



## **CABINET - 25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 25**

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER PROPOSAL OF THE  
FORMER TOILET BLOCK AT TREDEGAR GROUNDS**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ASSETS AND DECARBONISATION**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's approval for an in-principal Community Asset Transfer (CAT) through the grant of a long-term lease. The proposal involves transferring the former toilet block in Tredegar Grounds to Community Volunteers Wales.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Community Asset Transfer (CAT) aims to empower communities by transferring assets to safeguard services and facilities. This proposal forms part of several pilot projects that are being progressed under the refreshed CAT approach.
- 2.2 Community Volunteers Wales (CVW) is an award-winning, volunteer-led charity based in Risca, established in 2020 to address social isolation, food poverty, and health inequalities. The charity run several high-impact initiatives across the community, including The Pantri eco shop, Snug Coffee Shops, community transport, and employability programmes.
- 2.3 The proposal seeks to transform the disused public toilet block in Tredegar Grounds into Risca Kiosk—a vibrant, accessible refreshment kiosk with sheltered seating, inclusive unisex toilet and baby changing, and on-site equipment hire for active play and wellbeing. This project addresses an urgent local need for facilities that support both families and individuals of all ages to enjoy the park and improve physical and social wellbeing.
- 2.4 The project will offer affordable refreshments, activity hire (e.g. bikes, games), and community information in a safe, inclusive environment. It will support local volunteers, apprentices, and work placements, especially people with neurodiversity's. The aims are to increase park usage, reduce isolation, and create sustainable microenterprise.

- 2.5 The success of this project will enhance footfall and viability of wider initiatives including the CVW Transport to Health scheme, youth engagement activities, and local green space investment proposals from Groundwork Wales and Gwent Green Grid. If successful, Risca Kiosk will become a central feature in the emerging vision of Risca as a wellbeing hub.
- 2.6 The Council is facing significant financial challenges and simply cannot afford to deliver all current services. This scheme offers an opportunity to transfer a site that is currently not in use and develop a safe and accessible community space where services will be provided for children, families and vulnerable groups ensuring equitable access to well-being opportunities. The transfer will relieve the Council of some responsibilities and costs associated with managing the asset.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To endorse:

The proposed transfer of the toilet block in Tredegar Grounds to CVW via a lease agreement. Subject to planning requirements and provision of a sustainable business plan.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To bring back into use the former toilet block in Tredegar Grounds for the benefit of the local community. The proposal forms part of a pilot scheme to assess the refreshed Community Asset Transfer approach.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 Community Asset Transfer may take a variety of forms but fundamentally, it entails transferring management and/or ownership to community groups. It serves as an alternative to private sales, safeguarding community buildings and spaces for the long-term. This approach enables councils and communities to maximise local value while minimising public sector costs.
- 5.2 The proposal detailed in this report involves the leasehold transfer of the former toilet block in Tredegar Grounds, Risca, to a local charity, the constitution of which makes them a suitable candidate for the asset transfer process.
- 5.3 Pilot schemes are underway to assess the revised Community Asset Transfer approach and timelines. This project presents the opportunity to transfer a site that is currently not in use, returning it to an occupational use. The proposal will fill an identified gap in service provision within the Risca area, bringing benefits to the local community.

## The Proposal

- 5.4 CVW is a registered charity (No. 1191383) and volunteer-led social enterprise operating in South Wales working at a grassroots level to meet local needs through inclusive, community-owned initiatives. The charity is a registered CIO and adheres to the Charity Governance Code.
- 5.5 CVW is governed by a board of trustees who provide strategic oversight and ensure legal and financial compliance. The board includes professionals with experience in community development, finance, safeguarding, and project management.
- 5.6 This project will involve the full refurbishment and adaptive reuse of the existing former toilet block in Tredegar Grounds. The works will be sympathetic to the existing structure, maintaining the external shell while reconfiguring and modernising the internal layout for community use. The aim is to transform the site into a multi-purpose, accessible, and sustainable facility.
- 5.7 The Key Changes planned include:-
- Installation of a fully accessible unisex toilet with baby changing facilities and 24/7 coin/token entry system
  - Creation of a community facing kiosk, with serving hatch positioned at the rear of the building to face the park
  - Potential sheltered seating area, planned on the right side of the building for rest, socialising, and inclusive use
  - Future proposed laundry units (pending future consultation) to the left side sheltered space, allowing quiet and secure operation
  - Internal reconfiguration to accommodate secure storage for hire equipment, refreshments stock, and operational supplies
  - Installation of internal fixtures and fittings, including counters, shelving, CCTV, alarm system, energy-efficient lighting, and water-saving systems
- 5.8 The communities of Risca and Ty-Sign, areas of high deprivation with limited access to recreational infrastructure and rising health inequalities will be served through the addition of a bike hub, affordable equipment hire, and assisted cycles (in partnership with CCBC's Active Travel Team), residents across the wider Caerphilly borough will also be supported —especially as the only other operational assisted cycles are based in Newport.
- 5.9 The project will benefit a wide community of interest, including young people, families, and those without access to cycling or sports equipment. The project

will actively engage the elderly, who are often excluded from green space due to poor toilet access, and individuals referred through social prescribing pathways by GPs and mental health professionals.

- 5.10 The initiative will also focus on underrepresented groups, including the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community, and people with Additional Learning needs, disabilities, or long-term health conditions, ensuring equal access to wellbeing opportunities and inclusive use of public space.
- 5.11 A clear Business Development Strategy has been provided with key activities outlined for the project design and establishment, launch and initial operations phase through to sustainability and growth plan for years three and beyond.
- 5.12 The proposal includes market analysis, and target market data. The business case outlines the plans to expand services in the future, attract a broader customer base, collaborate with other local organisations, and further enhance community engagement.
- 5.13 A market research exercise through social media, in person engagement and informal pop-up sessions, identified a strong demand for accessible toilet facilities, inclusive activities that promote active lifestyles, and local volunteering routes for young people. Further consultation will occur with schools and youth groups to tailor hire options.
- 5.14 The project will be delivered in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure sustainability, inclusivity, and maximum community impact:
- 5.15 Local schools and the Caerphilly Youth Team will promote equipment hire, green space use, active travel, recycling education, and inclusive volunteering. Existing partnership with Gwent Police's Gen team to engage Police cadets with the community for cycling initiatives and to role model and reduce ASB.
- 5.16 Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations, BOOST Charitable Trust, Platform, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Integrated Wellbeing Network, CCBC Community Connectors, and local GP and psychiatric practitioners will support referrals, social prescribing, and access for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and neurodiverse communities.
- 5.17 Risca Town Council and CCBC's Green Space and Active Travel Teams will support inclusive infrastructure, including assisted cycles, and maintain alignment with the town's wellbeing strategy.
- 5.18 Existing relationships with Free Bikes for Kids in Bassaleg, GAP in Newport and Gwent Police's We Don't Buy Crime team and local Scrap traders to reuse broken / unclaimed stolen bikes intended for scrap for recreational use.
- 5.19 CVW will work with Groundwork Wales, Gwent Green Grid, Pobl Group Ltd, and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to embed the site within Risca's emerging role as a wellbeing hub.

- 5.20 The refurbished space offers the potential to increase our collaboration with Hubbub to introduce a community fridge, expanding environmental and food sustainability efforts.
- 5.21 This project will transform the former toilet block into a local landmark of wellbeing, inclusivity, and green innovation, supporting national policy priorities on active travel, public health, and community empowerment.
- 5.22 Funding streams for set up costs have been identified. Additional funding streams will be approached throughout the life of the project to develop and further enhance facilities and services provided.

### The Property

- 5.23 The Property identified as a potential Community Asset Transfer at Tredegar Grounds, Risca, site plan attached at appendix 1.
- 5.24 The proposal involves transferring a site that has been out of use. CVW plan to transform the former toilet block into a local landmark of wellbeing, inclusivity, and green innovation, supporting national policy priorities on active travel, public health, and community empowerment.
- 5.25 The proposed change will require a Planning change of use application. Comments from the Planning Dept on the business plan have been requested. See appendix 2 for proposed floor plan, appendix 3 for architectural rendering.
- 5.26 The site comprises of one title and is registered with freehold absolute ownership. Legal services will engage with CVW as part of the lease process.
- 5.27 To support community initiatives, certain asset transfers may be approved at below market rent. These transfers recognise the significant social and community benefits provided by the recipient organisations. Each case will be evaluated on its merits, ensuring the community value justifies the reduced or zero rent.
- 5.28 This approach aligns with our commitment to fostering resilience and empowering communities. The current rateable value (1 April 2023 to present) is £2,800 Therefore, if granting a community asset transfer at a peppercorn rent, the council will forgo a potential revenue income of £2,800 per annum in exchange for the community value and benefit that the project brings to the community.
- 5.29 This project offers substantial and measurable social value. With 5 volunteers running the kiosk and associated activity for a minimum of 20 hours per week, alongside support in marketing and management, the initiative will contribute over £62,000 per year in volunteer time alone — equivalent to £5,200 per

month. This figure exceeds the building's potential rental value, demonstrating that a CAT approach offers significantly better social and economic return.

- 5.30 Emissions impact will be fairly low, although bringing the site back into use will lead to increased energy consumption and waste production. Energy efficiency and the use of energy has been addressed in the application. It is recommended that further consideration should be given to the use of electricity for heating on a green electricity tariff, than the installation of a ground source or air source heat pump. Recommendations were also made regarding the use of products with compostable wrapping and sourcing locally where possible to reduce mileage emissions and contribute to the local economy.
- 5.31 Support for the project has been given from the CCBC parks team, although a query was raised regarding whether the size of the park allows for cycling due to the lack of a cycle path within the park itself.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 The tenant will need to submit a planning application for change of use. The proposal assumes that the application will be submitted once the lease proposal is approved and that the planning change of use is granted.

## **7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

A full Equalities assessment was undertaken on the proposed Communities Asset Transfer of the Former toilet block Tredegar Park.

[Click Here For Link To IIA](#)

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 A condition survey undertaken in November 2024 identified £23,858 of maintenance required on the property over the next five years. NNDR costs for the property are £2,800 per annum. If supported, the proposal, will reduce the Council's management responsibilities and costs associated with the property.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 N/A

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1 The report and associated documents have been circulated for comment

within the CAT Delivery Group, Planning, Decarb, Parks and Finance teams.

10.2 During the review process the draft policy and associated documents have been circulated to Leadership and Member Panel. Further consultation is being undertaken as part of the reporting process and comments will be included in the report.

10.3 Comments from the Decarbonisation team have been included in section 5.22

10.4 Comments from the CCBC parks team have been included in section 5.23

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Local Government Act 1998. Local Government Act 2003.

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### **Consultees:**

Councillor Nigel George, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Highways  
Leadership Team

Mark S Williams, Executive Director of Corporate and Regeneration

Leanne Sykes, Deputy Director of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer

Lisa Downey, HR Service Manager

Vickie Julian, Senior Lawyer – Planning, Land and Highways

Tina McMahon, Caerphilly Cares Manager

Mike Headington, Green Spaces Manager

Brodie Thomson-Payne, Strategic Asset Manager

Lesley Thomas, Community Asset Transfer Officer

Harry Skiff, Communications Manager

Kathryn Peters, Service Manager: Service Improvement and Partnerships

John Ollman, Service Support and Development Officer

Nicola Evans, Estates Officer

Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO)

Lesley Edwards - Community Asset Transfer Officer

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Site Plan

Appendix 2 Proposed floor plan lay out

Appendix 3 Architectural Rendering