3 The proposal supports Strategic Equality Objective 3: Improving Physical Access, Strategic Equality Objective 5: Inclusive Engagement and Participation and Strategic Equality Objective 7: Supporting Age-friendly Communities.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Channel View Community Centre has current fund balances of circa £72,500, however given its charitable status any proposed use of these funds in support of the proposal would be a matter for the charity in accordance with its own constitution.
- 10.2 At present the Council's contribution to existing Channel View Community Centre is in the form of caretaker costs, public indemnity insurance and statutory maintenance liabilities (see below) which can be used as future MTFP savings in the event that the facility closes:
- Caretaker costs - £5,500 per annum
 - Public Indemnity Insurance - £500 per annum
 - Statutory Maintenance Liabilities – £5,000 per annum
- 10.3 The most recent condition survey undertaken at Channel View Community Centre in 2014 outlines £107,479 of outstanding maintenance requirements identified against a priority 1, 2 or 3 rating with 1 being the most urgent. The breakdown is as follows:
- Priority 1: £9,560
Priority 2: £82,169
Priority 3: £15,750
- 10.4 Should the existing buildings on the site of the Channel View Community Centre close and be vacated there will be demolition costs to be considered in the context of any redevelopment.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 CCBC currently employs a caretaker at Channel View Community Centre on a 12 hr per week basis. The position would be managed in accordance with the Council's workforce flexibility policies in the event that the Centre closed.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 This report has been sent to the consultees listed below all comments received are reflected in this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Local Government Act 1972.

14. URGENCY

14.1 The decision will be subject to the “call-in” procedure.

Author: Rob Hartshorn – Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services
Consultees: Mark S. Williams – Interim Corporate Director, Communities
Nigel George – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services
Cllr Arianna Leonard, Risca East Ward Member
Cllr Philippa Leonard, Risca East Ward Member
Shaun Couzens – Chief Housing Officer
Jeff Reynolds – Sport & Leisure Services facilities Manager
Jane Roberts-Waite - Strategic Co-ordination Manager, Housing
Tim Stephens – Development Control Manager
Tim Broadhurst – Estates Manager
Kevin Lodge – Community Centre Services Manager
Rob Tranter - Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Richard Crane - Solicitor
Anwen Cullinane - Senior Policy Officer (Equalities, Welsh Language, and Consultation)
Mike Eedy - Finance Manager
Shaun Watkins - Human Resources Manager

Background Papers:

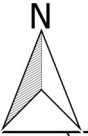
Cabinet Report – “Community Centres Task and Finish Group” 20th January 2016

Cabinet Report – “Proposed community centre in Ty-Sign, Risca to replace the Channel View Community Centre” 14th March 2018

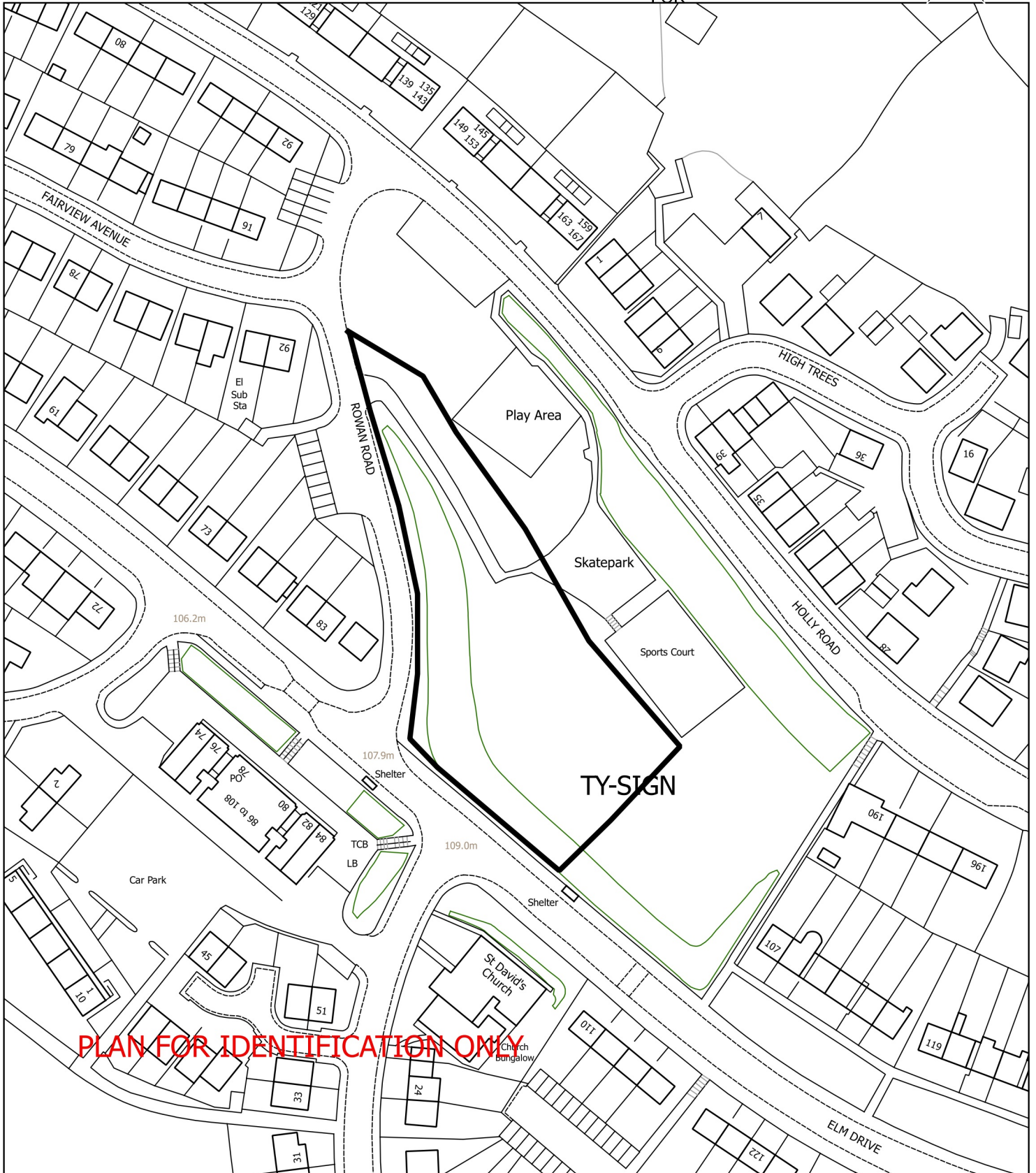
Appendices:

Appendix 1: Site of Proposed Community Resource Centre, Holly Road.

Appendix 2: Site of Existing Channel View Community Centre



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PLAN FOR IDENTIFICATION ONLY

