

Report

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Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	27 June 2018
Report by:	Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

Subject:	King Street, Larkhall – Extension of Lease to Larkhall Christians Together on Concessionary Terms
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise of the request to extend the current one year lease of the former public toilets and community facility at King Street, Larkhall for a further two years on the same concessionary terms.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the former public toilets and community facility at King Street, Larkhall, currently leased to Larkhall Christians Together (a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation), at a concessionary rental of £1 per annum, be extended for a further two years
- (2) that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in conjunction with the Head of Administration and Legal Services, be authorised to conclude all matters in respect of the extension of the existing concessionary lease.

3. Background

3.1. The Executive Committee, at its meeting of 8 March 2017, approved the creation of a lease to Larkhall Christians Together for a period of one year on concessionary rental terms.

3.2. Larkhall Christians Together have been in occupation of the former toilets and community facility at King Street, Larkhall since 3 August 2017. Their current lease is due to expire as at 2 August 2018.

3.3. During the currency of their existing tenure, the organisation have been undertaking various activities which are of benefit to the wider Larkhall Community. These include a signposting service where they gather and disseminate information relating to local events, activities and services between the hours of 10 am and 3 pm Monday to Friday during which times the toilets facility is open to the public.

3.4. The facility also serves as a hub for a youth cafe running twice a week in the evenings. This provides a safe environment for young people to socialise and make new friends and is delivered by the Machan Trust. In addition, local church ministers are providing drop in sessions twice a week allowing people to discuss any issues or problems they may have relating to life or their faith. The organisation are also acting as both a distribution centre and referral centre for the local Food Bank.

- 3.5. At present 24 volunteers are registered with the Larkhall Christians Together organisation with a further four volunteer applications currently being processed.
- 3.6. In addition to the aforementioned activities, the organisation are planning to start a group for dementia sufferers and their carers. Training is to be given to the organisation's volunteers by Alzheimers Scotland and the organisation hope to become dementia friendly accredited. The organisation are also planning to have health awareness sessions promoting healthy lifestyles which may lead to positive action on nutrition, physical activity and mental health in the wider community.
- 3.7. If the activities, both current and proposed, grow to the extent anticipated, it is understood that the organisation will seek to employ one FTE member of staff in 2019 to help manage the activities and overall general operation of the ongoing project.
- 3.8. At present, the organisation do not feel they have a sufficient number of community activities in place to justify seeking to progress a Community Asset Transfer purchase request. However, while it is their ultimate intention to do so, they believe that a prudent course of action would be to continue to run and expand the operation for a further two years before making any longer term commitments in this regard.

4. Proposal

- 4.1. It is proposed that the former public toilets and community facility at King Street, Larkhall, which is currently leased to Larkhall Christians Together by way of an annual lease on concessionary terms be extended for a further two years on the same concessionary basis, namely:-

- ◆ Rent £1 per annum
- ◆ The property will be used as a community facility and public toilets
- ◆ The tenant is responsible for repairs, maintenance and insurance
- ◆ The Council insures the building and recovers the premium from the tenant
- ◆ The tenant is responsible for all rates, water rates and utility costs

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. There are no employee implications.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The grant of the extension of lease at £1 per annum is a concessionary rent which will be the subject of reassessment based on the community benefits realised through this continuing project.
- 6.2. The extension to the lease will mitigate any short term potential revenue liability on the Council in terms of vacant rates, maintenance, insurance and security of the property.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. There will be a review of the viability of the project towards the end of the extended lease period and proposals for any further agreement will be reported back to Committee.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 8.1. Consultation has taken place with Planning and Regeneration Services.

- 8.2. 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.

Daniel Lowe
Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

25 May 2018

Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives

- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
- ◆ Work with communities and partners to promote high quality, thriving and sustainable communities
- ◆ Make communities safer, stronger and sustainable

Previous References

- ◆ Executive Committee Report – 8 March 2017

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

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

Frank McCafferty, Head of Property Services

Ext: 4073 (Tel: 01698 454073)

email: frank.mccafferty@southlanarkshire.gov.uk