



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Community Asset Transfer Policy

St Helens Borough Council

August 2023



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1. Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1 Our Borough Strategy sets out a clear vision for St Helens and we want to empower and enable our residents and our community organisations to play a more active role in helping deliver a better borough.

OUR BOROUGH STRATEGY 2021-2030: VISION

Working together for a better borough, with people at the heart of everything we do by improving people's lives together and creating distinct, attractive, healthy, safe, inclusive, and accessible places in which to live, work, visit and invest.

- 1.2 St Helens Borough Council wants to ensure residents get the best possible use of the buildings, green spaces, and land that it owns. That is why, as part of its St Helens Together approach, the Council is committed to supporting a cooperative approach to the use of its physical assets. This aligns with our Corporate Asset Strategy and Asset Management Plan 2023-26, which promotes the development and implementation of a Community Asset Transfer Policy.
- 1.3 This Community Asset Transfer Policy outlines St Helens Borough Council's approach to how it will support these objectives by creating a fair and transparent framework to enable and manage community asset transfers to appropriate voluntary or community groups in a sustainable and effective way.

2. Policy Statement on Community Asset Transfer

- 2.1 St Helens Borough Council is committed to using its assets to form long-term partnerships with organisations that meet the Council's criteria and where they will bring benefits to communities and link into the Council's Social Value Framework and Inclusive Growth Strategy. Community Asset Transfers can present a valuable opportunity as part of this commitment.
- 2.2 Potential benefits for Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations include:
- Strengthening the organisation confidence.
 - Strengthening the organisation community ties.
 - Strengthening the organisation ability to raise income.
 - Providing opportunities for income generation.
 - Providing opportunities for the organisation to develop the asset to meet the needs and aspirations of a community.
- 2.3 Potential benefits of asset transfer for the Council include:
- Creating the opportunity for investment in the assets that may not be possible within Council ownership and to provide a catalyst for inward investment through local purchasing and employment.
 - Contributing to the council's objective to rationalise its estate and facilitate more effective and efficient use of its asset base where the focus is on better services and community outcomes through a neighbourhood approach.
 - Reducing the asset maintenance burden allowing more investment into retained assets.
 - Delivering social, economic, and environmental benefits.
 - Ensuring the continued or renewed use of assets with a historical, cultural or heritage interest.

- Being a stimulus for partnership working between VCS organisations, the Council and other partners, providing opportunities for long-term working between sectors, improving provision and accountability of services within communities, which in turn helps the Council to achieve its corporate priorities and outcomes.
- 2.4 While fully supporting the principle of Community Asset Transfer, this Community Asset Transfer Policy recognises that some assets must remain under Council control to support the delivery of essential services or strategic corporate objectives. The Council will decide whether an asset is to be made available for Community Asset Transfer when deemed surplus to Council requirements.
- 2.5 It is also recognised that every Community Asset Transfer will be different and will need to be considered on its own merits, with each community organisation and/or group having their own ideas and objectives with the potential to result in different solutions and operating models.
- 2.6 Community Asset Transfer also requires careful planning, with the efforts of the community matched by practical support. Repurposing properties and sustaining the longer-term management of assets is expensive, so the development of robust business plans and sound financial planning will be a necessity to ensure that Council assets can be operated sustainably so they can be available for many years.
- 2.7 St Helens Borough Council will therefore consider the transfer of an eligible asset to eligible third sector organisations that makes a credible application, supported by an appropriate and credible business plan, and who are able to demonstrate the skills and capacity to manage the asset and the associated legal responsibilities.

3 Local Context

- 3.1 St Helens Borough Council is proud of its long-standing support for the Voluntary and Community Sector, believing that community-based groups are key partners in the delivery of services and provide a vital link with local people. Working in partnership with thriving community-based groups can help achieve the outcomes of strategic plans; and help promote the social, environmental, and economic well-being of the borough.
- 3.2 St Helens Borough Council recognises that:
- The way its physical assets are managed can have a positive impact on the long-term strength of local communities and the community sector more generally.
 - Asset ownership for community-based groups can help them to grow and become more secure, gaining access to sources of additional investment that the Council cannot access.
 - Successful asset transfer requires a long-term partnership between the Council and the community-based group that take over the asset management.
- 3.3 Community Asset Transfer features within its Corporate Asset Strategy – a Strategic Asset Management Policy aimed at transforming the Council’s property portfolio to make it more streamlined, efficient, and fit for purpose.
- 3.4 Community Asset Transfer also supports locality-based service delivery that is more community-centered, resident-led and data driven. Providing a locality-based service approach seeks to target resources to areas in most need whilst simultaneously empowering and enabling residents and/or community organisations to design and potentially deliver services where there is capacity and capability to do so.

3.5 The use and transfer of assets is not a new concept, as St Helens Borough Council has successfully completed Community Asset Transfers previously. Organisations such as FC St Helens, Valley Brass Band and Parr Sports & Community Centre now utilise Council assets to develop and grow their respective offer. Further information on these organisations, and more, can be found in the Community Asset Transfer Self-Help Toolkit.

4 Principles Underpinning the Community Asset Transfer Policy

4.1 St Helens Borough Council supports strong and sustainable voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) organisations as key partners in the delivery of services and in providing a link with local communities. It recognises that VCS organisations have a vital role to play. This is outlined in the Council's [Strategy for the Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise Sector](#).

4.2 Our Policy on Community Asset Transfer is underpinned by the following principles:

- Any proposed asset transfer must support the aims and priorities of the Council as set out in Our Borough Strategy.
- The Council's Asset Management strategy and Asset management plan have primary consideration.
- The Council will review its portfolios and undertaking option appraisals which will include examining the transfer potential of its assets.
- Assets will only be considered for community asset transfer when they are deemed surplus to requirements.
- The Council will adopt a transparent process for asset transfer which will include a clear point of contact and clear stages for each part of the process.
- It is recognised that the Council maintains dual but independent roles as a supporter of the third sector but also as a steward of publicly owned assets.
- All departments of the Council will endorse and assist in the delivery of the Community Asset Transfer agenda

4.3 The Council will ensure that the way assets are managed via this Community Asset Transfer Policy adheres to its corporate objectives whilst also enabling VCS organisations to grow and become sustainable on a long-term basis. The transfer of any asset must create viability not liability, and it must support and further the Council's strategic aims and objectives. The transfer of assets to community management should provide value for money and be able to demonstrate that it can positively impact the lives and wellbeing of residents.

1. Assets Suitable for Community Asset Transfer

1.1. An asset is either land or buildings in the ownership of the Council. The assets must be in the freehold ownership of the council and Community Asset Transfer should assist in delivering the corporate aims of the Council.

- 1.2. Where the applicant and the proposed use of the asset will assist in delivering the core purpose and corporate outcomes of the Council, an asset may be considered suitable for Community Transfer.
- 5.3 The assets made available for Community Asset Transfer will be at the discretion of the Council, but may include public service buildings and land, such as civic halls, community centres, heritage assets, libraries, open spaces, and parks. The Council will not support asset transfer where any of the following will apply:
- The asset is required for service delivery.
 - The asset has been identified within a disposal programme in anticipation of a capital receipt.
 - The asset is held for revenue income purposes.
 - The asset is held for long term future capital appreciation or investment.
 - Where the asset could contribute to any identified strategic objectives (as contained in the Council's Asset Management Plan).
 - Assets that are not considered fit for purpose or require significant investment which are likely to be beyond the means of the voluntary or community sector (unless significant funding has been secured).
 - Where the proposal relates to part of an asset because it would not be in the Council's best interests to transfer part of an asset.

6 The Community Asset Transfer Process

- 6.1 St Helens Borough Council recognises that Community Asset Transfer can be a daunting challenge for many organisations and to ensure the process is open, equal, and transparent, it is working alongside Halton & St Helens Voluntary and Community Action (VCA) who can offer advice and assistance to groups thinking of applying to the council for a community asset transfer.
- 6.2 Halton & St Helens VCA is an infrastructure organisation that provides advice, information, and development support services to voluntary, community, not-for-profit and faith organisations and volunteers in the boroughs of St Helens and Halton.
- 6.3 Halton & St Helens VCA is affiliated with the National Association of Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) and undertakes five core functions:
- **Development** - Identifying local needs, working with others to develop appropriate action, and working strategically to benefit the local voluntary and community sector.
 - **Liaison** - Helping to maintain links with a wide range of voluntary and community organisations and promoting cross-sector relationships.
 - **Representation** - Enabling the local voluntary and community sector to present its views to statutory and public sector bodies through consultation, networking, fora, seminars, and workshops, etc.
 - **Services** - Funding information and advice, training, legal, financial, management and constitutional advice and information, meeting space, newsletters, and mailings.
 - **Strategic Partnership** - Working with the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), helping to develop the voluntary sector compact, participating in neighbourhood regeneration, and working with other statutory bodies at a strategic level.
- 6.4 Halton & St Helens VCA will work independently with all organisations offering advice and guidance on the asset transfer process. For a full understanding of what Halton & St Helens VCA can offer, please visit their website:
<https://www.haltonsthelensvca.org.uk/>

6.5 National organisations such as [Locality](#), [Power to Change](#) and [Ethical Property Foundation](#) can also provide bespoke, independent advice.

7. Key Stages in Community Asset Transfer Process

7.1 Once the Council has identified a property or land that it considers suitable for asset transfer there will be four key stages in the application process:

- Stage 1 – Expression of Interest
- Stage 2 – Full Application and Business Case
- Stage 3 – Assessment and Decision
- Stage 4 – Agree Legal Terms (refer to Sections 9 and 10 of this Policy)

7.2 The Council will determine the appropriate legal terms based upon the strength and maturity of the application, it is expected that any identified risks will be managed using one or more of the following options:

- Legally binding Service Level Agreement or other legal agreement
- Form and length of tenure to be offered
- Clawback arrangements
- Lease restrictions

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest

7.3 The Community Asset Transfer process will be commenced by the Council if an asset becomes surplus to requirements and following its assessment the asset is identified as having the potential for transfer. In such circumstances, the Council will seek Expressions of Interest via several sources including:

- Local Press
- St Helens Borough Council communications channels
- Community Networks/Partners
- Other websites

7.4 The applicable criteria and information specific to the asset will be outlined within the marketing documentation. This may include information relating to the asset and its operating costs to assist applicants/enquirers in determining whether to proceed to completion of an application.

Stage 2 – Full Application and Business Case

7.5 Once an applicant has identified an interest in the asset they should request and complete a Community Asset Transfer Application Form (example Appendix A). This should include the following information:

- A summary of the proposal outlining how the asset will be used.
- Details of the outcomes to be delivered/how the use of the asset will support the Council's corporate objectives and benefit the community.
- Details of what capital funds are available for investment in the asset or how it proposes to secure capital or revenue grant funding to support the project.
- Cash flow and budgeting details.
- The capacity of the organisation to manage the assets.
- The experience and skills of the Organisations Board or Managing Group.
- Confirmation of the group's legal structure and how it will hold the asset.
- Succession planning to ensure the organisation maintains the right skills and knowledge to manage the asset in the longer term.

Stage 3 – The Assessment and Decision

- 7.6 The Council and its partners will assess and score all application forms received using an Assessment Matrix based on the following main headings:
- An eligibility check (attached at Appendix C).
 - The robustness of the applicant organisation.
 - The proposal and its impact on the Council’s aims and objectives.
 - Community and partnership impact.
 - The asset sustainability.
 - Financial sustainability.
 - Capacity to manage the asset.
- 7.7 Depending on the potential transferring asset when it is advertised there may also be other specific criteria sought concerning the specific asset in question. If so, these will be outlined in the marketing documentation.
- 7.8 The Assessment Matrix (attached at Appendix B) will be used to record the recommendation(s). The Council is looking for “Very Good” applications (as referred to in the qualitative scoring mechanism within the Assessment Matrix) and will require a minimum score of 136 to be referred to the Strategic Property Group for consideration.
- 7.9 As part of the assessment, the Council and its partners may enter a dialogue with the organisation(s) who have submitted the application form(s) to seek clarification and additional information/evidence in support of the organisation’s aspiration to acquire the asset. In certain circumstances, the Council and its partners may ask several organisations to explore a collaborative bid for the asset.
- 7.10 The outcome of the assessment process will be referred to the Strategic Property Group for final assessment.
- 7.11 Where an application is approved and the Strategic Property Group recommendation is that the Council should proceed with a community asset transfer, then it will be referred for approval in accordance with the Council’s Land and Property Disposal Rules.
- 7.12 Where an application is declined in the first instance, the reasons for this will be discussed with the applicant and advice will be given on how the application can potentially be improved (if applicable). A resubmission can be made within six months of the date of the original determination, and it will be reassessed against the Assessment Matrix.
- 7.13 In the event of the resubmitted application being declined again then the decision will be made in writing and include the Council’s reasons. No further consideration will be given to the application thereafter.
- 7.14 The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning will be informed of all decisions relating to Community Asset Transfers and elected members will be advised of all decisions relating to their respective wards.

Indicative Process Overview and Timeline*

- 7.15 The following timescales run consecutively, and the Council will be prepared to consider reasonable requests for extensions of time to facilitate proposals. The arrangements will be monitored and where insufficient progress is made the Council reserve the absolute

right to withdraw from the transfer process and dispose of the assets in accordance with its Disposal Policy.



** The timeline will be followed unless due to unforeseen circumstances it must be varied e.g. the advertisement of the proposed disposition of the transfer of open space (as required by statute) and any objections received being duly considered. The variation in the timeline may also include the receipt of more than one application for an asset.*

8. Risks

8.1 The transfer of assets to third sector organisations will inevitably include risks for both parties. For the transfer to be successful, it is important that these risks are identified and, as far as possible, mitigation measures put in place to reduce the risk. Risk management will be an on-going process and a full risk assessment will take place before the transfer is concluded to ensure that all potential risks have been identified and all parties are fully aware of the implications.

8.2 Potential risks may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Potential to disadvantage individuals, groups, or wider community.
- Potential for negative impact on community cohesion.
- Potential loss of existing services.
- Uncertain capacity of recipient to manage the asset.
- Potential for the asset to become a liability for recipient.
- Uncertain capacity of recipient to deliver identified outcomes.
- Governance responsibility (and therefore the asset) by person(s), not acting in line with community organisation's constitution or service users, who would not otherwise qualify for asset transfer.

8.3 The Council will seek to manage risks by using one or more of the following mechanisms:

- Legally binding Service Level Agreement or other legal agreement.
- Form and length of tenure to be offered.
- Claw back arrangements.
- Adoption of good practice learnt from others and the previous transfer of the Council's assets.
- Lease restrictions.

- 8.4 Should the organisation enter financial or governance difficulties, any services or provision delivered by the organisation(s) from the asset **will not** be absorbed by the Council.
- 8.5 Any current leasing or transfer agreement to VCS organisations shall be determined by adopting this Community Asset Transfer Policy and the associated Assessment Matrix at the expiry or renewal date to ensure the continued use of the asset is sustainable.

9. Legal Considerations

- 9.1 Any application will be considered against the Council's legal obligations in respect of property disposal, namely:

S123 of the Local Government Act 1972

A local authority may not dispose of land otherwise than by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can be obtained unless the local authority has the prior consent of the Secretary of State.

Under a general consent by the Secretary of State, disposal at less than best consideration is permitted where the undervalue is less than £2million provided it meets any one or more of the following objects:

- the promotion or improvement of economic well-being.
- the promotion or improvement of social well-being.
- the promotion or improvement of environmental well-being line with community organisation's constitution or service users, who would not otherwise qualify for asset transfer.
- Contravention of State Aid and procurement rules.
- Conflict with other legal or regulatory constraints.
- Potential for Council liability.
- Poor value for money.
- Conflict with other funders.
- Unfair advantage for one group over another.

- 9.2 The Council will need to consider whether the terms of the proposed transfer to the community organisation can be justified under these conditions.
- 9.3 As indicated earlier, issues may arise in the context of Community Asset Transfer such as public procurement/state aid, transfer of undertakings (protection of employment commonly referred to as 'TUPE') and each asset will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Whilst the Council can advise applicants on their legal responsibilities associated with an asset transfer, they should obtain independent professional advice which may incur a cost to the enquiring organisation.
- 9.4 Once the community asset transfer is completed, the organisation(s) acquiring the asset will become responsible for the following with effective from the date of legal completion of the asset transfer:
- Operation of the asset following the terms of the lease and all other legal obligations. This will include all insurance (except for buildings cover – see below), rates liabilities, repairs and maintenance, security, cleaning, statutory compliance,

health, and safety requirements as well as all other outgoings that may be applicable.

- Maintaining a monitored alarm system; this can be arranged by the Council and recharged to the organisation, or the organisation can make their arrangements with the consent of the Council. This is a condition of the Council's Building Insurance Policy, which the Council will continue to provide for the asset post completion of the transfer and the cost of which will be recovered from the VCS organization.
- Compliance with any Transfer Agreement and any other agreements.
- Delivery of agreed outcomes.

10. How will the Asset be Transferred?

- 10.1 The Council will normally only transfer assets by way of a lease or a management agreement. The Council will only consider transfer of a freehold by exception, and where there is a clear business case for doing so.
- 10.2 Where the lease is for 25 years or longer the council will expect the successful applicant to be responsible for all running costs and repair responsibilities for the property and will implement a charge commensurate with the business case be that a peppercorn or nominal rent. This is consistent with the principle of asset transfers creating independence and sustainability.
- 10.3 The Council will include lease terms enabling an asset to revert to the council in certain circumstances such as liquidation or bankruptcy or where the transfer is linked to a service provision that has ceased or the successful applicant is in substantial breach of the terms of the lease. In the event that the asset reverts to the Council they may be considered for sale on the open market.

11. Post Asset Transfer

- 11.1 The successful organisation(s) will have to submit an Annual Report to the Council's agreed representative, which will cover the agreed outcomes as per the lease.
- 11.2 Please note that failure to comply with the terms and conditions set out in the documentation could result in the council terminating the agreement and the VCS organisation having to hand the assets back to the Council.

12. St Helens Council's Commitment

- 12.1 As part of its St Helens Together approach, St Helens Borough Council remains fully committed to working together with communities and residents. It has however recognised that its current management of assets needs to be streamlined and become more focused.
- 12.2 It is therefore looking to approach co-operative/partnership working in a more structured way so that each party is aware of what they must do, what their respective responsibilities are and how the process of Community Asset Transfer will be navigated in the future.

12.3 To deliver a more cooperative vision, St Helens Borough Council recognises the importance of working together with communities and the crucial role a strong, dynamic, and diverse voluntary and community sector plays in achieving this.

12.4 As a community group or organisation that has successfully taken on one of St Helens Borough Council's assets, we want you to understand the importance of adhering to our core values and behaviors, namely:

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness:** Holders of public office should act and take decisions openly and transparently. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

12.5 All applicants for Community Asset Transfer are expected to follow the above principles and in return, St Helens Borough Council as a workforce will ensure that our behaviors match this to work as best, we can improve the borough together. In addition, we would ask that you:

- Trust that St Helens Borough Council is ready to listen and change.
- Care about your community and believe in the borough.
- Ensure the community asset is an accessible, welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment for all sections of the community.
- Be positive about promoting St Helens Council and the support you have received.
- Be open-minded to our innovative approach.
- Tell us what works and what could be improved.

13 Complaints

13.1 The Council is committed to putting our customers first and providing high quality services. Occasionally things do go wrong and so we welcome and recognise the importance of customer feedback. The Council will ensure officers take ownership of complaints and respond positively to our customers' needs and expectations. We will work with you to resolve issues. This is an integral part of the service we provide. The Council will respond to complaints promptly and efficiently, resolving complaints quickly wherever possible. We will use the information received from complaints to drive improvements.

13.2 To make a comment, compliment, or complaints, see our [Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy](#)

Community Asset Transfer Application Form

Please provide the name of the asset in which you have an interest:

Building / Site Name:

Address inc. Postcode:

Organisation Submitting the Application:

Organisation Name:

Is your organisation a branch or part of a larger organisation?

Yes No

If yes, please provide details:

Organisation Name:

Address inc. Postcode:

Who is the main contact for this application?

Title: Name: Surname:

Position in organisation:

Address inc. Postcode:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Type of Organisation (Please tick the relevant box)

A registered charity or Community Interest Organisation (CIO)

A Community Interest Company (CIC)

Social Enterprise

A Parish Council

Other

If voluntary/community body, please tick to indicate the structure of the organisation and provide details:			
Limited Company (by guarantee or shares)		Company Number:	
Community Interest Company		Company Number:	
Charitable Incorporated Organisation		Company Number: Charity Number:	
Community Benefit Society		Number:	
Co-operative Society		Number:	
Another type of legally constituted "not for profit" organisation (please explain and provide evidence)			
If you are currently unincorporated, is it your intention to become incorporated and if so, when?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes – the proposed date:		

The transfer of an asset into community management and/or ownership can be a complex matter. The processes of the Council and responsibilities of your Organisation's Managing Group are outlined within the document St Helens Borough Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

Have you read the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy and fully understand the responsibilities and duties outlined within it?

Yes No

Does your organisation have a Governing document (i.e. Constitution, Articles of Association or similar document explaining the organisational arrangements etc.)? If yes, please attach a copy with your application.

Yes No

Does your organisation hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or similar governance meeting?

Yes No

If yes, please confirm the date of the last meeting:

Does your organisation produce annual reports or returns for Companies House, the Charity Commission or other governing body? If yes, please attach a copy with your application.

Yes No

Please provide details of your organisation's management structure; how it is managed – please provide names, roles and responsibilities. (If you have an organisation structure diagram please attach a copy with your application).

Does your organisation employ staff or is it run by volunteers?

Employs staff

Run by volunteers

Please confirm the overall numbers of people in involved with running your organisation/delivering its activities (Please attach your staffing structure to the application):

Please confirm how many people currently use your organisation's services or activities (this should be individual clients/users and not the number of visits):

Has your organisation got an audited or independently checked set accounts for its' last financial year? If yes, please provide a copy with your application.

Yes No

Does your organisation have a bank account in its own name for which it receives bank statements? If yes, please provide a copy of the last three statements with your application.

Yes No

Does your organisation currently own or hold a lease on an asset; or has it previously owned or taken a lease of an asset? If yes, please provide details below.

Yes No

Has your organisation previously been in receipt of St Helens Borough Council funding (through supplying goods, training or services and/or commissioned activities). If yes, please provide details below.

If no, if you been in receipt of Local Authority funding elsewhere, please provide details below.

Yes No

One of the responsibilities attached to managing an asset is ensuring you have appropriate insurance policies in place. Does your organisation currently have any insurance policies in place? If yes, please attach alongside your application form.

Yes No

Has your organisation ever been refused insurance cover? If yes, please provide details below.

Yes No

As part of the St Helens Borough Council's Community Asset Transfer application process your organisation needs to submit a business plan along with its' application. This needs to be a concise but robust document and as a minimum requirement it needs to cover/contain the following key areas:

- A statement of the Aims and Objectives of your organisation
- A description of who the organisation's clients/users are, its target group.
- An executive summary of why your organisation requires the proposed asset; the nature and length of the agreement sought (for example a licence, management agreement, short of longer-term leases); what difference it will make to your organisation.
- Details of what activities, services, events and uses the asset will be required for, and how your organisation intends to deliver these. Please identify any new/additional activities/services which will be delivered as a result of managing the asset.
- Which of the Council's corporate aims and objectives your organisation will deliver against and what outcomes will be delivered as a result of your organisation managing the assets?
- A Statement of Community Need outlining the community need/benefits that would result from your organisation managing the asset - the how, who, how many and how you will measure this. Please include details of stakeholders and evidence of community involvement/consultation.
- What improvements, or disability reasonable adjustments, both physical and cosmetic, your organisation intends to make to the asset.
- A statement outlining what capital funds are currently available to the organisation for investment in the asset or alternatively how it proposes to secure capital or revenue grant funding to support the project.

- A financial history, cash flow forecast and/or budget detailing the financial viability and sustainability of your organisation.
- The capacity for your organisation to manage the asset:
- Expertise and skills of the Board/Managing Group of the organisation.
- Experience/history of the organisation in managing assets and delivering activities, services, managing health and safety requirements and projects.
- Arrangements for on-going business planning.
- Arrangements to be put in place to ensure effective management of the asset and compliance with all relevant statutory regulations.
- Succession Planning – how your organisation will replace people on its Board/Managing Group and ensure the right skills and knowledge is maintained.

Application Attachment Check list:

Item	Yes	No	Any notes or comments
Copy of Governing document(s)			
Copy of Annual report and/or returns			
Organisational Structure Diagram			
Copy of audited/independently checked accounts for the organisation's last financial year			
Copies of the last three bank statements			
Business Plan			
Copy of minutes, letter or email confirming authority to signatory to submit Application Form on behalf of the organisation			
Recruitment & Induction procedure/policy			
Training & Development procedure/policy			
Health & Safety procedure/policy			
Equality & Diversity procedure/policy			
Safeguarding procedure/policy			
Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) Checks procedure/policy			
Grievances/complaints procedure/policy			

I certify that the information supplied in this Application Form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I am authorised by the governing body of the organisation to submit this Application Form on its behalf. (Please supply a copy of the minute or minutes from the managing body meeting where this authority was granted or a letter confirming this).

I understand it is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement, to give or offer any gift or consideration whatsoever as an inducement or reward to any Council Officer, partner or representative and that any such action will empower the Council to cancel this application for the transfer of the asset.

Signed:

Print Name:

Position within organisation:

Date:

On completion this Application Form needs to be e-mailed to St Helens Borough Council at CAT@sthelens.gov.uk.

Community Asset Transfer Assessment Matrix

For Internal Use Only

(This document is provided for guidance purposes only and how applications will be considered/scored by the Council.)

Date Application Received	
Applicant Names or Name of the Applicant Organisation	
Details of the Asset including the address	

Using the qualitative assessment below, assessors will score each of the following criteria between 1 to 10 based on the responses/information provided by the Applicant.

10	Outstanding: The information in the application covers all elements; contains a prominent level of relevant and detailed information; is supported by unambiguous evidence; shows a thorough understanding of requirements; no weaknesses or omissions.
9	Excellent: The information in the application covers all elements; with relevant and detailed information, supported by unambiguous evidence; but with limited minor issues, weaknesses or omissions in the information or evidence only.
8	Very Good: The information in the application covers all key elements and with relevant and detailed information, backed up with unambiguous evidence; with a few minor issues, weaknesses, or omissions in the information or evidence.
7	Good: The information in the application covers all key elements and associated specified contract requirements and standards; and with relevant information, backed up with evidence, but lacks detail in some areas; some minor issues, weaknesses, or omissions in some areas of information or evidence.
6	Better than Satisfactory: The information in the application covers all the key elements and associated specified contract requirements and standards but is not fully detailed or fully backed up with unambiguous evidence in some areas; several minor and/or one or two more significant issues, weaknesses, or omissions in some areas.
5	Satisfactory: The information in the application covers all key elements and associated specified contract requirements and standards but is not fully detailed or fully backed up with unambiguous evidence in some areas; with many minors, and/or several significant weaknesses, issues or omissions in the detail or evidence.

4	Less than Satisfactory: The information in the application has some weaknesses, issues, or omissions, lacking detail, clarity and/or evidence about at least one key element and associated specified requirements.
3	Weak: The information in the application has some weaknesses, issues, or omissions, lacking detail, clarity and/or evidence about several key elements and associated specified requirements and standards.
2	Poor: The information in the application has material weaknesses, issues, or omissions, lacking detail, clarity and/or evidence about many key elements and associated specified requirements and standards.
1	Very Poor: The information in the application does not meet the requirements or does not include sufficient information or clarity or evidence or information in support, to determine whether the response meets the requirements.

Per its policy, the Council fully supports organisations wishing to apply for Community Asset Transfer and its assets.

However, for such applications and any transfer to be successful, organisations need to score highly i.e., equating to at least “Very Good” as referenced above. The Council does not wish to offer false hope or see organisations effectively set up to fail.

For the above reasons, applications need to be clear, credible, and robust in most if not all respects. Only those with a score above 136 points (i.e., out of a total of 170 points available based on the 17 criteria below) will be recommended for approval to progress/move forward to the next stages of the process.

Section A - The Proposal

		Score	Any Comments
1	To what extent are the Aims and Objectives of the organisation clearly defined and per the applicant’s proposal?		
2	To what degree are the organisation’s clients/users a priority group for the Council?		
3	To what extent does the applicant’s executive summary define why the organisation requires the asset and how it will make a difference to the organisation?		
4	To what degree does the proposal identify how the activities, services, events and uses will be delivered using the asset?		
5	How does the proposal assist the Council with the delivery of its’ Corporate Aims and Objectives?		

Section B - Community and Partnership Impact

		Score	Any Comments
1	To what extent has the organisation demonstrated a demand within the local community for their proposal?		
2	To what extent has the organisation demonstrated how their proposal will provide added community benefit because of acquiring the asset and how do they intend to measure and evidence this?		
3	To what degree has the organisation undertaken a consultation exercise with the local community and partners about their proposal?		
4	To what degree is there evidence that the organisation works in partnership with other organisations and community groups in the area?		
5	To what degree is there evidence that the organisation has an inclusive approach to the needs of diverse groups of people within the wider community?		

Section C - The Asset

		Score	Any Comments
1	<p>To what degree has the organisation provided details of any proposed works they intend to carry out to the asset, including indicative costs and how these will be funded?</p> <p><i>Note for consideration – It is difficult for smaller organisations to develop plans and costings without incurring feasibility costs.</i></p>		
2	<p>To what degree has the organisation demonstrated that it has a full understanding of the issues affecting the asset?</p> <p>This should include the following: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition • Suitability • Accessibility • Health & Safety • Planning Restrictions • Environmental 		

Section D - Financial

		Score	Any Comments
1	To what degree has the organisation demonstrated that the project is financially viable, sustainable, and reasonable in terms of projected revenue/income sources and outgoings/expenditure?		
2	To what degree have the capital costs of any improvement works been accounted for and the funding sources identified?		

Section E - Capacity to Manage the Asset

		Score	Any Comments
1	To what degree has the organisation demonstrated it has the skills and capacity to manage the asset(s) and deliver the proposal?		
2	To what degree does the organisation demonstrate a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities and issues arising from the management of the asset and compliance with amongst other matters the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety • Day to Day Maintenance • Risk Management • Safeguarding • DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Checks 		
3	To what degree has the organisation demonstrated it has a succession plan in place to ensure it maintains the right skills and knowledge for the duration the agreement/lease sought?		

Summary

Section	Score	Any Comments
A - The Proposal		
B - Community and Partnership Impact		
C - The Asset		
D - Financial		
E - Capacity to Manage the Asset		
TOTAL SCORE		(Minimum score to progress = 136)

Assessment Group Recommendation:	
Members of Assessment Group:	
Date of Assessment:	

Community Asset Transfer Eligibility Check

For Internal Use Only

(This document is provided for guidance purposes only and how applications will be considered / scored by the Council.)

Date Application Received	
Applicant Names or Name of the Applicant Organisation	
Details of the Asset including the address	

Section A - Eligibility Check

Answering 'No' to the following questions may result in the Application being declared ineligible and therefore rejected.

Section A – Eligibility Check		
Have the following documents been attached to the Application	Yes/No	Any comment
Copy of Governing document(s)		
Business Plan or Organisational strategy		
Copy of audited / independently checked accounts for the organisation's last financial year		
Copy of the last three bank statements		
Copy of minutes or letter or email from Chair confirming authority to signatory to submit the Application Form on behalf of the organisation.		

Section B - Applicant Organisation		
	Yes/No	Any Comments
Does the organisation have any legal standing?		
If yes, has the legal standing of the organisation been clearly defined and established?		
Does the organisation hold an Annual General Meeting or similar governance meeting?		
Has the organisational management and staffing structure been clearly defined?		
Has the organisation provided sufficient information for the Council to consider the organisation's financial sustainability / viability?		
Does the organisation have written procedures covering the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment & Induction • Training & Development • Health & Safety • Equality & Diversity • Safeguarding • Disclosure Barring Service Checks • Grievances / Complaints 		
Does the organisation have insurance policies currently in place?		
Has the organisation been refused insurance cover?		