

 Executive Committee –8 August 2012		Agenda Item No. 11B
Title	Chase Meadow Community Centre – Land Acquisition	
For further information about this report please contact	Andrew Jones Andrew.jones@warwickdc.gov.uk (01926) 456830	
Wards of the District directly affected	Warwick West	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers	None	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan?	No
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	N/A

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive	23 rd July 2012	Chris Elliott
Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer	20 th July 2012	Author
CMT	23 rd July 2012	Chris Elliott Bill Hunt Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	25 th July 2012	Mike Snow (Jenny Clayton)
Head of Service	27 th July 2012	Susie Drummond
Legal Services	23 rd July 2012	Barry Jukes
Portfolio Holders	24 th July 2012	Councillor Mrs Grainger
Consultation & Community Engagement		
A project board has been established which includes Chase Meadow residents and a member of the Parochial Church Council.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report proposes that Warwick District Council purchases land for £30,000 to help develop the Community Centre at Chase Meadow.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Executive approves the purchase by the District Council of the land shown on the plan as Appendix 1 for £30,000.00, subject to the construction of the proposed Chase Meadow Community Centre being achievable within the agreed budget as agreed with the Section 151 Officer.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 14th March 2012, Executive agreed to commit up to a further £180,000 (total Council commitment of up to £230,000) to help provide a Community Centre for the residents of Chase Meadow. The site for the Community Centre comprises two contiguous plots of land currently in the ownership of developers (Hawkstone) but under a Section 106 agreement the plots were to transfer separately to Warwick District Council (WDC) and Parochial Church Council (PCC).
- 3.2 It has been agreed between WDC and the PCC that the PCC will now use part of the proposed Community Centre building as a 'Place of Worship' and therefore the PCC will no longer wish to acquire the plot for its own purposes. The PCC has therefore agreed that it would be more efficient and appropriate for WDC to acquire the plot of land direct from the developer rather than the PCC subsequently transferring the title of its land to WDC immediately following its acquisition. The cost of the purchase would be met from within the project budget, the PCC having contributed £65,000 to the overall project.
- 3.3 The legal agreements to be entered into by WDC, the PCC and the Community Association will ensure that the respective interests of the parties are properly protected with regard to the future use of the proposed Community Centre building.
- 3.4 There is no delegated authority to effect the transfer of title from Hawkstone to WDC in relation to the 'Place of Worship' plot and consequently agreement of Executive is requested. The legal fees and disbursements to be expended in relation to the transfer will be met from within the Legal Services contract.
- 3.5 Since receiving Executive approval to progress the scheme, officers have been determining the contract arrangements for professional services and construction. The budget for this project is c£1.1m. However, a validation of the development costs previously supplied by quantity surveyors suggests that this budget may not be sufficient. Work has started with the local community and PCC to 'value engineer' the costs but there is a risk that the development as envisaged will not be achievable within the allocated budget. Therefore the acquisition of the land will not take place until officers are sure that the project costs can be met.
- 3.6 Should the revised costs not come within budget, then a further report will be submitted to Executive with proposals for next steps.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Officers considered whether PCC should continue with its separate acquisition of the land but this would be a less efficient way of completing the necessary land transfers.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The project has a total budget of £1.1m. It was thought that the cost of the land to be purchased by PCC would be in the region of £65,000 and so PCC had agreed to contribute this sum to the project. The actual cost will be £30,000 and so £35,000 will be available for other elements of the project.
- 5.2 The consequential legal fees and disbursements will be met from within the Legal Services budget.
- 5.3 As the part of the Centre will be occupied by the P.C.C., who are a charity, and this will be used for a place of worship, this Council could be unable to apply an "option to tax" on this area. This could affect how V.A.T. incurred on the construction will be accounted for. Officers are currently investigating this further and how this risk will be managed, with Members being updated accordingly.

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The report supports the Council's Vision of making Warwick a great place to live, work and visit by engaging and strengthening communities.