

Report

Report to:	Housing and Technical Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	30 August 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Community Facility Review – Ward 7, East Kilbride Central South
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to advise committee:-

- ♦ of matters considered in the Asset Review Pilot exercise, reviewing the community accessed assets within Ward 7; and
- ♦ of the proposed action plan for the properties within East Kilbride Central South.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the process for reviewing the community accessed facilities within Ward 7 is noted;
- (2) that the Ward 7 action plan is approved and incorporated into the overall action programme for East Kilbride locality;
- (3) that the Head of Property Services be authorised to investigate the options for developing a “campus” around Murray Owen Centre that includes the pitches, Murray Owen Bowling Pavilion and Murray Owen Football Pavilion; and
- (4) that the Head of Property Services be authorised to take forward proposals in respect of the alternative options for:-
 - Westwood Community Hall
 - Red Deer Centre and associated Bowling Club
 - Dunedin Pavilion and pitches

3. Background

- 3.1. Through its approach to Asset Management Planning and prioritised investment strategy the Council regularly reviews its property requirements with a view to improving the condition, suitability and effectiveness of its portfolio, identifying opportunities to improve service delivery and create a sustainable portfolio.
- 3.2. The Scottish Government has set out emission reduction targets in legislation with the intention for Scotland to become Net Zero by 2045, with responsibility upon public sector organisations to decarbonise their properties by 2038. The costs associated with complying with this target are significant, estimated at over £250

million for the Council's schools alone. It is imperative therefore, before embarking on the development of investment proposals and seeking funding that the council is confident of the service need for all its properties.

- 3.3. Set against this background and in light of the increasing budget pressures within the council and consequently South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC) , the existing asset portfolio is unsustainable, and it is essential to identify opportunities to reduce operating costs and avoid future financial liabilities. In terms of service continuity, it is better to do this in a planned way rather than await events which require property closure at short notice. A review of property assets in conjunction with local members is now underway and this report is the result of the pilot exercise which has informed this wider review process.
- 3.4. The options for each of the properties within Ward 7 have been reviewed by Community and Enterprise, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and Property Services with input from Social Work and Education where appropriate.
- 3.5. Consideration has been given to the following factors:-
 - The area profile and the locality that each property serves
 - Accessibility and local transport
 - Service demand and whether the property serves a local geography or particular type of activity e.g. sport
 - Potential changes in demand, for example community growth areas and proposed developments in the locality
 - Level of current community engagement at the property
 - Property Investment
 - Operating costs
- 3.6. The next stage has been to discuss the information collated on the assets with the Elected Members for the Ward through 3 meetings.

Those meetings worked towards developing the action plan and identifying assets either as:-

- Core Estate – preference to continue to maintain the property, with repairs and maintenance being programmed through the repair budgets and prioritised investment fund.
 - Opportunities - potential reuse or redevelopment leading to:-
 - Better use of remaining assets
 - Potential for revenue savings and avoidance of unnecessary capital expenditure
 - Carbon reduction
 - Releasing assets for other operational uses or site redevelopment
 - Releasing assets for sale or lease through the Property Bulletin process
 - Community Asset Transfer opportunities
- 3.7. This report outlines the outcomes of those detailed discussions and highlights the proposed actions.

4. Assessment of Assets

4.1. Core Estate

4.1.1 Schools

The Council's modern school estate is Core to the locality and there are 7 schools in Ward 7. 3 schools are not currently available to the community letting programme as they are within 1 mile of a high school.

Opportunities remain for the community use of
Heather Knowe Primary School
Murray Primary School
St Louise's Primary School

The opportunities at Duncanrig Secondary School are under review following the recent announcement of SLLC withdrawal from service provision at this facility.

4.1.2. Murray Owen Centre/East Kilbride Lifestyles

This is a modern facility in good condition which operates as a social work day care facility during the day and a Lifestyles facility in the evening and at weekends. The facility is operationally considered a Core property within the ward and has capacity for additional community letting through discussion with Social Work and SLLC. This property should be a priority for planned maintenance and investment.

The facility is adjacent to playing fields, a football pavilion and bowling greens with a bowling pavilion and there is potential to create a "campus" with these adjoining facilities which are well used.

4.2. Opportunities

4.2.1 Westwood Hall

This hall is in basic condition and would require significant capital investment within the next 5 years to simply to sustain the existing service.

The level of use is low, and income does not cover even the utility costs. There is scope to transfer the existing activities to alternative facilities in the ward.

Opportunities include:-

- Sale or lease of the property on the open market;
- Sale or lease to an adjoining owner; and
- Community Asset Transfer – although no known interests at present.

4.2.2. Red Deer Centre and Red Deer Bowling Club

Red Deer Centre, formerly a day centre, remains the responsibility of Social Work. Part of the building is leased to Red Deer Bowling Club and there are a number of legacy community lets that are currently free of charge which are anomalous to other community assets. Of the 23 groups that used the facility pre Covid, only 9 continue and there is scope to transfer these remaining activities to alternative facilities in the ward, albeit that charges would apply at the new locations to apply consistency with the treatment of other community groups.

This facility is in extremely poor condition with running costs of approximately £220,000 p.a. and investment of around £1.15 million forecast to be required over the next 5 years, simply to bring the property into a state of good repair. In order to meet modern standards of accommodation investment in order of £3.8 million would be required. There are no budgets available for this scale of investment.

Community asset transfer is unlikely to be a viable option given the level of funding required for the refurbishment of the facility, however there are options in terms of retaining the bowling greens that could be explored with the club and external funders or for the club to merge with other nearby clubs.

The location is suitable for residential or commercial redevelopment and initial investigations show that the site would be suitable for social housing.

Opportunities include:-

- Redevelopment by the Council for Social Housing.
- Combination with the adjoining social housing site owned by East Kilbride Housing Association.
- Disposal.

4.2.3. Dunedin Pavilion

The pavilion serves the adjoining grass and blaze pitches, is in basic condition and there are currently no lets for the facility.

There is interest in community asset transfer for existing use, however, in terms of redevelopment, the site would have challenges in terms of planning policy and Sports Scotland could seek to seek the pitches re-provisioned elsewhere if development or disposal was proposed.

The opportunities include:-

- Community Asset Transfer – live interest from local sports club.

5. Next Steps

5.1. It is recognised that the Core community facilities in the area are the schools and the Murray Owen/East Kilbride Lifestyles. There is potential to create a “campus” around the Lifestyles based on the property, the pitches, bowling club and pavilion. Some alterations may be required to Murray Owen Centre to support increased community use and the potential investment need will be identified and considered as part of the Transition Fund.

5.2. It is recommended that:-

- discussions commence with the users of Westwood Hall and Red Deer Centre to identify alternative locations for their activities;
- the opportunity to redevelop the site of the Red Deer Centre for Social Housing is progressed;
- the opportunity to dispose of Westwood Hall is progressed; and
- discussions continue with the local community regarding the Community Asset Transfer of Dunedin Pavilion.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. The review of services may result in the requirement for adjustments to staffing arrangements and these will be considered as part of any future detailed property project. This will include discussions with SLLC and Unions. There are not however, considered to be any significant issues within Ward 7.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. Financial implications will be identified through the development of any individual projects and will include any possible adjustment to repairs and maintenance budgets, potential capital projects, any potential capital receipts and/or revenue savings along with community benefits.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 There are potentially implications for service users arising from decisions to close or asset transfer properties and in the case of each property recommended for more detailed review, the opportunities for relocating or re-provisioning the service will take these implications into account.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required. Services may however be required to undertake equality impact assessments when considering service reviews and/or the specific circumstances of a property.
- 9.2. The contents of this report have been the subject of consultation with Community and Enterprise, South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and Property Services with input from Social Work and Education where appropriate.
- 9.3. The contents of this report have been the subject of consultation with the Elected Members for Ward 7.

Joanne Forbes
Head of Property Services

26 July 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/ Ambitions/ Objectives

- Accountable, Effective, Efficient and Transparent

Previous References

- none

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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