

## **ASSET TRANSFER UNDER THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACT**

### **REFUSED**

**To: THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP, FIRST FLOOR, WYNESS HALL, JACKSON STREET,  
INVERURIE, AB51 3QB**

**DATE OF NOTICE – 22 JANUARY 2019**

**This Decision Notice relates to the asset transfer request made by THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP, (SCIO SC043548) on 4th July 2018 in relation to FORMER MARKET PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MARKET, PLACE, INVERURIE, AB51 3XN (“The Request”)**

The Garioch Partnership (TGP) wish to formally request the Scottish Minister to review the decision of Aberdeenshire Council in the determination of the above asset transfer for Market Place Primary School in Inverurie, as detailed above, in the answers below. TGP answers are in the text boxes under Aberdeenshire Council’s formal reason for refusal.

We would wish the Scottish Minister to consider our appeal via written submission, but also to consider a site visit and a hearing to enable the best possible consideration to be given to this. We will do all within our power to support this appeal in any way required, providing any additional information if required in a timeous manner to support the process of appeal to be as streamlined and smooth as possible.

We would like to ascertain if by lodging this appeal, we can ensure that Aberdeenshire Council cannot move to demolish the building whilst the appeal is in process.

**OUTCOME - Aberdeenshire Council has decided to refuse the request.**

#### **Reasons for Decision**

In terms of Section 82(2) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 the Council has carried out a review of the decision confirmed by notice dated 31st August 2018 to refuse the request. Following review, the Council has confirmed the decision subject to modifications.

The reasons for the decision as modified following review are; -

#### **Statutory grounds for refusal**

The Council has considered the request in terms of Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“the Act”) and reached the decision that they have **(four)** reasonable grounds in terms of Section 82 of the Act to refuse the request and these are;-

**(First Ground ) Consideration of the benefits of the Request has demonstrated insufficient evidence of these being achievable**

The case for agreeing to the request by the Applicant is substantially made in the Applicant's Business plan and which was submitted to support the Request, but given the weakness and lack of evidence in the Business plan, the Council consider there is insufficient evidence that the request will result in or is likely to succeed or promote or improve; (i) economic development, (ii) regeneration, (iii) public health, (iv) social wellbeing, or (iv) environmental wellbeing or any other or other benefits, and accordingly, it is not unreasonable for the Council to refuse the request.

The consideration of the Business Plan by the Council and its proposed benefits are as set out as under noted, and underlines the Council's reasoning to coming to the conclusion to refuse;-

### 1.1 Proposal

Although great emphasis is placed on the requirement for a 'much needed' Third Sector Hub little evidence of need and demand has been provided to substantiate this assertion. The Request does not include a market needs assessment.

The ambition of reducing reliance on core grant funding support from the Council is positive and one which the Council would support. However, the surplus figures calculated on page 24 of the Business Plan submitted by the Applicant are not factually accurate raising questions in terms of how this can be achieved.

There is no evidence of additional activities generated because of this Request, other than those derived from the co-location of voluntary services e.g. synergy of space, collective working etc.

There are tensions within the local market that make it very difficult for small groups to risk a stable tenancy to come out in favour of the hub. Many groups have expressed an interest and have written letters of support for the asset transfer. Some groups are also concerned about the move from Aberdeenshire Council to move towards full cost recovery of leisure and recreation services. Additional activities were outlined in the business plan, such as HFSA Sector 3 Safety delivering Health & Safety training for the third sector, and whilst The Gaithering is not a new group, to have a settled base would make it easier for them to continue to grow and develop as the constant moving and hunting for venues takes up valuable volunteer time that could be better used to further the aims of the group.

Part of the aspiration for the hub is to bring together existing and new groups, creating new partnerships and better ways of working locally. We have support from the Business Improvement District (We Are INverurie) as well as the local business association (IBA), as well as a wide range of smaller third sector groups who currently struggle to find accessible and affordable community space within the centre of the town. Having the hub located centrally is also of vital importance. (See appendix 3, letters of support)

The idea and core thought behind the hub being so central is to reduce costs, both to groups using the space, and to the local participants in terms of access via public transport. As stated by the Scottish Government in March 2003, "enabling people to

access local facilities over local networks by short walking or cycling trips, in turn contributing to social justice”. The town centre location of Market Place makes this an ideal opportunity, as it is within an easy and flat walk from both the local train station, and the local bus stops, and right next to the sheltered housing, which would allow us to offer groups to support the reduction of social isolation, reducing loneliness and increasing social capital by bringing a wide variety of people together into shared spaces.

Creating Places, the Government’s policy statement on architecture, really highlights the need for integrated and accessible community facilities, and how they can impact on healthier lifestyle choices. A centrally located third sector hub would reduce the need for car journeys to access leisure, learning and community supporting organisations locally.

“Sustainable places are often characterised by well-designed, walkable mixed-use neighbourhoods with integrated facilities... These types of places can play a role in reducing our carbon emissions and are a considerable impetus for healthier lifestyle choices. Our decision to make journeys on foot or by car is often determined by the layout of our surroundings.” (Scottish Government, Creating Places: A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland, 2013)

For many of the groups who have identified the hub as a great work space, the reduction of stigma from accessing services in a multi-use building has been high on their agenda. This is in terms of not being able to identify vulnerable people accessing groups around mental health, domestic abuse and relief of poverty.

The Garioch Partnership will also be able to utilise this space to reduce our own overheads to offer training, advice and networking opportunities without the requirement to hire space to host these events.

TGP have meet the area manager, Margaret-Jane Cardno, and the Chairperson of the Garioch Area Committee, Cllr Fergus Hood, on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019. At this meeting, they both offered support for TGP to create a third sector hub, supporting the ambition of the partnership, and offering to help find alternative options from Aberdeenshire Council’s Property portfolio, or to help us source land and funding for a new build. In our options appraisal, we ruled out a new build in terms of time to deliver the benefits to the community, and the fact that we felt the building at Market Place offered us the best all round – in terms of location, space and the ability to have something that could be used from day one. If, as stated by Aberdeenshire Council there is no need for a hub, it does question why they are keen to support us to find an alternative solution.

One of the burdens on the title deeds is an obligation to maintain buildings on the site which Aberdeenshire Council have neglected as they had already made the presumption of demolition, even with an asset transfer in progress. The electrical supply to the site was shut down, disabling an alarm system, which therefore allowed vandalism to happen to the school – with lead being stripped from the roof, and copper piping stolen from inside the building. This lack of care and dereliction of duty from Aberdeenshire Council will have an impact on the timescales for TGP opening the building and will mean that we must repair the damages that they have allowed to occur. This will mean it takes us longer to get groups in using the space, although the damage is not

unsurmountable, and both a local architect and a local chartered surveyor have assured us that the building is sound and worthy of retention.

## 1.2 Overview and Structure

The Council is content that the Board of Trustees have a strong skill set. However, given the high dependency on funding from the Council it is unclear how the organisation itself will be sustained in the longer term should funding from the public-sector decrease.

As with many other third sector organisations, if public sector funding were to decrease, we would be seeking funding from alternative sources, and would be looking at future provision of some of the services we currently deliver and facilitate on behalf of the public sector bodies locally. The Garioch Partnership have a very good record of supporting the application for funds for other organisations, often supporting the applicants to consider all that is required for their own funding bids. There is no reason why we could not use this for our own development if required. We have been successful with applying to the Big Lottery AwardsForAll Fund ourselves for an IT upgrade previously. We have good links with many funders and could use this to our advantage to support the role and remit of the partnership, as well as supporting the development of the building.

TGP have robust reserve policies in place to protect our employees if the reduction of funding from Aberdeenshire Council comes to pass, which would give us enough time to source alternative funding sources to ensure the longevity of the partnership.

Under the plans in our business case, we would be using the excess to invest in additional support for the communities and third sector across Garioch, both in terms of improving the building, and for supporting communities to grow and develop.

The asset transfer request and the development of Market Place Primary School is to also ensure the longevity of TGP, to allow us to develop, grow and become sustainable with alternative sources from those we currently rely on, increasing the number of development workers we can employ.

## 1.3 Project Background

The Council is supportive of the ambition set out in the Request. However, there is a general lack of information in terms of how the Partnership plans to deliver on key aspects of the project. Importantly there is a lack of evidence in terms of commitment and detailed usage from other voluntary organisations.

Great emphasis has been placed on the perceived lack of affordable meeting space. The Partnership's proposed hourly charge can be found on page 23 of the Business Plan. Upon comparison with Aberdeenshire Council's charging policy in all cases the Councils hourly rate is significantly less.

No additional evidence has been submitted to show that demand outstrips supply within the area. With respect to Inverurie Town Hall alone based on regular lets only and not

considering one off bookings the hall is used on average 25.5 hours a week out of a possible 98 hours (based on availability between the hours of 8am to 10pm). High quality community space will also be available upon completion of the Inverurie Community Campus.

Although there is no financial projection associated with the 'affordable nursery provision' the implication within this section is that this would be a subsidised facility. This would have implications for nursery providers throughout the area and no evidence has been provided to demonstrate how this would align with the Councils 1140 implementation strategy.

As stated in 1.1, there are issues for local groups to openly request usage in terms of scarcity of lets locally, and a highly competitive market. It is also very difficult to get user sign up when the timescale for asset transfer has been prolonged – we initially requested an asset transfer in November 2016 with the previous area manager.

The costs associated with hiring Aberdeenshire Council property is not only to do with the financial cost. Many groups have reported issues with the letting process, the requirements for insurances, and certification (e.g. first aid, REHIS) have been a barrier to many groups' usage. Also, access to local authority property can be difficult to negotiate in terms of janitorial and key-holder cover. There are other developments led by Aberdeenshire Council, such as Midmill School at Kintore, where the promised community access has not come to fruition despite promises during the development and build time, leaving the community with a lack of accessible space, despite promises made.

We have groups, such as "The Gaithering" and arts and music residential and holiday programme for young people across Aberdeenshire who are struggling for suitable venues, and finding academies are not available, or affordable. This is one of the groups that we would be looking to help, and that the flexibility and size of space at Market Place perfectly lends itself to.

The groups who have identified a desire to come to the hub when it is open have said it would allow them to do more, having more presence, and to reduce the dangers to staff of lone working which can impact on the service delivery times and accessibility.

The Town Hall in Inverurie is not fit for many community groups to access with limited disabled access, poor facilities and a lack of flexible space.

The community campus will not be suitable for all groups to meet, and many vulnerable groups are concerned about the proximity to teaching space and being in a school has negative connotations and memories for many adults.

We also did not want to tie up every available space with groups as the ability to access space as and when required is vital to supporting a flourishing third sector and support new groups and ideas to have space to develop. The lack of demand is sometimes a sign that communities know there is nothing available for them, and therefore they do not ask. We have evidence of groups who have had to try to meet in their homes to allow time and space to develop.

The hub would also allow TGP to develop its offerings regarding training and information that we currently must source venues for. Also, as part of the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation, we currently hire local venues in Inverurie as it is central

for all colleagues to meet. This would be a saving we could offer and another set of regular users.

The affordable nursery provision will be further developed when have the security of building ownership as this will open doors in terms of attracting funding to support this part of the development. It would not affect nursery provision locally, as it would be run for people returning to education, training and not already in work, or in a position to be able to afford the high fees locally. With Garioch having relatively low levels of unemployment, the support to get people not able to access work, into work is vital. There are some very good models locally for how this could work in Inverurie – such as the SensationALL charity and “Schools Out!” social enterprise model in Westhill, in Aberdeenshire. The Garioch Partnership is open to developing new working agreements and partnerships to support to continued development of the Garioch area of Aberdeenshire.

There is a shortage of affordable childcare provision available in Inverurie, and nursery provision will be under pressure with the move to 1140 hours by 2020. As part of our research, we investigated prices of nursery provision in Inverurie, with most prices coming in around National Minimum Wage. As unemployment is low across the Garioch Area, we need to support people back into employment. Often this is the stay at home parent looking to return to work, but in terms of access to benefit, some families are just above this threshold. The cost of housing, and cost of living in this part of Aberdeenshire is above the national average.

#### **1.4 Community Needs and Demands / Partnerships**

On initial reading the Council considered the community engagement element of the plan to be weak. In response to this feedback the Partnership launched an online petition, the outcome of which highlights a few issues which are factually incorrect, for example a perceived affirmation that the Inverurie Campus will not be accessible and affordable to all. Although the petition attracted several comments the Partnership has not undertaken any robust analysis of this feedback. The petition therefore adds very little in terms of the robustness of the Business Case. There is little information to demonstrate how the Partnership has adopted to engage with the wider community and there is little detail in terms of the outcome of this engagement.

Whilst groups have stated general interest, other than perhaps the Food Bank there is no detail in terms of actual commitment nor levels of anticipated usage. No guaranteed user groups have been identified nor potential customers seeking a lease

HFSA, Sector 3 safety have already committed to a lease as soon as TGP have the asset. This is a third sector organisation that would offer training and support to other organisations and have said they would be looking to refit a room to use as a training centre, that would be available to other groups out with the times they require it.

There was no evidence of need prior to the January 2016 “Storm Frank” flooding that the community would require space for a prolonged time. Yet, after this event, the community did need space – a space that is no longer available. The old legion hall at that time was used

as a hub for donations and volunteers in the aftermath of the flood damage. This space was given free by the organisation that had it then – but times have moved on and it is now a private venture and would not be available for this. Whilst the Aberdeenshire Council model of disaster relief is the spoke and hub, it does not allow for this longer term, community-based, volunteer led response. This is one of the services TGP feel that Market Place would be the ideal venue for. This clearly shows the third sector locally needs responsive and available spaces to facilitate their own recovery after any disaster. (See appendix 3, letter from [REDACTED], Aberdeenshire North Foodbank and Community Resilience)

The identified user groups themselves do not look like they would be financially strong and may well rely on donations etc for their own funding. Although there is an indication that business start-up is an area of interest there is no detail to support this demand, nor a clear indication as to how this could contribute to the sustainability of the project.

Further submissions were made in the request for review from the Applicant which included additional information on user groups and community engagement. However the proposals are still lacking in detail and do not add anything to the overall Business Case which in the Council's view is not sufficiently robust to demonstrate the benefits of the project.

The perceived weakness of identified user groups is exactly why a third sector hub is required in Inverurie to cover the Garioch area. Many groups do rely on donations and grant funding, but the support the Garioch Partnership could offer these groups would be of huge benefit, and all being in one space would make best use of the development workers time and cut down on single use car journeys to meet a variety of groups. The sharing of costs – e.g. janitorial cover for the building being open, would be lessened if shared across a multitude of user groups. It would also reduce the risks associated with lone working that many of our smaller groups face, often with one paid member of staff delivering services.

TGP have engaged with the community since we initially floated this idea in 2016, through a variety of meetings, engagements with community councils, our own membership and other groups. We did not progress until we had unanimous support from the membership of TGP. There has been no engagement from Aberdeenshire Council on the plans to demolish Market Place for a staff car park. There has been no traffic impact assessment done, and with the initial valuation including land that was leased, and not owned, there has been no reassurance that the site would be large enough for the planned car park development.

We would be working with Inverurie Business Association and We Are INverurie (The BID) to support small business start-up, with the advantage of a town centre location without the burden of a town centre shop front cost. As with all users of the building, the rental income from this would go towards to sustainability and ongoing development of the asset. (See Appendix 3 letters of support)

We also feel quite strongly that Aberdeenshire Council are applying different rules to this request than they have done for others, in Garioch and wider Aberdeenshire. The burdens placed on Action Kintore who are interested in the Kintore Town House have been less than anything that Aberdeenshire Council have requested from TGP. Similarly, SensationALL at Westhill did not have the same burden to prove lengthy community engagement had occurred, and their asset transfer was a £330,000 building in Westhill transferred on a 175-year lease for a peppercorn rental of £1 per year.

## 1.5 Asset

There is no evidence to suggest that the Applicant has undertaken an independent condition survey of the building. There is no depth to this section of the plan in terms of how the Applicant plans to raise the funds required to upgrade the facility, nor is there any indication throughout the plan as to the extent of required capital investment or ongoing maintenance costs, although the Applicant clearly consider these costs to be minimal. The Council agreed that it would have been prudent for the Applicant to conduct a full survey of the building to ascertain repair and maintenance costs. As the business plan takes no account of these costs and given the surplus figures have been calculated incorrectly, the Council are of the view that even a small unexpected capital cost could jeopardise the viability of the project. This is borne out by the survey instructed by the Council which concludes costs in the sum of £146,682.50 would be incurred (excluding VAT and professional fees) to reinstate the asset to a condition prior to any of the improvement works proposed under the Business Plan.

Given there is an expectation in the plan to attract office start-ups no consideration has been given as to the basic works required to upgrade the space to a lettable standard to attract potential high value leaseholders, for example; good quality refurbishment, wall and floor coverings, furniture, Wi-Fi, etc. Building Warrant costs are also not included.

As part of the review process, further information was sought from the Applicant on this issue however the response lacked sufficient detail and failed to provide any further assurance.

We had not envisioned Aberdeenshire Council allowing the building to be vandalised, so had plans to refurbish the building in stages, as it was in usable and lettable condition when we were allowed access just as the school was moving out. When TGP applied for the CAT the school was still being used and we had a tour of the building. Other than some damp patches in the toilets the condition of the building was as expected for a school and ideal for use as a 3<sup>rd</sup> sector hub. No major alterations were planned and rolling cosmetic improvements that were necessary as detailed in the management plan. TGP would have been able to use the rooms as were and apply for funding to allow us to upgrade and enhance provision there, rather than to seek funding to rectify the vandalism and neglected state the building has been allowed to slump into because of Aberdeenshire Councils lack of care.

The costs of refurbishment would be sought through application to charitable grant giving bodies and support from local businesses, tradesmen and volunteers. This is not something we have been able to progress without an agreement on ownership of the property. We have spoken to funders who support similar works in other areas and who have said they would be open and happy to discuss supporting our development when we have a lease or a date for ownership.

As is mentioned as good practice in the guidance for the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, there was no opportunity for discussion regarding joint valuation of the asset, and TGP were not consulted as regards to the survey and are unclear as to the instruction and standard provided to the surveyor. It would have been prudent if AC were planning to do this that they should have involved TGP as the end user to explain the standard and use of the building i.e. some rooms upstairs will be used for dry storage.

TGP did offer to save Aberdeenshire Council money by taking on the building on a month to month lease to allow us to use the building as a trial, to protect the building from sitting empty and becoming a target for vandalism, and to save Aberdeenshire Council paying rates on an empty building. Although we would have been very limited in the funding we could have accessed in this “trial period” it would have kept the building in use, saved the local authority money, and allowed the community to prove how much the building would have been used.

## 1.6 Capital cost

The Applicant in the request for review submitted that the asset valuation of £555,000 was incorrect and following a request for written information from Council officers, the correct valuation figure of £290,000 has been noted. However the valuation of the asset remains significant therefore the change in valuation does not materially impact the reasons for refusal as set out below.

There remains nothing within the section to indicate how the Applicant would meet the capital cost of purchasing the asset. Although the expectation is that it would be sold for £5,000, this asset has an independent market value of £290,000. Apart from the unexplored nursery provision, the Business Plan is heavily weighted towards the provision of a centralised location for users, rather than providing any new benefit or services to the community. Accordingly, due to the lack of evidence the projected benefits are ill defined and/or unrealistic and do not demonstrate value for money or Best Value characteristics which would competently justify any discount from the market value. If the transfer were to proceed this would result in a loss of an asset with a value of £290,000 with the resulting impact on the capital plan.

If the transfer was to proceed at such a discounted price, then it would be essential that the Council make it a condition of any sale that the Applicant be required to repay the difference in price if the benefits are not delivered or to return any increase in value to the Council if the use of the Asset is changed. This can be done by imposing conditions within the Contract to sell and or to seek securities over the title albeit due to the legislative complexities of these conditions there are risks in the absolute robustness of enforcing these in the future.

The valuation of the site, at £290,000 has been noted by TGP. In terms of justification for our offer of £5,000 for the asset, we looked at other asset transfers locally. The Old School House at Westhill, valued at £330,000 was transferred on a 175-year long-term lease, at a rate of £1 per year. Aberdeenshire Council has a history of transferring assets at below market value. See Appendix 1 (Aberdeenshire Council Asset Transfer Annual Report)

TGP are concerned that the incorrect capital cost was an element of the refusal at Garioch Area Committee, and the loss of revenue in terms of the sale is not being weighed fairly against the cost of demolition and making the site into a fit for purpose car park. The impact of these costs does not seem to have been weighed into the capital plan provision.

TGP also have concerns as no traffic impact assessment has been carried out on the site, so it may not be practical for the car park to be sited there, and with a demolition order awaiting the outcome of the appeal going forward, we have concerns that Inverurie, and Garioch could miss out of a useful development of a third sector hub, seeing the demolition of a perfectly sound building for no reason at all. There are other, far more suitable sites for siting a car park that would have a less detrimental impact on the town centre, and would make better sense in terms of linking with the public transport network, which would give the car park more out-of-office hours use for people using the car park to access leisure opportunities without having a detrimental impact on the quality of life for residents of the disabled sheltered housing right next door to the site.

TGP are willing to accept reasonable conditions against the asset transfer to protect future security for the site.

### **1.7 Plan**

The implementation of the Inverurie Town Hall element of the Aberdeenshire Office Strategy is heavily dependent on the provision of car parking at the Market Place site. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for the Applicant to assume that the Town Hall element of the strategy will be implemented should this site be disposed of through an Asset Transfer.

Should the Council be able to implement the Town Hall element of the Office Strategy it would look to secure the use of assets within its existing control to reduce costs and to provide temporary accommodation to displaced users where possible.

Aligned with previous comments, this section indicates that renovation will be in a planned manner. However, there is no clear asset management plan for the building and no indication that the applicant understands the requirements for capital investment and ongoing maintenance costs. The response to the request for information sought by the Council as part of the review provided no further assurance on this point as it lacked sufficient detail.

The Aberdeenshire Office Strategy took no notice of our asset transfer, and the full council of Aberdeenshire Council voted through the document relying on the Market Place site on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 for car parking without being fully informed that a CAT was in progress, yet Aberdeenshire Council's own asset transfer annual report lists it as being in progress. We had discussions with the previous area manager, dating back to Nov 2016. We started to progress following a meeting with the current Garioch Area Manager in December 2017 and achieving validation in July 2018. TGP are unsure why we were allowed to progress and take the asset transfer request to committee if the site was essential to the wider Aberdeenshire Office Strategy, and feel that the April full council decision conflicted the Garioch Area Committee decision of August 2018 – as Garioch Area Committee could not overturn a whole council decision. TGP strongly feel the decision-making process as per the asset transfer was not in the spirit of the Act. (See appendix 7, timeline)

TGP also believe there are better alternatives to the car park site being at Market Place, moving the traffic away from an already congested town centre, in line with Scottish Government aspirations for healthier and cleaner town centres I.e. the current train

construction area that will be handed over to AC in late 2019. We also feel that by reducing the availability of car parking for developments, it encourages the use of public and more sustainable transport options, as per the Scottish Planning Policy, SPP 17, Transport and Planning Maximum Parking Standards, Addendum to NPPG 17 (Scottish Government, March 2003) (See Appendix 3 letters of support, Colin Hepburn, MRICS, dated 14 Feb 2019)

TGP have consulted with statutory consultees, residents, community groups all through the process however AC have failed to carry this out. AC consulted with the IBA and received negative feedback and failed to consult with ICC. ICC planned to hold a public meeting regarding the CAT/office strategy to provide the public key information on alternatives however officers and elected members of AC moved to prevent this happening. Members of ICC felt that this was intimidation and resigned their posts in ICC.

It should be noted that statutory consultees I.e. IBA, ICC, many local business and residents fully support the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector hub and oppose the office strategy using this area as a staff car park. (See Appendix 3)

Throughout this process AC have used significant resources to undermine the TGP team, management plan etc but have not used the same standards for their own process for the office strategy;

1. No traffic survey has been conducted for this option, this is the most congested part of the town and will impact of local business, residents and commuters.
2. No risk assessment is evident as to how council employees will have safe access and egress to the new office to and from the car park (requirement under Health and safety at work AT 1974). This could again add to congestion with additional pedestrian crossings and staff crossing roads at the busy traffic times.
3. Local businesses have not been consulted as to removal of parking spaces behind the town hall during office hours.
4. Local business and residents around MPS have not been consulted on traffic routes etc and the proposed access road is single file on most occasions due to disabled/carer parking.

### **1.8 Management Plan**

The Council welcome the establishment of a user group but again there is little detail as to how the services would be delivered. A business start-up provision is suggested but there is no evidence of the demand for such a provision.

There is some potential for duplication of effort with the existing Business

Gateway service. The plan states “Start-up Business opportunities are often the first step into long term employment for the unemployed, this could be achieved working with another partner in sections of the MPPS facility.” However, business start-up support is already catered for at Crichtiebank and Thainstone Business Centre.

The plan includes a Disaster Resilience Centre and again there is no indication as to what this means in real terms, or how this would generate income. The Council utilises a hub and spoke model for Rest Centres during the response phase of emergencies, in the case of

Inverurie, the Academy being the “hub” and the primary schools the “spokes”. This model is embedded in policy and works very well.

Aberdeenshire Council at present have limited facilities, using schools as a hub and spoke model for short-term disaster relief but as seen with the flood resilience during the last serious flooding this can take 2-3 months or longer in order to complete the operation. The Garioch flood support group used the Inverurie British Legion hall during the last flooding however this is no longer available. This was provided free of charge and as a support process for residents and business so NO will not provide an income but an essential service. The flood committee have funds (circa £20,000) held by TGP to provide this support service.

During the flooding Aberdeenshire Council provided very minimal support and the fact that they do not understand what a “Disaster Resilience Centre” is concerning, the MPPS is an ideal location as it is close to the town centre, out with the flood area and close to the railway line so convenient if there ever were any rail disasters and can be ready with equipment, space and storage. (See Appendix 3 letter from [REDACTED], Aberdeenshire North Foodbank and Garioch resilience)

## 1.9 Project

### 1.9.1 Project Costs

The business plan is well structured. However, Officers are concerned about the lack of substance from a financial perspective. It is very unusual for a three-year financial forecast to contain so little detail and Officers would reflect that the income figures within the Financial Appraisal seem highly optimistic.

The business plan does not recognise that a reduction in occupancy e.g. 20%, 30%, 40% does not equate with a comparable reduction in utility costs unless the opening hours are greatly reduced and set as such. If this approach were to be taken the operation would not be beneficial to the overall community. Due to this lack of correlation the breakeven costs would be higher than stated in the business plan (£165).

The running costs relied upon by the Applicant have been calculated using current figures from Aberdeenshire Council. This does not include expenditure on items such as telephony, ICT, Broadband, administration, HR etc. An assumption has been made that as these are currently paid within the Councils revenue grant to the Partnership and that this would be sustained. The Partnership should not rely on this assumption. It appears that no calculation has been made regarding an increase in these costs as the organisation moves to a larger building. Therefore, they do not appear in the forecast.

The Council does not consider these costs to be realistic and given the lack of detail and evidence provided throughout the Business Case, this can be considered a competent reason to refuse the request.

TGP have made no such assumption that the Aberdeenshire Council revenue grant would continue. The asset transfer is about developing our future sustainability and moving away from reliance on the core funding from Aberdeenshire Council.

TGP currently have HR on an “as and when” basis and we would see this relationship continuing, and as we grow, it would be brought in as a management overhead cost associated with any new posts and applied for in line with any newly created posts.

Running costs would be shared across all users, so the burden would not fall solely on TGP. Aberdeenshire Council were approached to give TGP the running costs associated with the building when in use as a school so we could base our plans on realistic figures for the building being used.

### 1.9.2 Capital Cost

Apart from the unexplored nursery provision, the Business Plan is heavily weighted towards the provision of a centralised location for users, rather than providing any new services to the community. Due to the lack of evidence and detail within the Request, The Council is unable to competently apply the discount model. Given the Applicant is only prepared to pay £5,000 for the asset, Officers are of the view that this does not provide Best Value and agree this is not a viable way forward.

The discount requested by TGP considered the costs of demolition, road and access remodelling, with the possible costs of installing new traffic lights, and to reinstate the area as a car park for staff use for most of the time, and the limited benefit this car park would have for residents of Garioch, only being accessible during evenings and weekends. Aberdeenshire Council have failed to show if a traffic impact assessment has been done, and have not consulted the community, nor the neighbouring houses on this proposal. In terms of costs, we believe that in terms of discount, the community benefit and being a positive development for the town centre, that the £5,000 is a reasonable amount, and does provide best value.

### **(Second Ground ) Alternative Proposal**

The benefits of the asset transfer request are judged to be less than the benefits of an alternative proposal, namely, there is insufficient evidence provided to demonstrate the benefits arising from the Request, as opposed to those benefits to be gained from the Council’s decision of 26 April 2018 to progress the Aberdeenshire Council Workspace: Office Space Strategy i.e. annual revenue saving of £676,000, a positive impact on the Inverurie town centre as demonstrated by Town Impact assessment and improved and more efficient office facilities for the whole Council.

After considering multiple options over an extended period, on 26 April 2018 Aberdeenshire Council agreed the Council’s Workspace: Office Space Strategy. This decision included, as a wider programme of works across Aberdeenshire, an agreement to release Gordon House, Inverurie and undertake the refurbishment of Inverurie Town Hall including the provision of an extension to that building to accommodate a Service Point, Civic and Community space and an extension for office space, with associated parking at the former Market Place School.

It is important to emphasise that failure to provide a parking solution at Market Place is not only critical to the Inverurie Town Hall element of the Office Space Strategy, but to the strategy as a whole. The strategy incorporates significant changes to office provision at

Stonehaven, Woodhill House, Aberdeen and Ellon, as well as Inverurie. The strategy, as approved, provides a cohesive solution to the Council's needs and jeopardising any element of it jeopardises the whole strategy.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Applicant's submissions in the request for review regarding the timeline of the case and the Council's decision on the strategy are noted. In considering the application the Council has to look at the substance of the alternative proposal, not the decision making process that sat behind it. Accordingly the Council did not consider this to be of relevance to its determination of the application. The Applicant has, through the asset transfer process, put forward its case for the asset to the Council which has resulted in extensive discussion and debate. The Council has therefore had the opportunity to assess the benefits of the request against the benefits of the alternative proposal.

The decision for the Office Strategy and vote was completed without any mention of the asset transfer of Market Place. The full council met on April 26th and decided to demolish Market Place without considering the asset transfer that was in progress at that date. TGP believe the local elected members were in a position of conflict against a full council decision. (See appendix 6 – Aberdeenshire Council Asset Transfer report to show asset transfer was deemed as “in progress” as of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018, and appendix 7 – timeline)

The language used around our request has been intimidating. Stating that the asset transfer request jeopardises the whole strategy, as well as the language used at our meeting with the area manager and Garioch area committee chair on 12th February 2019 we strongly feel that Aberdeenshire Council have not been acting in the spirit of the act in the way they have dealt with our request.

### **(Third Ground) Statutory Compulsion**

The Council is under a statutory duty to obtain Best Value and given the projected benefits as detailed in the request are ill defined and/or unrealistic the Council would be in breach of its duty to obtain Best Value as it could not competently justify any discount or transfer in terms of the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010 and accordingly the forgoing statutory duties prevents or restricts the Council's ability to agree to the request. Following review of the decision, the Council considered that the reduction in the value of the asset from £555,000 to £290,000 did not materially impact on this reason for refusal as a discount in the sum sought by the Applicant was still significant and could not be justified where there were no clearly defined and realistic benefits outlined by the Applicant.

In terms of providing best value, TGP feel retaining the asset as a community hub is better value than the costs of demolishing a perfectly sound building, making it into a carpark, and the associated costs of road remapping in the locale.

TGP also feel that the vandalism and damage caused to the school building will have a direct impact on the value of the building, and this should be taken into account in terms of discount.

#### **(Fourth Ground) Financial Loss**

If the transfer were to proceed this would result in a loss of an asset of £290,000 with the resulting impact on the Councils capital plan which is not sustainable in the current financial climate.

As noted above, the reduction in the valuation of the asset from £555,000 to £290,000 does not materially impact this reason for removal following review. Having regard to the value of the asset it remains a significant loss that cannot be sustained.

Although the offer from TGP is below market value, TGP feel in terms of community benefit and building social capital, community cohesion and providing community space for a wide variety of groups in our community and third sector, supporting some of the most vulnerable in our society, as well as supporting the development of new small businesses would have an impact on the Aberdeenshire Council spend in the future by utilising the preventative spend agenda to support community development locally.

#### Further information.

TGP is funded via a service level agreement with Economic Development at Aberdeenshire Council. We receive £35,616 for the year 2018 – 2019 (£32,616 Economic Development and £3,000 Area Manager Funding) and £33,900 for the year 2019 – 2020 (£30,900 Economic Development and £3,000 Area Manager funding) will be allocated to support the development and activities of The Garioch Partnership for 2 years. (See Appendix 8 TGP SLA)

Within the meeting with the area manager and Garioch Area Committee chairperson of 12/02/2019, we were asked to reconsider our right to appeal, being informed that Aberdeenshire Council would rather work with us, than be in an adversarial position for the 12 – 18 months that they expect the appeal to take.

TGP were open to options from the Garioch Area Manager, and one building had been identified on 12th February 2019, one week prior to our appeal submission date but no time has been given to review the building or options it may give us. In our options appraisal prior to requesting the asset transfer of Market Place Primary School, we could not find another building that offered the space, flexibility and location that this asset offers, and do not believe that this late alternative will either.

## **Right to appeal**

**You have a right to appeal this decision to the Scottish Ministers. An appeal must be submitted within twenty working days of the date of this notice to:-**

**The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DD or by email to [community.empowerment@gov.scot](mailto:community.empowerment@gov.scot).**

**Guidance on the process can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/asset-transfer-under-community-empowerment-scotland-act-2015-guidance-community-9781786527509/pages/20/>**

## **List of appendices**

**Appendix 1 & 2 – TGP Business plan**

**Appendix 3 – Letters of support (July 2018 – February 2019)**

**Appendix 4 – Potential users**

**Appendix 5 – Online petition**

**Appendix 6 – Aberdeenshire Council Asset Transfer Report**

**Appendix 7 - Timeline**

**Appendix 8 – SLA TGP**

**Appendix 9 – Previous appeals**

## Appendix 1: TGP Business Plan – Feedback July 2018

Feedback	Action taken
Further information needed regarding sustainability plans of partnership	Please find detail in section “Proposal”, sub-section “partnership benefits”; also section “Garioch Partnership: overview and structure”
Usage information from other volunteer groups	Please see comments in section “Project background” and “Community needs and demand” regarding the community consultation process adopted when developing the Hub proposal.
Nursery provision information	Please see section “Project background” for information regarding nursery provision.
Community needs and demand	Please see comments in section “Project background” and “Community needs and demand” regarding the community consultation process adopted when developing the Hub proposal. Also see appendix 2 and 3
Project plan	See comments in “Project plan”
Management plan	See Comments in “Management plan” section
Project costs	Please see explanations and commentary in the section “Project costs” and “Financial Appraisal”



# Business Plan

For a  
Third Sector Hub  
in Inverurie

**June 2018**

## **Proposal**

The purpose of this business plan is to present The Garioch Partnership's vision for the establishment of a Third Sector Hub in Inverurie. This Hub is designed to act as a focal point for charity, social enterprise and voluntary activity within Inverurie and the Aberdeenshire communities surrounding the town.

The key features of the proposed Third Sector Hub are:

1. Affordable accessible community space
2. Shared reception facilities
3. Small business and social enterprise space and support
4. Shared space for networking and collaboration, developing new social bridging capital
5. Tourist and community information
6. Space for learning and training
7. Multi agency co-location to reduce stigma from accessing services
8. Safe space for vulnerable people in the community

The Partnership has identified the following key benefits of a Third Sector Hub in Inverurie:

### Community benefits:

- The hub will provide a much needed one-stop facility
- All activities on a single site at the heart of Inverurie
- Dispensing with the need for multi-site operations which are often in unsuitable buildings where space is already at a premium.
- Shared facilities reduce the risk of lone working for social entrepreneurs, small businesses and community groups
- The hub will allow further development of a wide range of activities and services
- Meeting place for the whole community.
- Co-location provides opportunity for integrated cross sector working
- Increased opportunities for employment and supported volunteering

### Partnership Benefits:

- Easily accessible single point of contact
- Visible town centre presence
- Ability for TGP to develop new services e.g. affordable nursery provision and back office services
- Reduce carbon footprint by reducing mileage and more efficient use of time

- Developing new TGP services reducing reliance on core grant funding from Aberdeenshire Council
- Opportunity to explore wider cross sector working relationships

The Garioch Partnership believes that Inverurie is an ideal location for a Third Sector Hub to serve the town and surrounding communities. The population of the town is growing, with a number of new housing developments recently completed, with others at the development or planning stage. Inverurie is served well by public transport links, including rail and bus, and offers retail, sport and leisure facilities utilised by town residents as well as by the population of the rural communities in the local area.

There are many voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises operating in Inverurie and its surrounding communities.

Garioch is a thriving and diverse community with a huge amount of community groups and activities. The hub will provide opportunity to raise the profile and aspirations whilst supporting equity of opportunity.

The Garioch Partnership has identified the former Market Place Primary School as a suitable location for the proposed Third Sector Hub. The School venue would allow the Hub to provide the following facilities:

- A new focal point for the third sector
- New employment and volunteering opportunities
- Access to advice, information and support centrally
- Inspiring innovation within the community and small business sector increasing aspiration
- Contributing to local economic growth

In order to implement this vision for a Third Sector Hub in Inverurie, the Garioch Partnership request an asset transfer from Aberdeenshire Council for the former Market Place Primary School.

TGP identified this asset as part of our growth strategy following on from an externally facilitated Board development day where we looked at sustaining the Partnership. At that stage we identified the need to have a suitable facility giving us a physical presence at the heart of our Garioch community.

We undertook a wide ranging options appraisal looking at various sites, facilities and opportunities across the Garioch area. We selected Market Place as a viable option because it met so many of the Partnerships requirements, its central local, accessible for public transport whilst being large enough for flexible and future use.

Our discounted options were...

- Harlaw Centre (pre-demolition) building beyond its economic life span, and was at that time earmarked for the possible development of Aberdeenshire Council's headquarters.
- Inverurie Medical Practice – building not fit for purpose for community use, would require redevelopment, cost of purchase.
- Inch Community Centre – not big enough for us, and not accessible for everyone in Garioch due to rurality/distance from Westhill
- We discounted Westhill due to a lack of available property and we felt that we would be in direct competition with some of the groups we support that have premises in that area.
- Blythewood – not as accessible a location, out of the way. Has since been vandalised/burned.
- Wyness Hall – not suitable for our purpose, building requires too much work, no parking.

There are issues of cost and availability of suitable property within Garioch, and for this reason our options are limited, but we feel that Market Place offers a genuine opportunity to keep the building in public use, to meet the needs of a growing and active third sector and to allow us to develop our own sustainability without moving away from our core purpose.

Market Place gives TGP the opportunity to develop this site in the future, whilst allowing immediate use on general spaces for hire and redeveloping other areas for future specific use, e.g. Nursery, Kitchen.

#### What Benefits Will This Bring To Local Community Groups?

- Inverurie is a central point in Aberdeenshire, with the rail and several road links connecting.
- The opportunities presented by additional space could easily give rise to **social enterprise development**, providing further employment, training and volunteering for people in Garioch.
- There will be benefits for working parents and/or those hoping to **access the labour market** via provision of affordable nursery facilities.
- A first point, accessible, reactive resilience centre in the case of any future event.

#### Who Will Benefit?

The people who will benefit from this facility will be:

- Third sector and community groups across Garioch
- Local people
- Local children
- Tourists
- Local businesses

- Disadvantaged groups, e.g. Syrian New Scots, Disabled people, those on low incomes.

#### How Will People Benefit?

In short, this project will facilitate

- People having access to improved facilities
- People having access to opportunities to volunteer
- People having access to work opportunities
- Shared space with many community groups – synergy of space, collective working, and reduction of lone working for some group tutors.
- Access to affordable, fit for purpose space
- Access to advice, information and support at one central point
- Access to services, signposting

This business plan provides background information regarding the development of The Garioch Partnership's vision for a Third Sector Hub in Inverurie; outline of needs analysis undertaken; overview of project resources and planning; preliminary costings.

The Garioch Partnership developed its vision for a Third Sector Hub in Inverurie in consultation with many of its member organisations.

### Intended Outcomes

We believe that the vision for the hub aligns with Aberdeenshire Council's mission and outcomes around cohesive and connected communities specifically targeting:-

#### *Lifelong Learning*

Aberdeenshire is the best place to live and learn, work and play. It is an area where we are working together for the best quality of life, supporting healthy, successful, inclusive Communities.

#### *Strong & Sustainable Communities*

Aberdeenshire is the best area where the council works with partners and communities to create and sustain the best quality of life for all through an enterprising and adaptable economy, that is the location of choice for high value national organisations, for smaller expanding businesses and for social enterprises.

#### *Caring for Communities*

Aberdeenshire is the best place to be, where the council is creating and sustaining the best quality of life for all through involving and enabling happy, healthy and confident people who live in safe, friendly and lively communities.

#### *Public Service Excellence*

Aberdeenshire is the best council. It is a dynamic, effective organisation aiming to provide excellent services by finding new and more efficient ways of doing things. The focus is on continuous improvement of the quality and efficiency of service provided with strong leadership and motivated employees.

Building on the foundation of Aberdeenshire Council's single outcome agreement the following areas were identified and the hub could help sustain these areas of development.

#### *Economic recovery and growth*

The project will assist the regeneration of the Inverurie area via the new facility. For example, local business will benefit from the footfall at MPPS.

#### *Employment*

The new facility will provide a number of employment opportunities, firstly during its development, and thereafter when it is fully operational. It will also provide volunteering opportunities and opportunities for social enterprise. Start-up Business opportunities are often the first step into long term employment for the unemployed, this could be achieved working with another partner in sections of the MPPS facility.

#### *Older people*

This project will benefit older people by offering a meeting place and a facility where they can participate in activities and generate interest in other activities under the same roof. This will assist them to live healthier lives for longer.

#### *Safer Communities*

The provision of a Third Sector Hub will provide diversionary activity to people in the area and therefore create a safer community.

#### *Stronger Communities*

Development of this project will ensure that Aberdeenshire Council are supporting voluntary groups to develop and grow. As already mentioned, this will give us the opportunity to create volunteering placements which will hopefully lead to work opportunities where appropriate.

## **The Garioch Partnership: overview and structure**

The Garioch Partnership (TGP) is a fully constituted voluntary sector organisation, owned and managed by elected representatives from the Garioch Area.

The legal status of the organisation is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO No: - SC043548).

The Partnership's purpose is:

*"A community-led, independent community development organisation that uses its members' network to build stronger, more successful, more sustainable communities in the Garioch Area"*

At present, the TGP support non-profit and charitable organisations with:

- Signposting to relevant advice and support
- Governance
- Funding support and advice
- Business planning, visioning and support
- Sustainability
- Advice, information and networking
- Knowledge and support around OSCR requirements for charities.

We are often the critical friend and listening ear that can support groups to develop and overcome the obstacles that they come across in working in communities.

These activities have resulted in a membership of 96 organisations, however TGP support over 100 groups in Aberdeenshire.

The people who benefit are:

- Children
- Young people
- Adults
- Specific interest groups

TGP is governed by a board of Trustees, who are elected at an open and public Annual General Meeting. Office-bearers are selected from the Trustees to hold the officers posts of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. There is a maximum of eight committee members. All of the Trustees are volunteers.

TGP office bearers are as follows:

- [REDACTED] Chairperson
- [REDACTED] Secretary
- [REDACTED] Treasurer

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It is TGP's intention that the user group will reflect the usage of the hub and future developments, upgrade priorities and acceptance of new users within the site. This will consist of the chairperson, secretary and one other TGP trustee to chair these meetings. These user group members, would be members of TGP, adhering to the role and policies of TGP as per the constitution and run as a sub-committee under the SCIO of TGP.

Current policies and procedures include:

- Health and Safety
- TGP SCIO Constitution
- Public Indemnity Insurance
- GDPR compliance

A bookings policy will be developed when the facility is nearing completion. This will reflect current booking policies utilised by other facilities in the area, however there will be a clause reflecting the need to transfer or cancel previous booking at a time on disaster resilience needs.

The financial policy is straightforward. There are two cheque signatories, being unrelated individuals. Accounts are presented with a Treasurer's report at each meeting. Accounts and Reports are submitted to OSCR annually along with a monitoring review with Aberdeenshire Council, rated against the SLA.

TGP hold Insurance policy with Zurich Insurance with public and employee indemnity included.

## **Project Background**

Garioch is a large urban and rural area which covers four council wards 10, 11, 12 & 13. Within these four wards, there are two large settlements in Inverurie and Westhill. The population of the Garioch area in Aberdeenshire is around 50,000 (using figures from Aberdeenshire Councils Garioch Profile, May 2016)

Within these demographics, there are many volunteer organisations, charities, not for profit groups and unincorporated bodies. These groups cover activities sport, religion, nursery, toddlers, education, uniformed organisations, older folk and various Third sector groups.

Since our initial consultation with our members in 2017, several organisations have expressed an interest in being part of this project, several comments have been that the group do not access to facilities on a regular basis, which are fit for purpose and there is a general lack of public affordable meeting space.

WE have some groups already keen to lease space moving from expensive privately rented premises which are often a make do rather than a good fit. Due to the sensitivities of the private market rental sector it would not be appropriate to disclose group names in a publically accessible document. Evidence of support can be viewed on our Facebook page and the online petition.

We would look to develop an affordable nursery provision in the future, to support people getting back into work, education and training. Childcare is often cited as the single biggest barrier in terms of cost, availability and timing for many people returning to employment, or accessing training, skills development and further education. Within the development of our plans for Market Place, we would look to develop a social enterprise nursery offering local employment and training opportunities.

It has be quoted that affordable nursery places are at a premium in Garioch, (Ibp Strategy & Research Document, August 2016) and hinders employment opportunities. The Aberdeenshire Council Early Years team is working hard to develop increased levels of funded providers to meet the extended nursery hours per child to 1140 hours by 2020, according to their own website.

This would be a development under an expanded use of the facility and is not included in the initial start-up of the project. Local businesses have also identified child care costs as a barrier to recruitment and returning to employment.

We have a vision that any employment created within the project, would also support opportunities for volunteering, work shadowing and skills development to support people on their path back into work, and to assist them to have something current to put on a CV

for a job, as we recognise the benefit of well supported volunteer roles. We would like to play a part in ensuring Garioch has a skilled and ready workforce.

The demand for community facilities in Garioch is high, and with changes in policy regarding school out of hours let, is at a premium in terms of available and affordable space.

TGP are looking to become more sustainable in the medium to long term, and by developing our own income stream, this will allow us to develop without being reliant on one sole income stream. We also feel that the development of a third sector and community hub ties in very well with our core remit.

In identifying the possibilities for asset transfer, we looked at a wide range of options, and Market Place became the preferred option for numerous reasons.

- Central to Garioch
- Accessible space for all to use
- Town centre location, so accessible via public transport
- Large enough
- Already exists so we could start straight away
- A range of multi-purpose rooms, that are flexible enough to be used in a variety of ways to suit the needs of different groups

## **Community Needs and Demand**

The current gap in provision has been identified by many of our user groups.

### *Community Consultation:*

- There is a need for flexible, affordable and accessible community arts spaces.
- There is a need for community meeting space that is affordable (schools are difficult to get lets in and the Tesco community room is difficult to book for new groups as it requires public liability insurance and is often booked up well in advance)
- The loss of the community centre
- Fears that the new Inverurie Academy Campus will not be accessible and affordable for all, see comments on iPetition.
- The re-purposing of the British Legion space that was used initially after the 2016 flooding as a community space for resilience planning and support. The last flooding issue at

Inverurie & Port Elphinstone only really succeeded as Schools were on holiday, a different scenario would have been met if school was occupied or exam period.

- We can contribute by being one of the spokes in the Local Authority hub and spoke model for rest centres during the response phase of emergencies.
- A resilience centre would be about further ongoing support for longer than the initial rest centres where we can provide co-located space for all advice and information agencies to be on one site making it a "one-stop recovery shop"

### *Needs Analysis:*

Respondents indicated that their desired activities were:

- Health improvement
- Community capacity building through training and learning
- Sports
- Arts
- Music
- Space for existing groups to meet and come together

Barriers to participation will be addressed via:

- By being central, we are easily accessible via public transport
- Costs will be tailored to be affordable and accessible
- The main activities will all take place on the ground floor
- A range of space for different activities
- Opening times to suit the community needs
- Ease of booking
- TGP will be able to offer support to help groups develop and grow
- We will develop a friendly, welcoming, safe space
- Wide range of groups using the building to reduce stigma for anyone accessing services

The facility will be located in the centre of Inverurie, within easy walking distance of all other amenities and transport infrastructure.

### **Project Resources**

Initially, the facility could create 4 Part time additional posts as reception/caretaker.

Management and supervision of these posts will be undertaken by the existing Directors.

The Community will be able to influence what happens within the facility via provision of the following:

- Open meetings
- Open invitation to join Board and attendance at Board meetings
- Suggestions box
- Comment via social media
- A representative from each user group to sit on User Group Committee, this would give the opportunity to mould the future of the Market Place site.

## Partnerships

A large number of other organisations have stated an interest in being a partner or use this new facility:

<b>WHO</b>	<b>ROLE</b>	<b>WHY</b>	<b>MANAGED BY</b>
Garioch Resilience Group	Representation on Board	User Group	Self
GYMS & BUZZ	Major User	User Group	Self
BID	Stakeholder	Primary Stakeholder	
Grampian Opportunities	Representation on Board	Primary Partner Activity	
The Clachan Project	Major User	User group	Self
City Church Inverurie	Venue Hire	User Group	Self
Uniformed Organisations	Venue Hire	Fundraising activity	Self
Foodbank NorthEast	Major User	User Group	Self

Several of these groups have spoken to TGP, independent of their volunteers and employees, it is seen a sensitive area for employers.

## Asset

The Garioch Partnership request an asset transfer from Aberdeenshire Council for the previous Market Place Primary School.

After this has been effected, the group will raise the funds required to start upgrading the facility.

This is anticipated to be early 2019, with a 12-18 month phase 1 programme.

## Risk Assessment

<b>RISK</b>	<b>LIKELIHOOD</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>MITIGATION</b>
Small committee	Not very likely due to ongoing commitment and enthusiasm shown	Lots more work for fewer people if numbers reduce	Interest for new members now from potential user groups / stakeholders.
Difficulty attracting funding	Moderate	Minimal impact, MPPS already fit for purpose.	Spread risk via identifying wide range of funders
Revenue income	Moderate	Reduces sustainability of project.	Identify a reasonable pricing structure, sell the tangible assets /opportunities for project.
Identified users not committing	Medium	No income to MPPS, throwing project parameters out.	Early Comms with possible user groups, showing all the positives of the MPPS project.

If successful with the asset transfer a detailed survey would be undertaken, initial visual inspection by trustees and information from local professionals see no issue with the soundness of the building.

## **Project Plan**

This is a project where we can “hit the ground running” and start delivery immediately. Minimal capital expenditure will be needed immediately as the facility already meets most of the demands. Modifications will commence when the needs of new groups are identified and suitable funding is secured. This is anticipated to be 2019.

There is an opportunity to migrate users of the Inverurie Town Hall to MPPS for a period of time to allow the Town Hall to be renovated. This would give small disruption to Town Hall users and MPPS to gain valuable revenue in the early stages of development, this needs the buy in with Aberdeenshire Council also.

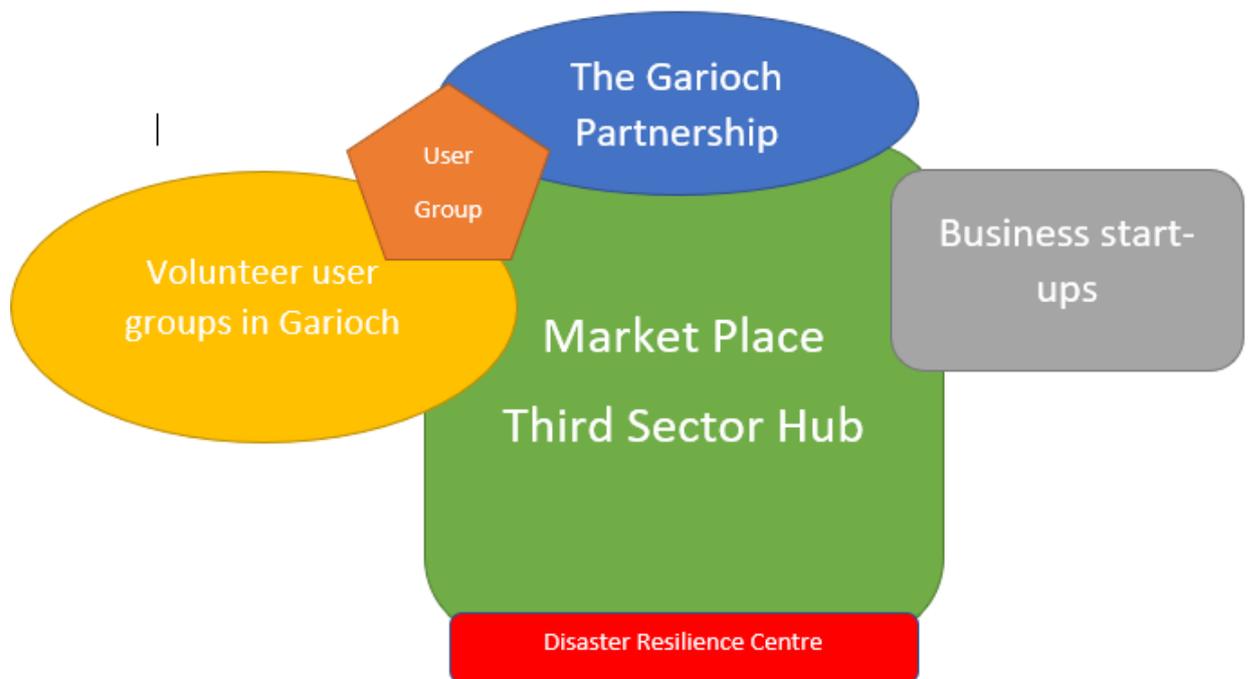
As the building is currently in a useable state, we would be doing any upgrades in a planned manner, doing it bit by bit, as required by the user groups and an ongoing development plan for renovations. Work will be undertaken by local businesses and trades keeping the employment within the area.

## Management Plan

TGP will lead in the management of the facility. A user group of major users, stakeholders, primary activity partners and other user will make up this group. The user group will be chaired by a trustee of TGP. This group will review and accept any new user group coming to use the facility, prioritise any maintenance or equipment required to ensure the facility meets the needs of the group. Election into the user group would be through an annual meeting of all users, set after the AGM of TGP. Let contracts will be drawn up for the users and will set down a minimum set of guidelines that the groups would expect to adhere to. This would include a clause for moving of groups within the building to allow maintenance work to complete and the possibility that the facility may be utilised as a Disaster Response Centre. The financial running of the facility will be controlled by TGP.

TGP can access funding grants not accessible to the local authority. TGP will build on our proven track record for attracting funding to the Garioch Area to sustain the project and explore new areas of delivery for our growth as well.

Areas which are not DAA compliant have been identified and will not be used for general public use, however have been identified as storage areas for local group requiring this facility.



## Project Costs

Running costs for Market Place for year 2016/17 amounted to £146,774.			
However it should be noted that this includes rental expenditure towards playing field and 2 storey temp unit – neither of which will apply to Garioch Partnership.			
Key elements/breakdown is;			
Rent -	£75,774		
Rates -		£24,480	
Utilities (water/sewerage, gas and Elec)		£17,735	£17,735
Trade waste -		£3,152	
Cleaning -		£16,010	£16,010
		<b>£61,377</b>	
Based on 42 weeks / year, 5 days a week and 7 hours per day.			
Based on the above usage from Aberdeenshire Council the usage cost to light, heat and clean the clean the building as a school, with lights and heating all of the building, all of the time equates to £23.20/hr			

The running costs above have been calculated using current figures from Aberdeenshire Council, Estates Department. Utilities do not include Telephone, broadband, Human Resource and professional service, these are currently paid within the revenue grant from Aberdeenshire Council and would continue to be so.

Using the cost calculation above for Rate (Charitable Rate), Utilities, Trade waste and cleaning, the projected expenditure has been calculated as below, relating to % occupancy of the building.

	20%	30%	40%
Rates at Charitable discount 80% -	£4,900	£4,900	£4,900
Trade waste -	£3,152	£3,152	£3,152
Increase usage for Monday - Friday 9.00am - 9.00pm Open 50 weeks / year, 5 days a week and 12 hours per day.	£13,920	£20,880	£27,840
Increased usage for Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm Open 50 weeks / year, 2 days a week and 8 hours per day.	£3,720	£5,580	£7,440
<b>Running Costs</b>	<b>£25,692</b>	<b>£34,512</b>	<b>£43,332</b>
<b>Running Costs</b>	<b>£25,692</b>	<b>£34,512</b>	<b>£43,332</b>
<b>Additional staffing</b>	<b>£32,000</b>	<b>£32,000</b>	<b>£32,000</b>
<b>Income / day to break even.</b>	<b>£165</b>	<b>£190</b>	<b>£215</b>

With the % occupancy the cost of the daily income required to break even has been calculated as £165, £190 & £215 per day.

The projections are based on the facility being open for 7 days a week, with the weekdays being from 9am to 9pm. Weekend opening will be reduced. However if uptake is low then opening will be changed accordingly. It is envisaged that day to day running will be covered from the income of the hire and rent of the rooms, opportunity will also be sought for the long-term hire for start-up businesses. The page below gives projections of occupancy based from 20% to 60% utilisation of the basic facility lets.

The care & maintenance of the building "do nothing for a year" would cost approx. £30K/yr., this can be covered with current reserves held by TGP.

Additional staffing has been calculated on the basis of three part-time staff on a rota to cover times when TGP staff are not in the building.

The below table shows possible income from the Hub based on increasing % of occupancy.



A three year projection on Income and expenditure based on the first year occupancy of 20% usage is given below. With an increase in future years as the building is developed over this period.

	Notes	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Income</b>						
		10% Increase in revenue / year			Note 1	Regular hire booking of facility and long term renting
Hire of facility	1	£ 82,200	£ 113,800	£145,400		
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Rates		£4,900	5% £5,145	3% £ 5,299	Note 2	Based on Charity rates 80% reduction from Business rates
Utilities		£25,682	10% £28,250	10% £ 31,075		Possible savings with contracted service and income staff roles.
Trade Waste		£3,152	3% £3,247	4% £ 3,376		
Cleaning	2	£3,200	2% £3,264	3% £ 3,362		
Staff	3	£ 30,000	£ 30,000	£ 35,000	Note 3	Year one facility will be part staffed by employees and by trustees
Insurance	4	£ 2,000.00	2% £ 2,040	2% £ 2,081		on a voluntary basis.
<b>Surplus</b>		<b>£15,266</b>	<b>£43,894</b>	<b>£67,287</b>	Note 4	Increases in current insurance cover for facility

Even in year 1 with an occupancy of 20% a surplus is projected. However if income is not reached the Partnership is willing to underwrite the losses in any of the first three years or alternatively loan money for essential maintenance from day one.

## **Marketing and Communications Strategy**

TGP trustees and co-opted people from different backgrounds will be involved by engaging with existing users of local facilities, including mother and toddlers, playgroup, primary school, nearby secondary schools, youth groups, all community groups as well as local businesses and others.

The asset itself will be promoted via word of mouth, social media, local media, leaflets, posters, open events and consultation events. It is hoped the unique functionality of this facility will rate interest in local TV and Radio communications

Services and activities provided will be promoted via social media, leaflets, local newspapers, magazines and local radio. It will also be promoted via each user group to their own users, for example, fundraising, AGMs etc.

We will also use our own, very well received, Garioch Gazette. The current newsletter for TGP, as well as advertising opportunities in our weekly roundup so that people and groups are aware of all that is happening at Market Place.

Part of the marketing strategy will also be around the building being open and accessible to the public on a day to day basis – and being a first point of call for queries on what's happening locally.

We'd also be working towards good signage for the school so it is easily found.

Online survey launched at :-

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/market-place-school-as-a-3rd-sector-hub>

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The success of this project will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- Number of service users
- Number of Lets
- Attendance at groups and classes
- Financial results
- Anecdotal feedback
- Suggestions Box comments
- Number of social media followers
- Social media comments
- Measuring social impact
- Monitoring social capital

This will be used to monitor service delivery and where suggestions are made these will be discussed at Board level prior to implantation.

The long term impact of project will be monitored in terms of identified project outcomes – changes for user groups, for example increased capability of major users and sustainability and development of smaller groups.

We will also use tools like the Place Standard to assess our impact, and also documents like Education Scotland's "How Good Is Our Third Sector Organisation"

We will use ongoing evaluation to improve our service delivery, and also utilise our user group feedback as an ongoing method of improvement.

## **Executive Summary**

The Garioch Partnership (TGP), have several facets to this project:

- a) To create a business trading arm for TGP to generate income
  - i. Current funding from Economic Development, Aberdeenshire Council may reduce or cease altogether.
  - ii. To develop and meet the needs of a growing area.
  - iii. To ensure the sustainability of the work by TGP currently and in the future.
- b) Create a Third Sector Hub to encompass as many voluntary organisation together, sharing resources, knowledge and capacity to the Garioch area.
- c) Encourage the further development of several partner organisations, supporting them to reach their potentials.
- d) Create a first point resilience and disaster management centre, utilising the skills of above identified organisations.
- e) Training facilities for voluntary organisation
- f) An information and contact point for volunteer groups to come together, sharing space, knowledge, information and ideas.
- g) Tourist information point
- h) Affordable space for community groups to use.
- i) Front office facilities for smaller volunteer groups – e.g. a manned address for official mail to save it having to go to volunteers homes, that would be a managed mailbox facility.
- j) Back office support for community groups through development of our current independent examination service to support community based activity, developing book-keeping and office support.
- k) Development of an affordable nursery provision to support people accessing work, training and employment locally.
- l) Business start-up facilities.
- m) A base for TGP to work from and be connected with support groups.

- n) Arts and performance space in a smaller venue than the Town Hall to allow a greater diversity of artistic events to happen.

At present, various groups in Inverurie support their own communities and needs based on an existing hire/lease, disconnected from other likeminded activity.

With current squeeze on Local Authority and statutory funding to groups, our aspiration is that Market Place would be a specific facility for 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Groups to utilise, at a reasonable cost, with any profits re-invested into the facility that would allow groups to develop their own strategy and sustainability with the support of TGP.

With all of this under one roof, it would remove any stigma around accessing services, particularly those targeted at more vulnerable people, such as mental health support, a domestic abuse project, and recovery projects. Entering the building would be non-identifying and safe.

The demand for community space in Inverurie and Garioch often outstrips availability and affordability. By keeping Market Place in community use, many of these challenges could be overcome by utilising the spaces for a variety of uses.

TGP wish to provide a community asset that will have far reaching benefits. Under the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015, communities are being given the tools to drive forward more ambitious and aspirational uses for community assets. We very much see ourselves as being a small part in the puzzle that makes Garioch such a rich and vibrant place to stay.

Essentially, this change of functionality will provide a much needed one-stop facility with several 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector activities on a single site. The space will allow further development of a wide range of activities and services from backroom services, community café and a meeting place for the whole community.

There will be an initial requirement for new members of paid staff creating new employment opportunities and several Community groups have already pledged a commitment to utilise the facility.

#### How Will People Benefit?

- People having access to affordable and accessible facilities
- People and communities becoming healthier
- People being able to access local services
- People having better chances in life
- People have better volunteering opportunities
- People have better work opportunities
- Meeting active lifestyle needs

The outcomes of this project are:

- Creating better opportunities
- Making communities safer, stronger and more vibrant
- More sustainable services (and environment)
- Improved health and wellbeing

This project is closely aligned to Aberdeenshire Council's Visioning 2050 targets... (Aberdeenshire Council, July 2014, pg2)



A large number of other organisations and stakeholders are involved with this project, including:

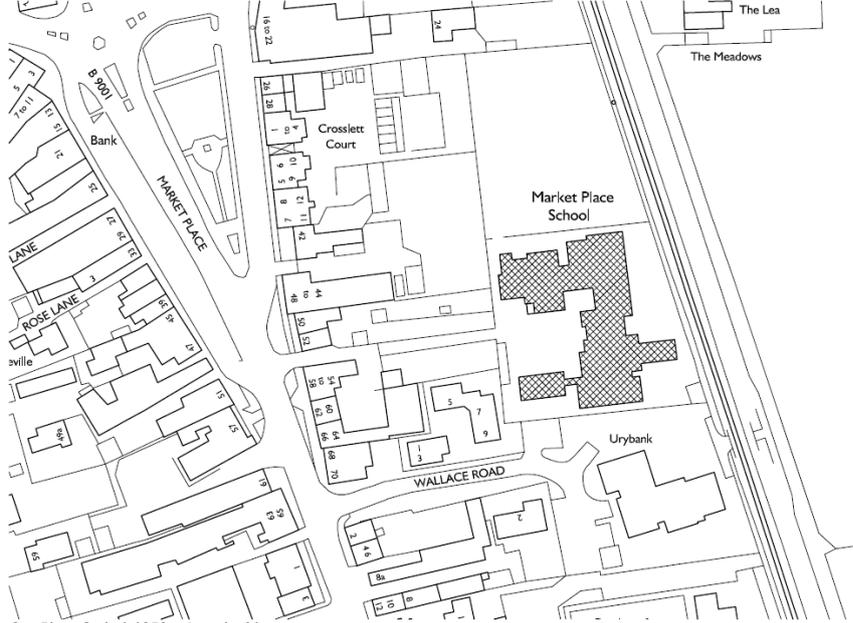
- TGP member groups
- Aberdeenshire NE Foodbank
- Aberdeenshire resilience group
- GYMS / BUZZ
- Inverurie Panto
- Inverurie Business Association
- We are INverurie (Inverurie BID)

The Garioch Partnership require an asset transfer from Aberdeenshire Council for the proposed site at Market Place Primary School. After this has been effected, the group will raise the capital funds required to develop the site to meet the needs of the community groups, accessing a range of charitable trusts. Development will commence when funding is secured and will be phased in on a priority basis, depending on the organisational needs of the tenants. It is envisaged that the structure of the School will be kept to what is currently provided.

Long term sustainability will be ensured via charges for lets of rooms, venue hire, assisted front and back office support facilities as well as income from donations and fundraising. All income generated will be used to cover core costs of the building and management of it, and any surplus reinvested back into the facility and into the aims and objectives TGP to benefit the communities of Garioch.

# Business plan, site plan

THIS DRAWING IS FOR GENERAL REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY. FOR PRECISE DETAILS OF BOUNDARIES AND TITLE RESTRICTIONS SEE TITLE DOCUMENTS.



Site Plan - Scale 1:1250 - sheet 1 of 1

Amended 15th April 2003

REFERENCE DRAWING No.

Date Surveyed 21 NOV98 Date Drawn 22 NOV98

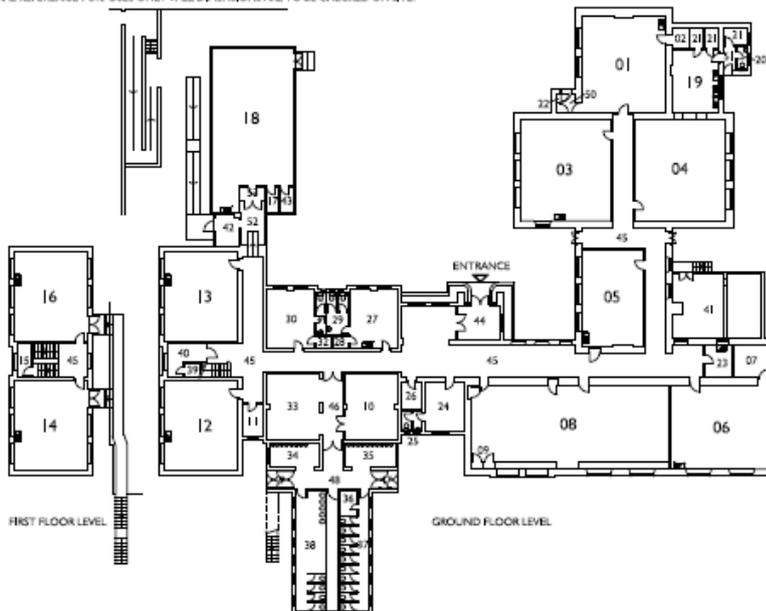
**G1496RS1**

**INVERURIE MARKET PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
Market Place, Inverurie



Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen AB16 5GB Tel. (01467) 620981  
Property is a part of the Transportation, Roads and Property Service.

THIS DRAWING IS FOR GENERAL REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE.



Floor Plan - NOT TO SCALE sheet 1 of 2

Amended 15th April 2003

REFERENCE DRAWING No.

Date Surveyed 21 NOV98 Date Drawn 22 NOV98

**G1496RF1**

**INVERURIE MARKET PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
Market Place, Inverurie



Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen AB16 5GB Tel. (01467) 620981  
Property is a part of the Transportation, Roads and Property Service.

THIS DRAWING IS FOR GENERAL REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY.

**EDUCATIONAL AREAS**

01	65.9sm	classroom
03	75.2sm	classroom
04	75.6sm	dining hall
05	48.6sm	classroom
06	67.2sm	classroom
07	9.8sm	learning support room
08	132.7sm	general purpose hall
09	2.2sm	stores (3no)
10	28.6sm	store
11	5.5sm	store
12	54.4sm	classroom
13	54.4sm	classroom
14	54.4sm	classroom
15	3.9sm	store
16	54.4sm	classroom
17	2.9sm	store (temp.)
18	97.4sm	classroom (temp.)
50	2.8sm	store

EDUCATIONAL AREA MAIN BUILDING = 735.6sm

EDUCATIONAL AREA TEMP. ACCOMMODATION = 100.3sm

**ANCILLARY AREAS**

02	3.0sm	toilets
19	24.3sm	kitchen
20	2.3sm	staff toilet
21	8.4sm	stores (3no)
22	0.7sm	electrical switchgear
23	7.4sm	cleaners store
24	16.0sm	head teacher
25	3.7sm	staff toilet
26	5.0sm	janitors store
27	23.1sm	staff room
28	1.6sm	store
29	7.2sm	staff toilets
30	23.2sm	office
31	3.3sm	staff toilet
32	1.6sm	store
33	29.0sm	cloak area
34	10.1sm	boys wash area
35	10.0sm	girls wash area
36	3.4sm	cleaners store
37	25.6sm	girls toilet
38	29.1sm	boys toilet
39	2.0sm	store
40	7.7sm	assistant head teacher
41	44.9sm	plant room / oil tank
42	6.0sm	cloak area (temp.)
43	2.9sm	store / electrical switchgear (temp.)

ANCILLARY AREA MAIN BUILDING = 292.6sm

ANCILLARY AREA TEMP. ACCOMMODATION = 8.9sm

**CIRCULATION AREAS**

44	11.6sm	
45	216.6sm	
46	11.3sm	
47	1.3sm	
48	18.4sm	
49	1.3sm	
51	2.5sm	
52	8.7sm (temp.)	
53	2.8sm (temp.)	

CIRCULATION AREA MAIN BUILDING = 263.0sm

CIRCULATION AREA TEMP. ACCOMMODATION = 11.5sm

**TOTAL GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR AREAS :-**

MAIN BUILDING = 1419.4sm

TEMP. ACCOMMODATION = 122.5sm

Ver.	Pg	Content	Date
2.5	9	If funding were .... we have at the moment then changes would be needed.	14.7.18
2.5	11-12	Project Background updated.	14.7.18
2.5	21	Hyperlink to iPetition	14.7.18
2.5	16	Asset Survey	18.7.18

[REDACTED]

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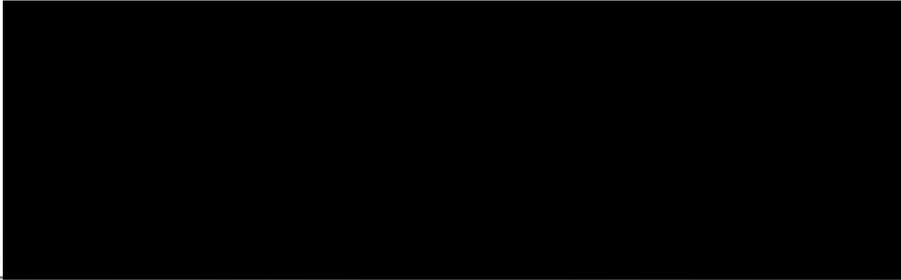
**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 09 July 2018 23:04  
**To:** info@gariochpartnership.org.uk  
**Subject:** Market Place School

I am writing on **personally** and on behalf of the **Garioch Potters** who use the Community Centre at the moment. I am very much in support of the Garioch Partnership's plan for Market Place School.

I was dismayed when I saw the plans for the Community Campus where the community groups were to be placed in all different parts of the building. As far as I am concerned, community means together and there is a great sense of community amongst the groups who use the present Community Centre. I think the Partnership's plan for Market Place School is coming at just the right time and fully support their proposal.

[REDACTED]

[The Pain Stop](#)  
[The Bowen Technique](#)



11<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Mr Jim Savege  
The Chief Executive  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB16 5GE

Dear Sir

**Marketplace School**

I write in support of the Garioch Partnership application to retain Marketplace School under a community asset transfer, as a hub for the third sector serving Inverurie and the local community.

Whilst the building may not be suitable for modern educational purposes, there is a substantial granite building which, correctly refurbished and maintained, will continue to be an excellent asset to the community.

The thought of losing this merely for car parking, when there is an adjoining playing field available, no longer required as part of the school and much cheaper to develop, would appear to be extremely poor value for the "tax payer".



16 July 2018

[REDACTED]  
Development Worker  
The Garloch Partnership  
1<sup>ST</sup> Floor, Wyness Hall  
Jackson Street  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB

Our Ref.: CFH/EC

Your Ref.:

[REDACTED]  
**MARKET PLACE SCHOOL, INVERURIE**

Thank you for your email of 11 July 2018, concerning the above, and in particular the future use of the buildings and site formerly occupied as Market Place School.

I have had the pleasure and privilege of having worked in Inverurie since 1984, but prior to joining DM Hall, I spent ten years working in the Local Authority sector, with six and a half years in Grampian Region Assessors Department, based in St Nicholas House, and three and a half years in Aberdeen City Council Estates Department.

Since coming out to Inverurie, I have been involved with Inverurie Business Association almost continuously throughout the period, and became heavily involved in the Business Association around the time that John Glover reenergised the association. We conducted a business survey at the time, with some grant support from the Local Authority, which did highlight a lot of issues that the town required to address, but sadly most of these we are still talking about today. After leaving Inverurie Round Table, I was one of the founder members of the Inverurie Environmental Improvement Group, and for the last 14 or 15 years have been active in supporting the enhancement to the floral displays around the town.

Over the last three of so years, I was an active member of the working group who promoted the successful Inverurie BID, and although I have recently stepped away from the board, I am still keen to ensure that the BID is successful going forward.



DM Hall LLP, a Limited Liability Partnership registered in Scotland with Registration number SC301144  
Registered office, 17 Conistorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 5DD.

A full list of members can be obtained from the Head Office, 17 Conistorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 5DD. Tel: 0131 477 6000. Fax: 0131 477 6016.

Aberdeen, Ayr, Bridge of Ailsa, Cumbernauld, Cupar, Dunfermline, Dundee, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Egin, Falkirk, Galashiels, Glasgow (North and South), Hamilton, Inverness, Inverurie, Irvine, Kirkcaldy, Livingston, Musselburgh, Oban, Paisley, Perth, Peterhead, Stirling.

64 Market Place  
Inverurie  
AB51 3XN  
DX520777  
T: 01467 624393  
F: 01467 622742  
www.dmhall.co.uk

Regulated by RICS

I did actually raise at one of the early working group meetings and even more recently at one of the BID operational meetings, that we had to find a suitable alternative use for Market Place School.

Through all of the contacts that I have made over the years, I am well aware of the particular shortage of space for third sector groups in particular, with many community groups such as the Orchestra and Drama Groups having to make use of whatever space they can actually find to rehearse and practice. I have no doubt that there would be a large number of community groups who would be able to make use of the space and the accommodation available within the former Market Place School.

In the earlier part of my career with Aberdeen City Council, one of the projects that I was involved in managing, was the Fredrick Street School Development. This was a former school, which was no longer required for educational purposes, where the City Council utilised the space to promote, encourage and support new business ventures. In addition to a strong demand for space by community groups, I do believe that there would be a long term demand for space to support small start up businesses.

The business market has changed, and at the moment new businesses are probably being operated by the owners from either a back room in their house, or a shed or garage at the bottom of the garden. However, scaling up a business to normal retail or office type premises, can be a daunting and financially crippling exercise. We really do need to see something in between. That was the whole purpose of the Fredrick Street School Development, and I believe using Market Place School in a similar manner to even a small extent could help the future of our community as a whole. The building may no longer be suitable for modern educational purposes, but that does not mean that the building should be demolished and the ground turned into a car park. This would be an act of sheer folly, and would be little more than vandalism.

I believe that there have been numerous previous proposals including residential development, but the latest one to turn the space into a car park in my opinion simply wouldn't work. The existing access, which we currently utilise to get access to our office car park, is far from satisfactory. Any alternative access off Wallace Road, I think would also be fraught with issues. As I understand it, the proposal to convert Market Place School into a car park, is to facilitate the council headquarters/office development at the back of Inverurie Town Hall. Surely, the answer here is not to demolish a building which would have a viable future life for an alternative user, but rather to invest money into the enhancement of the car parking at the new transport interchange by the station.

In my humble opinion as a Chartered Surveyor, I believe that the planning authorities and council need to make a decision as to what sort of town centre we want to see in the future. I am firmly of the opinion that a town centre cannot survive on purely Charity Shops, Coffee Shops, and Hairdressers. The changed business reality, and the loss of high street businesses, means that we have to find an alternative way of encouraging footfall within the town centre. If the existing businesses in the town centre decline and die, then there will be no need for car parking.

In short, I would fully support the retention of the Market Place School, for use as community and/or small business hub facilities, and any alternative use of the site, should be a last resort.

I cannot support the demolition of the existing Market Place School buildings, the clearance of the site, and the formation of a car park. The space offered by Market Place School is required by the community and the community should be supported in whatever way possible by the Local Authority to make sure that the facility is retained for community use.

I hope this letter is of some assistance, but if there are any aspects of my comments that you feel you would be best enhanced, I would be more than happy to continue to support your proposal for the future use of Market Place School.





[REDACTED]  
The Garioch Partnership  
1st Floor, Wyness Hall  
Jackson Street  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB

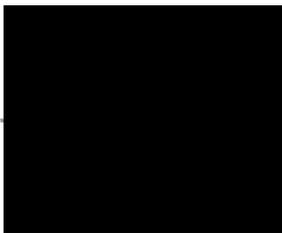
18 July 2018

[REDACTED]  
**RE: Asset transfer request for Market Place Primary School**

The Inverurie Business Association Committee (IBA) is pleased to support this proposal as not only will it increase town centre footfall but reinforce our social fabric and enhance community resilience. The provision for business start-ups is very welcome, and the central location appears to lend itself to a wide range of community uses currently restricted by the unavailability or lack of suitable accommodation.

A rapidly changing retail sector makes additional and more diversified town centre activities highly desirable. We have every confidence this proposal will bring more people in, especially given current public transport improvements adding to the accessibility of Inverurie town centre. With constraints on local authority spending a third sector hub to provide community support must also be beneficial to many, particularly those who may be disadvantaged.

We applaud this initiative by the Garioch Partnership under the Community Asset Transfer legislation, and trust Aberdeenshire Council will recognise the need for this facility and look on their application favourably.



IBA Hub, 1a High St, Inverurie  
Aberdeenshire AB51 3QA

31<sup>st</sup> July 2018

The Garioch Partnership  
1st Floor, Wyness Hall  
Jackson Street  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB



[REDACTED]

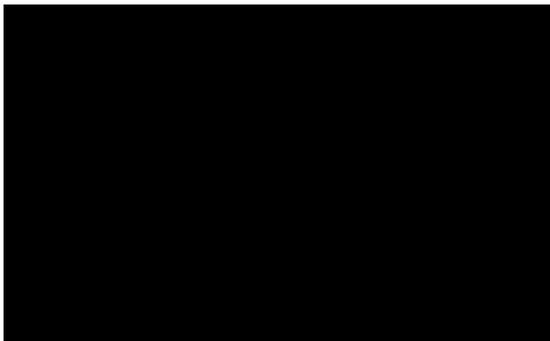
### **Asset Transfer of Market Place Primary School to TGP**

As a member of the partnership, Port Elphinstone Community House (PECH) has received invaluable support from TGP over the years not only financially but also in keeping up to date with funding opportunities, training and best practice in how we operate. When we heard of the above proposal at the TGP AGM, we were fully in support. To keep the building in public use, as a hub for third sector, the community and small business start-ups in the middle of the town we believe will strengthen the 3rd sector and the key role it plays in supporting the community.

PECH would also like to see the partnership continue to develop and grow. PECH would benefit from a community hub which hosts an IT room where members could obtain support in preparing promotional literature and social media training.

PECH also agrees that TGP could offer our communities new and exciting opportunities to come together in affordable, accessible space. At PECH we often get contacted by new groups looking for space but PECH is a very small venue and cannot therefore accommodate. We believe that in Inverurie it can be difficult for user groups to find larger venues, particularly for children's groups.

We wish TGP all the best in its application and look forward to receiving up-dates on progress.



**1 Pinewood House, Elphinstone Road, Port Elphinstone,  
Inverurie AB51 3UX**

**Tel: 01467 625206** [REDACTED]

**[www.pechonline.co.uk](http://www.pechonline.co.uk)**

Port Elphinstone Community House is a Registered Scottish Charity  
SCO 35192

We Are INverurie Ltd  
Top Floor, 1a High Street, Inverurie AB51 3QA  
07852 617092  
bidmanager@weareinverurie.co.uk



9<sup>th</sup> August 2018



The Garioch Partnership  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Wyness Hall  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB

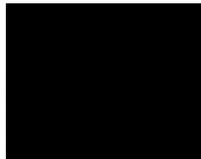


We Are Inverurie Ltd are pleased to support the Garioch Partnership in their application to retain Market Place School under a community asset transfer.

We feel that this would serve the community well as a hub for the third sector in Inverurie.

The provision for business start-ups in a central location in the town is also a very attractive part of the proposal.

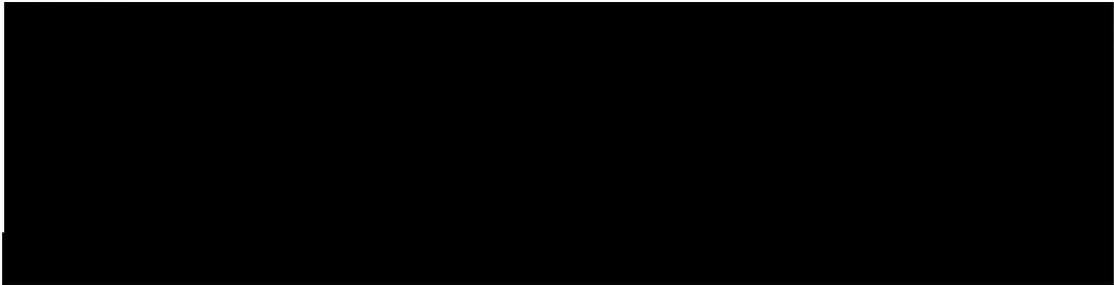
We hope Aberdeenshire Council will look on their transaction favourably and that common sense will prevail in the end.



BID Manager

We Are INverurie Ltd



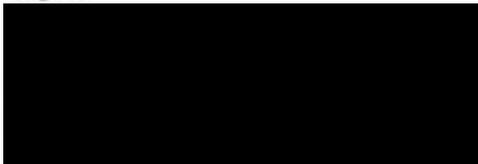


It was nice to meet you today in Inverurie.

Just dropping you a line so that you have my email contact.

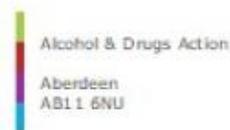
Very much interested in the Market School development, and you have our support and interest in the project. We are currently based in Chelsea House and likely to be there until March 2019 as it stands, but very open to moving to a community facing facility should that arise. From our perspective there is very much a demand for such provision in Inverurie, it is a very busy hub for us, and our staff who cover Inverurie, Kintore, Banchory, Huntly and Ellon all use it widely.

Regards



Web: [www.alcoholanddrugsaction.org.uk](http://www.alcoholanddrugsaction.org.uk)  
Tel: 01224 577120 | Mob:

Alcohol & Drugs Action is a registered charity. Scottish Charity Number SC013582.



Alcohol - Do you know your score? Click the pic to take our quiz!



¶

¶

FightFit-Fitness-Ltd¶

31a-Kirk-Street¶

Oldmeldrum¶

Aberdeenshire¶

AB51-0DF¶

Dear-Sir/Madam,¶

¶

In-addition-to-my-comments-on-the-online-petition-for-the-Asset-Transfer-request-by-The-Garioch-Partnership-for-Market-Place-Primary-School-in-Inverurie,-I-would-like-to-add-my-further-support.¶

¶

As-a-community-based-exercise-instructor,-I-have-struggled-to-get-suitably-accessible-and-affordable-venues-within-Inverurie-town-centre.-I-have-used-the-community-space-within-Tesco,-but-times-there-are-limited-both-in-terms-of-availability-and-ongoing-use,-as-the-space-can-only-be-used-for-a-year-at-a-time-by-an-individual-group.¶

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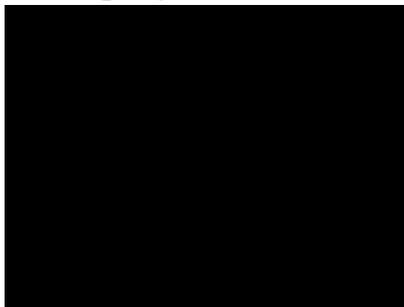
The-classes-I-run-are-aimed-at-people-of-all-abilities,-but-I-do-also-run-specialised-classes-for-people-with-disabilities--covering-all-aspects-of-disability--physical,-mental,-learning-impairments-along-with-recovery-from-illness-as-well.-Therefore-a-venue-that-is-welcoming-and-easy-to-get-to-is-of-vital-importance.-For-many-participants,-a-working-school-based-venue-would-be-unsuitable-due-to-noise,-fear-of-judgement-of-pupils,-former-trauma-within-a-school-setting,-and-difficulties-with-access.¶

¶

Therefore,-a-community-hub-where-classes-are-offered-in-the-building-as-part-of-a-range-of-other-community-based-activities-would-be-ideal,-as-it-reduces-stigma-of-accessing-service,-reduces-social-isolation-and-supports-the-development-of-peer-support-and-friendship-networks.¶

¶

Warm-regards,¶



Director¶

FightFit-Fitness-Limited-is-registered-in-Scotland,-No-SC457189¶

¶

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## Support and Requirements for TGP 3rd sector Hub

HFSA is a local consultancy based in Inverurie, the company currently has two full-time staff and three Associates and works with clients both locally and internationally, including a company working in power generation in Saudi Arabia and Oman, offshore on drilling rigs and platforms and the transition of assets, as well as bakeries and social enterprises.

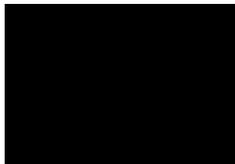
HFSA is looking to set up a local training centre in Inverurie to offer a wide range of training courses for local businesses and individuals. These courses cover a wide range of subjects including; Risk assessment, H&S legislation, Accident investigation, Auditing, OHSAS 1800, Business improvement i.e. WCM, TPM, TQM, Team building and Human Factors.

We have launched a community interest company (CIC) called sector3safety and are looking to provide free or reduced cost support to social enterprises and charities. Of course, this support must be cost efficient and enable the trustees to manage safety in an easy way.

HFSA and sector3safety are also looking to run seminars and invite local and international speakers to the Hub to cover a number of subjects.

HFSA and sector3safety will provide equipment and funding to set up a training room in the Hub and will look at weekly bookings of at least 1 day with a view to expanding this as the business progresses.

More information about Human Factors Safety Associates is available from the website - [www.hfsa.co.uk](http://www.hfsa.co.uk)





Inverurie & District  
Men's Shed  
Unit 19, Harlaw Way  
Inverurie AB51 4SG  
Scottish Charity No SC 044965



The Garioch Partnership  
(via email)



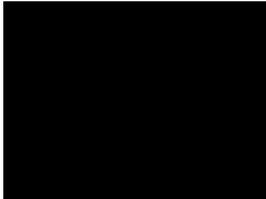
#### Support for transfer of the former Market Place School, Inverurie

The Trustees' of Inverurie & District Men's Shed decided, at our board meeting yesterday, to express our support to The Garioch Partnership in your application to make a 3<sup>rd</sup> sector hub of the former Market Place school, Inverurie.

It would be good to be able to look forward to the possibilities that a transfer of this unique asset will offer charities and community groups in Inverurie, including IDMS.

I am confident that many of our 87 members would like to join the online petition and show their support also.

Wishing the TGP every possible success.



website  
[www.inveruriemensshed.co.uk](http://www.inveruriemensshed.co.uk)



email  
[inveruriemensshed@gmail.com](mailto:inveruriemensshed@gmail.com)

## **Market Place School Community Hub**

We have a number of community groups in Inverurie that work hard to support improvement in lifestyle and wellbeing. At present these are scattered across various locations. There are many benefits to bringing these together into one central site.

We want to support integration and promote resilience. Bringing people together of different backgrounds, and with different needs helps to break down barriers. It also promotes understanding of the needs and challenges of each group. In some groups members feel that they would not be accepted by the wider community. Bringing groups together and facilitating contact between them reduces these concerns and enables links to be formed.

Often communities that have challenges with one aspect of life have developed resilience and coping strategies in other areas. Sharing of skills and knowledge produces both practical results and promotes self-esteem. Recognition of challenges overcome and improved self esteem are key to mental wellbeing.

Bringing community groups together in one place also allows the support teams within these groups to meet and share ideas. It enables sharing of communal space for events and joint activities that would not be possible without combining resources.

Very importantly, a central hub supporting a range of groups enables discreet access to activities and support. This is essential for participation in some types of recovery and support groups. Any group where attendance may give rise to judgement, criticism or any form of pressure not to attend, benefits from a space where multiple activities take place.

So, a community hub enables several small groups to benefit from sharing knowledge, experience and skills. Communal space such as larger meeting rooms or halls can be effectively used by all the groups in the hub. And discreet access to support systems is supported.

Location of the hub is important. Many members of community support groups are reliant on public transport. Easy access by bus, rail and on foot is key to success.

We have the opportunity in Inverurie to bring multiple support groups together and create benefits for all involved. Supporting the sectors of the community that need help and promoting recovery and integration reaps benefits for the whole community.



Steps Into Wellness



WL/PL

25th October 2018

Margaret Jane Cardno  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Gordon House  
Blackhall Road  
Inverurie

05 NOV 2018

ABERDEENSHIRE  
COUNCIL

Dear Madam

**Appeal by The Garioch Partnership, Market Place School**

I write in SUPPORT of the Garioch Partnership for asset transfer of former Market Place School.

Based on the information provided to the Garioch Area Committee the decision to refuse was flawed on two accounts.

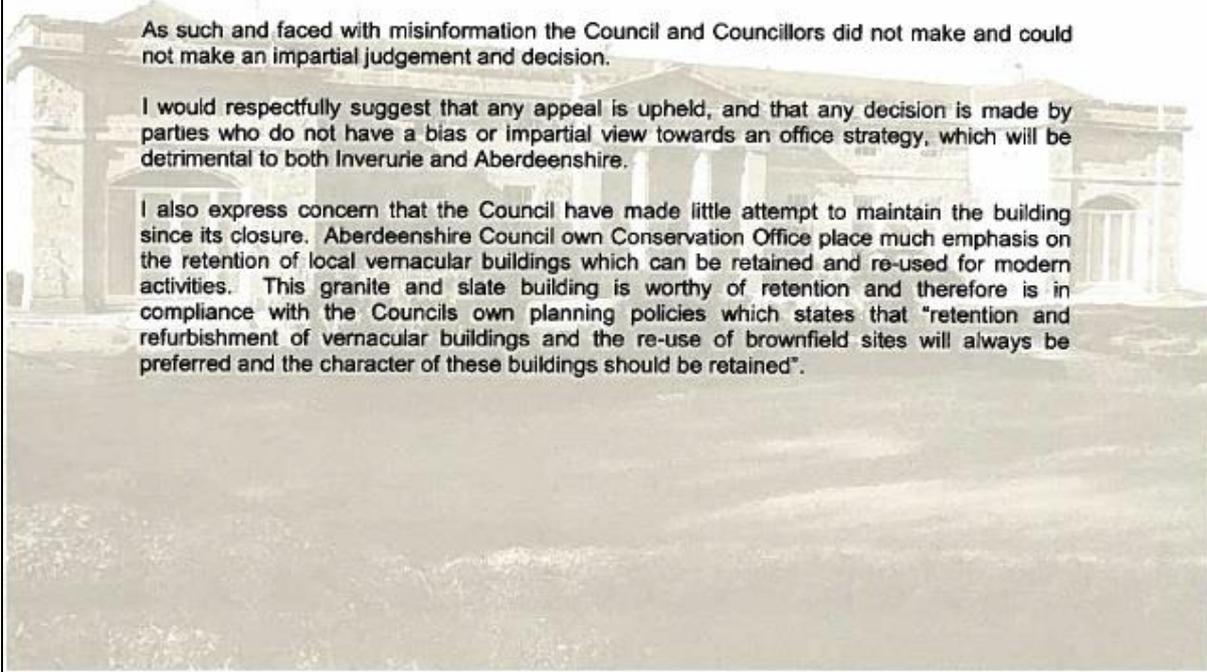
The valuation report and land ownership plan presented to the Councillors was incorrect and included the playing field which is outwith the ownership and control of the Council and was not included in The Garioch Partnership request.

Aberdeenshire Council have agreed an office strategy which included an extension to the Town Hall to accommodate 400 staff which included the demolition of Market Place School to provide parking for these offices.

As such and faced with misinformation the Council and Councillors did not make and could not make an impartial judgement and decision.

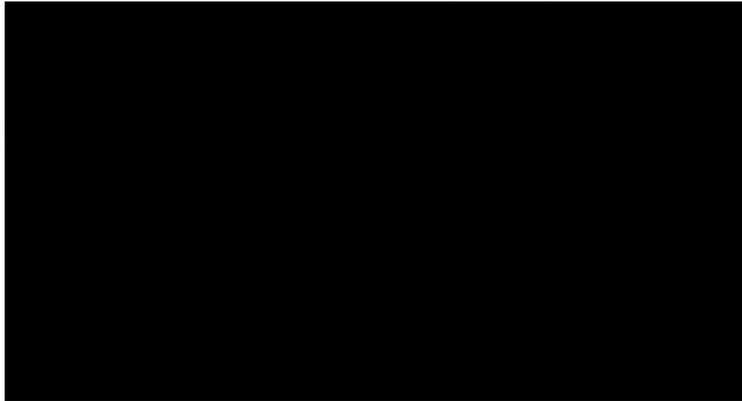
I would respectfully suggest that any appeal is upheld, and that any decision is made by parties who do not have a bias or impartial view towards an office strategy, which will be detrimental to both Inverurie and Aberdeenshire.

I also express concern that the Council have made little attempt to maintain the building since its closure. Aberdeenshire Council own Conservation Office place much emphasis on the retention of local vernacular buildings which can be retained and re-used for modern activities. This granite and slate building is worthy of retention and therefore is in compliance with the Councils own planning policies which states that "retention and refurbishment of vernacular buildings and the re-use of brownfield sites will always be preferred and the character of these buildings should be retained".





I would therefore suggest that Aberdeenshire Council adhere to their own policies **ALLOW** the appeal and transfer the property to The Garioch Partnership.



14 February 2019

The Garioch Partnership  
First Floor Wyness Hall  
Jackson Street  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB  
[REDACTED]

Our Ref.: CFH/EC

Your Ref.:  
[REDACTED]

**MARKET PLACE SCHOOL**

I would like to take this opportunity to wholeheartedly and fully support the Garioch Partnership, in your asset transfer request to take over the former Market Place School for use by the Partnership and other community groups.

The school may be redundant for educational purposes, but in my opinion, this iconic building in the centre of Inverurie must be retained for community use.

I am astonished and disappointed that Aberdeenshire Council have refused your request, and hope that you are successful with your appeal to the Scottish Government against this decision.

It was interesting to meet with you on Thursday morning, 14 February 2019, and to be able to walk round the school buildings. It is sad to see a building that my Daughter had 3 wonderful years at, being left to fall into a state of disrepair. The fact that the Local Authority have permitted this vandalism to occur by failing to take appropriate steps to secure the premises, is astonishing. Nevertheless, although there has been some vandalism, particularly around the roof where flashings and lead work have been removed, and there is quite a number of dislodged and slipped slates, I am of the opinion that the roof structures are actually not in that bad a condition, but will obviously require some work to retain the building in a wind and watertight condition. There has obviously been some vandalism to internal pipe work, but nothing that can't be reinstated. There are cosmetic



DM Hall LLP, a Limited Liability Partnership registered in Scotland with Registration number SO301144  
Registered office, 17 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6DD.

A full list of members can be obtained from the Head Office, 17 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6DD. Tel: 0131 477 6000. Fax: 0131 477 6016.

Aberdeen, Ayr, Bridge of Allan, Cupar, Dumfries, Dundee, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Elgin, Falkirk, Galashiels, Glasgow (North and South), Hamilton, Inverness, Inverurie, Irvine, Kirkcaldy, Livingston, Musselburgh, Oban, Paisley, Perth, Peterhead, Stirling.

64 Market Place  
Inverurie  
AB51 3XN  
DX520777  
T: 01467 624393  
F: 01467 622742  
www.dmhall.co.uk

Regulated by RICS

issues as a consequence of the vandalism, but nothing that can't be resolved. In short, I am of the opinion that the view that the building is in such a poor condition as to make it unviable to repair and restore is simply not correct.

As I understand it, the Council's objection to the community transfer request, is primarily based on the premise that their plans to construct a new office building to replace Gordon House at the rear of the Town Hall, can only proceed on the basis that Market Place School is demolished in order to provide the space as car parking for Council staff. Clearly, there are alternatives, and in my opinion, a car park could easily be accommodated at the transport hub interchange at the station or even on the site adjacent to Marks and Spencers. There is in my opinion, no need to demolish Market Place School simply to make it into a car park.

As far as I am aware, no traffic impact assessment of this proposal has been carried out, and in my opinion, the accesses into the school site, would not make it particularly suitable for such a proposal. I was astonished to learn this morning that the contract to demolish the school has in fact already been tendered for, as I wasn't even aware that a planning application to demolish the school had been submitted. As an adjoining land owner, I would have thought that I would have been informed of such a proposal, particularly since it may impact on access to our own premises.

In the early part of my professional career, I spent almost 10 years working in Aberdeen City, 6 years in the Assessors Office valuing properties for domestic and commercial rating purposes, and nearly 4 years with Aberdeen City Council in their Estates Department. The reason I mention this is that at that time, one of the jobs I was involved with was the management of an embryonic business centre at Fredrick Street School. This bear in mind was more than 35 years ago. It was hugely successful, and allowed a business to take an intermediate step from the garage, garden shed or bedroom, before committing to the expenditure by taking on fixed premises. That step is a huge one for most, and I believe is at the root cause of so many start up failures.

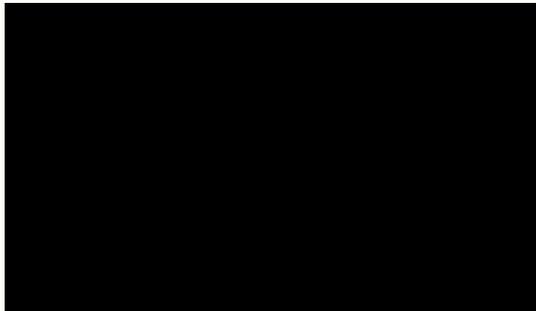
As well as using the buildings for social enterprise groups, I would be of the opinion that there will be a reasonable level of demand to support embryonic businesses within the Inverurie community. Most of the small back street workshop, stores, and premises, in and around Inverurie have long since gone. Buildings being demolished or converted, into typically residential use. Inverurie has seen a huge change, and has lost many businesses over the years, through a failure of the planning system in the main to create the potential within the community. From my own personal experience, having sat in a number of local plan enquiries, I am tired of hearing the same old arguments being trotted out. i.e there is no demand.

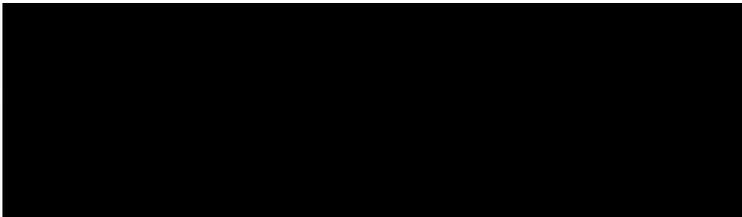
In one planning enquiry, a Planning Officer actually stated that because there had been no take up in the last 10 years of industrial commercial land, that equated to no demand. In reality, it was the lack of supply which meant there was nothing to take up. Personally, I have been involved in a number of groups in and around the town in my 35 years here, including Round Table, Inverurie Business Association, Inverurie Environmental Improvement Group, and more recently I served as a member of the steering committee and board for the Inverurie BID. The future of all of our communities, rests on

encouraging and supporting businesses both new and old. There has been a lot of commentary in various quarters, relative to rates. Unfortunately, business rates as a form of tax in my opinion is now defunct. It serves none of the basic requirements of any taxation system. It has to be applicable to all and it has to be fairly and reasonably assessed. 35 or 40 years ago, one couldn't run a business without having fixed premises, it was almost impossible. New technology, and particularly the internet means that more and more businesses are trying to avoid carrying the overheads of fixed premises. Until such time as governments can square that circle to ensure that all business pays a reasonable contribution to the tax raised, then the considerable pressure that we are seeing on businesses, particularly on the High Street, is just going to continue to grow. Although Inverurie to some extent has bucked the national trend, there is considerable pressure on our businesses because of the changing economic climate and the influence of new technologies. All businesses have to make a contribution to the tax requirements, including those businesses that trade out of the back of a van, or from the "cloud".

The council's plans to "demolish" Market Place School, and turn it into a Council staff car park, is not widely known within the community, and I predict there would be considerable disquiet amongst the population of Inverurie when this proposal becomes known. In my opinion, there appears to be undue haste here on the part of the Local Authority to kill off the community asset transfer process, and demolish the school. At the very least, the Council's proposals should be suspended pending an opportunity for cool and calm reflection, and of course community consultation.

I hope that my comments and observations are of some assistance. I sincerely hope that at the very least, the appeal to the Scottish Government will convince Aberdeenshire Council to rethink their whole approach to this matter.





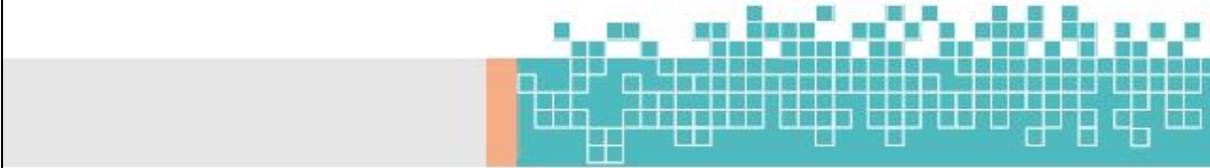
17<sup>th</sup> February 2019

To whom it may concern,

I am writing concerning the potential future use of Inverurie Marketplace School as a community hub. In January 2016 I led a team from Samaritan's Purse which is a Christian, International Development charity, to support the community and local churches following the serious flooding. I retired as a staff member of Samaritan's Purse at the end of 2018, so this letter is in my personal capacity.

When we arrived, the community led response had already started and we met Mrs Fiona Cooper in the British Legion hall. She led a small group of volunteers from the community and churches who had come together at a time of crisis. Together they established and ran an impressive hub of activities that involved providing a safe place for people to attend with simple catering provided, a place to receive guidance and signposting and a place to gather and distribute practical equipment, donated from local business and individuals, for cleaning out damaged properties. Clothing was also donated in a similar manner which provided some relief when households had been devastated. Our small team of 6 was privileged to work alongside Fiona and the volunteers to provide practical support where needed.

What was obvious was the vital role the community played during that crisis and how valuable it was to adapt existing community activities to the situation being faced as the community already had the trust and respect. Leaders like Fiona were needed to organise and galvanise this exceptional response.





It was also critical to the success of the activities to have a facility available, such as the British Legion Hall, and it was fortuitous that the Legion management committee were able to release the facility for the time required and with no notice.

Having facilities available all year round, such as the Marketplace school, would obviously benefit during a critical time but more importantly would provide opportunity for the entire community to work together all the time. These would need to be mapped out against the needs and opportunities but in so doing community cohesion would be increased because of the relationships developed and the trust established. The local authority is an integral part of any community and should be fully involved in developing and/or supporting such initiatives. Having a secure facility to host and enable this work is an essential part as it releases and enables initiatives to blossom.

In writing this letter for Fiona to submit my hope is that it will add some background to the business case for the future use of the property.

Sincerely,



## Foodbank

The community hub would be a fantastic asset to the operations of the foodbank. To access the foodbank people require to obtain a red voucher from a referral partner. Referral partners work along side the foodbank and can offer services which the foodbank cannot. For example money saving tips in relation to utility bills, benefit information and health care assistance. Being able to access these services in one building makes it very easy for people to obtain the help they require without travelling to different locations. In addition, its central location makes it so much easier to access and for the people to use public service transport to and from their home. The foodbank give out approximately 3 days supply of food but people can also obtain additional items like toiletries during their visit. The other bonus of having the services located in one building, is that they can easily communicate thus providing the best of service. This is crucial when a family requires multiple foodbank parcels due to on-going issues with benefits for example.

Finally, as the building would be multi-purpose, the stigma attached to reaching out for help is minimised, resulting in more people using the service.

## Community Resilience

In 2016, Garioch experienced the effects of Storm Frank, which unleashed horrendous flooding. The affect on the Inverurie, Kintore and Kemnay was so great, that it was clear very early on that some sort of support was required. The Garioch and Inverurie Flood support Group set up in the Legion in Inverurie. This proved to be an excellent location due to the fact it was in the centre of Inverurie. The hall was large and able to cope with the overwhelming volume of clothes, shoes, bedding and miscellaneous items which had been donated by the public and companies. The central location allowed people to visit easily no matter what mode of transport they had. One of the main purposes of this venue, was to provide somewhere for a person who had been affected by flooding to have a cup of tea and a chat. In essence, empty their heads and make lists of what they needed to do and when. In addition, they were then able to go round the hall and help themselves to what they needed. The facebook page was set up and proved an amazing communication tool for publishing vital communications such as items which should be donated and items that we not required as well as details of where help was located. Many of the people had no insurance and therefore facebook provided a platform where large items such as furniture and white goods could be identified and located. Communication was key. A lot of companies supported the flood volunteers by providing free donations/services. A man with a van became crucial to take the items to the different areas. The coming together of groups and services for the community was astounding. An amazing amount of fundraisers and acts of kindness were done throughout garioch. The group also provided help in dealing with difficult insurance companies through the local MP. For 2 hours every day for over 6 weeks, a representative from his office was available at the Legion for consultation. The volunteers help was incredible and they excelled at helping those that were flooded and also their families who were struggling to cope. The group instigated an investigation into why a housing association had not provided appropriate help to its residents and kept the pressure on until those families were properly cared for. Many of the residents were relocated to areas out with Inverurie and the group was involved in getting help and assistance to relocate back. One particular case, the group managed to get a house previously assigned to demolition, revamped into a habitable home, by arranging for specified donations and repairs.

As you will see from the above, the community response to the flood emergency was incredible. There was no time for a community engagement process to see if this was a service that was required. The need for this flood support was just an idea brought about by concerned volunteers that nothing was being provided by the council. Not only did we provide a service for Inverurie, Kemnay and Kintore, but other areas such as Ellon and Methlick were welcomed. The volunteers did what they could and sign-posted if they could not provide the help required. The main message to help no matter which area you were from.

Once the community hub is established, I believe that the community will provide the same support and usage but in a much more controlled manner than the fly by the seat of our pants scenario that the volunteers found themselves in 2016.

One of the main issues faced by the group was lack of dehumidifiers, storage of blankets, sleeping bags, large brushes and other tools for use in the clearing up phase post flood. Hub would be used by residents in Kemnay and Kintore with resilience plans working together.

It is difficult to evidence, Community use as the groups we will attract will not commit until they have something to commit to in case they jeopardise their current lease etc. With regard to public access to new Inverurie Academy Campus, the same assurances were given in respect of the new primary School in Kintore and there have not materialised in any shape or form. The community council is currently fighting to get access which they were promised at the time the school was being built.

#### Community Funding

Dawn has an extraordinary knowledge of filling in funding applications, along with the community's incredible ability to generate monies, it seems unfounded and incorrect that the council can raise funding as an issue with the business plan. Examples of community funding are Floods 2016 amount in excess of £40K and more recently Kintore Fundraising team of £12K in approximately 21/2 months for Christmas lights appeal.

Finally at the time TGP announced this plan, I remember the overwhelming support at the meeting, was this minuted at the time, as surely this would be evidence of community engagement and support.

## Appendix 4: Potential users

1. I would be interested in a hire of the hall area. 2 to maybe 3 times a week at lease an hour each time to teach my classes.
2. FYI, Inverurie Community Council tried to book the town hall for a “group fest” and was told it was fully booked till Feb 2019.. we only got a Sept date due to cancellation..
3. Following our telephone conversation regarding the possible use of Market Place Primary School gym, I am writing to formally request it’s use on behalf of the children, young people and adults that are currently members of Inverurie Boxing Club.  
Inverurie Boxing Club has been running for over one year now and already we have been in three different venues. Currently we are training out of Inverurie Academy gym hall, which is a good gym for our purposes, however the main problem we have is that we do not have any storage to keep our equipment. At present we train 3 days a week, if we had access to Market Place School this would be raised to 5 days a week, which would allow us to better separate the children and adults. We currently have a roll of 50 children and young people and 18 adults. Further to this having a dedicated venue would allow the club to invest in a ring.  
We are part of Boxing Scotland and as such we are continually participating in courses run by them. It would also make sense to use the classrooms of Market Place School when these courses are being run.
4. We would be interested in moving into the hub so that we were in the heart of the community and alongside other 3rd Sector organisations,
5. Sounds like a fantastic idea to keep it open for community use. I'd definitely consider holding my workshops there. Not many other options for me in Inverurie.
6. We are looking for a new rehearsal venue for our expanding community band. This would be perfect.
7. Winter bowling two days per week, would be in interested hall size/costs?
8. An accessible community centre with a gym would be nice, even if we had to crowdsource \$ to buy gym equipment. I would be interested in teaching dance classes there-tap, ballet, jazz, ect for all age groups kids-older adults.
9. I am involved with an organisation which could consider using part of the facility 2 or 3 times per week. In addition, the site may be suitable as a co-location opportunity for an existing 3rd sector organisation based elsewhere in Inverurie.
10. We would use this as a fundraising facility
11. Twice a week, maybe more depending on the facilities available
12. Probably 2 or 3 times a week

13. Trussell Trust Food Bank will welcome a joint office/warehouse approach within the Garioch Partnership project
14. I'm a photographer and would love a place to use in Inverurie with sensible costs.
15. Would be terrific for Camera club meetings for around 50 members. Been looking for a space to use as a photography studio, with some kind of secure storage for studio equipment.
16. Inverurie is a hub of activity which is great! yet often there isn't enough venues available to host community events. We have a number of initiatives we would like to provide for the community. We are looking to launch a Mainly Music group in the Autumn, a weekly youth meeting and community support groups such as the coffee and craft group that currently runs at the Tesco community room. Inverurie has the potential for so much more, but is limited by the lack of community venues, this proposal would be a great benefit to the wider community of Inverurie. Be great to see this happen.
17. We have a pottery group at present in the Community Centre and would love it if we could have space at Market Place School. As at the Community Centre at present, the space could be shared with other arts groups. Also I think a community cafe would be a great way for new people to feel included in the community.
18. Personally I sometimes organise meetings/trainings and this space would be ideal for that. So central and a good choice of room sizes.
19. We are a very small community group that meets weekly. Space here could be ideal for us as a group. Plus for committee meetings.
20. The Gaitherin could make use of the school to hold bi-annual, week long traditional music, drama and dance courses for local young folk during the Easter and October holidays. The central location and layout makes it ideal for us and we could possibly make use of it throughout the year for music/youth work related activities. We also meet as a committee and could use this space for our monthly meetings.
21. I'd like to hold and attend groups at an Inverurie hub. I.e. Arts / yoga / Community forums. If it had a cafe I would use it to get lunch when I'm at work at Inspire Soaps.
22. We are very much in support of this and would want to base our charity in the building
23. I'm a member of a childminding group and we may use the facilities for weekly meetings, if the space was affordable, we may also use it for facilitating training
24. Garioch Women for Change will use the school as a weekly venue for meetings and additionally for workshops, exhibitions and for fundraising events.

Additionally, we will offer support to other users and groups proposing to use the centre and will assist in any way we can other parties in the maintenance of the fabric of the building.

## Appendix 5: Online petition

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/market-place-school-as-a-3rd-sector-hub/>

As of 23<sup>rd</sup> September: 264 signatures of support and 93 comments.

### Summary of comments:

Suggesting a permanent user group	6
Suggesting regular user group (weekly or more)	9
Suggesting occasional use by a user group	7
Potential/suggested uses	33
General support	38
	93

### Full list of comments:

1. This is what is need in the area, a proper community hub for everyone at the heart of Inverurie
2. We would be interested in moving into the hub so that we were in the heart of the community and alongside other 3rd Sector organisations,
3. A fantastic idea to be used by the whole community and improve services for everyone.
4. Inverurie would benefit greatly from such a facility, its central location and opportunity to offer community space for groups and co-location of community services to meet ever increasing demand for support would help meet local demand and support partnership working to maximise resources, enable signposting and referrals and minimise waste and duplication of services.
5. Inverurie is a very community minded Town. This facility provides a hub for the community based services and is greatly needed.
6. Tremendous idea - this great place needs to be saved
7. I believe an accessible hub for partners would be an excellent resource for Inverurie
8. Sounds like a fantastic idea to keep it open for community use. I'd definitely consider holding my workshops there. Not many other options for me in Inverurie.
9. The building should be used not flattened
10. It would help bring the community together.

11. Good for the whole community.
12. We are looking for a new rehearsal venue for our expanding community band. This would be perfect.
13. This would be a fantastic resource for third sector organisations. It has the potential to really bring the community together in a shared space.
14. Would be ideal as a 3rd sector community hub like JIC, Here4you, Compass Point etc.
15. To be used as needed by the locals in Inverurie and the surrounding areas.
16. winter bowling two days per week, would be interested in hall size/costs?
17. An accessible community centre with a gym would be nice, even if we had to crowdsource \$ to buy gym equipment. I would be interested in teaching dance classes there-tap, ballet, jazz, ect for all age groups kids-older adults.
18. I am involved with an organisation which could consider using part of the facility 2 or 3 times per week. In addition, the site may be suitable as a co-location opportunity for an existing 3rd sector organisation based elsewhere in Inverurie.
19. As a digital tutor I support (mainly) older people in the local community and work alongside 3rd sector groups who are in touch with those who need digital support or advice. It can often be hard to find a space to offer this service. A Hub providing the Garioch area community with a central point for these 3rd sector organisations and services within an accessible venue within the town would be a real asset to Inverurie and the locality. The 'hub' model is already being considered or rolled out as the future way forward in many communities offering a way to bring together and engage with local people and/or meet with others who can provide support or even help seed opportunities for entrepreneurs. It has been shown that such collaborative spaces are welcomed by local residents and provide a range of sustainable benefits across the social, creative and health aspects of the community.
20. I think the central hub would bring visibility and more information about the many local organisations whom TGP support. Our organisation would benefit if this hub provides a shared resource base such as IT that can be accessed by all TGP members.
21. Ideal location
22. Think this would be an ideal space for a variety of groups and people to talk; share ideas and simply get to know one another. It could put a sense of community back into the heart of the town!
23. We would use this as a fundraising facility
24. Twice a week, maybe more depending on the facilities available

25. As a self-employed Instructor, I have found community facilities to hold classes is very limited in Inverurie so a community hub would be excellent
26. Not sure, I am activity co-ordinator at Urybank House on Wallace Road along with other commitments there as well as being on hand for babysitting my grandson
27. TGP hosts many meetings and conferences for volunteer groups like ours. It would be great if they had the Market Place School as a base.
28. Think this would be great space for community use and could become a fabulous asset
29. Probably 2 or 3 times a week
30. It would be wonderful to have a facility for the people in the Garioch to use. Well done!
31. Always need affordable meeting space! Inverurie is the most central place in Aberdeenshire with good transport links for shire-wide organisations.
32. Trussell Trust (Food Bank) will welcome a joint office/warehouse approach within the Garioch Partnership project
33. This development will open up many new opportunities for the local community, and we know from our experience in Banffshire, it will be the catalyst for growing community-led development in Garioch. Banffshire Partnership and Garioch Partnership are already used to sharing knowledge and experience, and we will readily do that in this development too.
34. This is needed in the community!
35. I fully support this proposal. I have worked with many community groups and charities in and around Inverurie over the years and many get stuck in their start-up or development due to lack of appropriate and affordable space to carry out their activities. If The Garioch Partnership were to run Market Place as a Third Sector Hub, many such groups would be able to flourish, further enhancing and supporting the lives of residents and visitors to Inverurie.
36. Inverurie desperately needs this facility and The Garioch Partnership are the ideal people to run such a hub as they are impartial and able to support any community group / member accessing the Hub. Even though we have spaces available for rent here at Fly Cup there are many enquiries we cannot accommodate for a variety of reasons and there are just not the type of spaces they need available in the town.
37. This will keep facilities and services right in the town centre and support the Garioch Partnership to continue its support throughout Garioch Area.
38. This is what the community needs

39. I'm a photographer and would love a place to use in Inverurie with sensible costs.
40. Inverurie certainly needs more affordable venue space for not-for-profit/community use so we'd be in favour of the development of this community hub.
41. It would be great to see Market Place Primary School continue to serve the community as a hub for local groups.
42. Children attending the Gaitherin would get so much from this, and would hopefully reduce costs associated to organise which would be fantastic for the organisers
43. Such facilities are greatly needed in the area
44. An essential resource for the community.
45. Fantastic idea which fits perfectly with the Scottish Government Communities Bill. Ticks all boxes!
46. I support the Garioch Partnerships use of this community asset. Inverurie would benefit from the use of this community space in many ways. Local business start-ups, affordable childcare and access to local charities to name but a few. I have been involved in several local charities over the past 20 years, to access information locally would support many groups and families in a practical way.
47. The Gaitherin is a charity event held twice a year which benefits over 200 local young people a year. We always rely on using secondary schools in the local area and sometimes this is a struggle to do. Having access to this school would mean guaranteed housing for our event each year.
48. Used to live in the town, most of my childhood nests in the hubs of the community and I'd hate to see such integral parts of everyone's lives repurposed or lost.
49. If the site was to be used for this purpose, which I am in favour of, it would have to be made clear to people using it that they must not park in Urybank's car park as this is needed for carers, residents and visitors and was abused frequently when the school was there.
50. A Garioch co-working space (however big or small) would be great for local start-ups.
51. Would be terrific for Camera club meetings for around 50 members. Been looking for a space to use as a photography studio, with some kind of secure storage for studio equipment.
52. This is an important step in helping people to get back on their feet, reducing the costs of maintaining all the different services in different buildings by co-locating can only help more people.

53. Inverurie is a hub of activity which is great! yet often there isn't enough venues available to host community events. We have a number of initiatives we would like to provide for the community. We are looking to launch a Mainly Music group in the Autumn, a weekly youth meeting and community support groups such as the coffee and craft group that currently runs at the Tesco community room. Inverurie has the potential for so much more, but is limited by the lack of community venues, this proposal would be a great benefit to the wider community of Inverurie. Be great to see this happen.
54. We have a pottery group at present in the Community Centre and would love it if we could have space at Market Place School. As at the Community Centre at present, the space could be shared with other arts groups. Also I think a community cafe would be a great way for new people to feel included in the community.
55. Personally I sometimes organise meetings/trainings and this space would be ideal for that. So central and a good choice of room sizes.
56. We are a very small community group that meets weekly. Space here could be ideal for us as a group. Plus for committee meetings.
57. The Gaitherin could make use of the school to hold bi-annual, week long traditional music, drama and dance courses for local young folk during the Easter and October holidays. The central location and layout makes it ideal for us and we could possibly make use of it throughout the year for music/youth work related activities. We also meet as a committee and could use this space for our monthly meetings.
58. Local artists could perhaps hire working space.
59. Could be ideal for rehearsal space. At a time when Town Hall costs are rising dramatically lots of groups might find this a welcome alternative.
60. I'm sure this would support lots of voluntary and community activity in Inverurie
61. We need to have central, accessible venues for local people to access the support and services they need. A central hub is vital for our community.
62. I'd like to hold and attend groups at an Inverurie hub. I.e. Arts / yoga / Community forums. If it had a cafe I would use it to get lunch when I'm at work at Inspire Soaps.
63. It would be very useful to do discussions and workshops for mind-set, goal setting and EFT. It has access so all would be able to attend. eg. those with disabilities and wheel chairs etc.

64. Be great for Inverurie to have somewhere to go for a variety of different groups such as support groups/social meet ups for adults/teenagers and also all different groups for families too, like peep groups, free crèche to give opportunity for parents with low income to attend courses such as first aid etc or just somewhere for mums/dad's to get together for a cuppa and let little ones play.
65. The community would be well served to keep this valued centre available.
66. I'm moving out of the area but feel this would be a good central point for groups and people looking for somewhere to start up.
67. I would use the hub as often as I could, especially if it was used to run groups for social skills, anxiety, isolation etc, it would be good to have somewhere to come together and share support for each other
68. Unsure if I would personally use it. I would love to see the transformation of space as it used to be my workplace and it would be extremely beneficial to see it being used to give back to the community
69. I feel Inverurie could benefit from more community space as many groups are constrained on offerings just now due to space limitations in size or availability.
70. I'd also welcome hot desk style space for start-ups and business people who are meeting clients in Inverurie.
71. I wouldn't be using the facility but think it's an excellent use for the old school.
72. But know this would be a great asset to Inverurie.
73. Please make Market Place School useful to Inverurie!!
74. We are very much in support of this and would want to base our charity in the building
75. Members of our communities may use the facility in the future depending on what is offered there and when.
76. Much needed facility, obvious and sustainable solution. Any councillor worth their position should fight for this.
77. I'm a member of a childminding group and we may use the facilities for weekly meetings, if the space was affordable, we may also use it for facilitating training
78. Accessible, affordable community facilities are essential for so many 3rd sector and voluntary groups to use, support a wide range of populations and vulnerable groups and make a positive impact the larger community. The Garioch Partnership is a fantastic interface to facilitate this. Good luck!
79. My children are older now but we used to use the Community Centre three times a week for activities. The area needs a proper replacement for this facility.

80. A noble and practical cause,
81. I use the Community Centre for weekly pottery classes
82. Much needed space for Inverurie and surrounding area!
83. when we need one
84. I use the Community Centre for weekly pottery classes. I have also used it for painting class and took my young son to the mother and toddler group. This would be a valuable resource for the community when the current centre closes as there are no other comparable facilities in Inverurie.
85. We use the creche every week at the community centre and it's been invaluable for both me and my child, there doesn't appear to be any thought for it continuing once the new campus is set up
86. A much needed resource for Inverurie, if I can help in anyway.
87. A venue in the heart of the community for the community - don't rip out the heart and then put funding into mental health and loneliness projects - it's ludicrous!
88. A space for mums and mums to be to receive health and wellbeing support in the pre and postnatal periods
89. Could be used for meetings & groups. Art & photography classes &/or exhibitions. fundraising events, a collection and distribution centre for disaster & aid charities.
90. Use for meetings & groups. Potential office space. It is central ground floor with drop off space, parking and public transport links nearby.
91. Possible venue for fundraising events
92. This was my old primary school. I would hate to see it not being used. I think this is perfect for the younger generation to keep them out of trouble. I think fun activities ie gym, games etc is needed in this community
93. Garioch Women for Change will use the school as a weekly venue for meetings and additionally for workshops, exhibitions and for fundraising events. Additionally, we will offer support to other users and groups proposing to use the centre and will assist in any way we can other parties in the maintenance of the fabric of the building.
94. Hopefully the Food Bank will be able to be part of this venture and return to the centre of town.
95. The 3rd sector hub is badly needed in Inverurie and can provide a number of facilities for small businesses, charities and 3rd sector businesses.



From mountain to sea

# Asset Transfer Annual Report

31st March 2018

This is Aberdeenshire Council's first Asset Transfer Annual Report and covers the period 2017 to 2018. During this first year we have developed a new Asset Transfer webpage, updated our application forms and streamlined our request process.

The Council is keen to support asset transfer and recognises that community ownership of assets can:

- generate long term sustainable revenue streams for community organisations making them more sustainable.
- instil a heightened sense of civic pride and responsibility.
- provide local people with a meaningful stake in the future development of the place in which they live and/or work.
- contribute to more effective and more intensive use of local resources.
- be used as leverage to draw in new finance and expand the level of community activity.
- improve the quality of the relationship between individuals, the community and the Council.
- provide new opportunities for local learning and community capacity building

**Section 95 of the Community Empowerment Act** requires Aberdeenshire Council to publish an annual report setting out:

- the number of asset transfer requests received.
- the number of such requests which the Aberdeenshire Council has either agreed to or refused.
- the number of agreed requests which have resulted in the transfer of ownership, a lease or conferral of other rights.
- the number of appeals which have been allowed, dismissed or have resulted in any part of the decision of Aberdeenshire Council being varied or reversed.
- any action taken by Aberdeenshire Council to promote the use of asset transfer requests and to support a community transfer body or community organisation in the making of an asset transfer request.

## Community Empowerment Legislation

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 moves forward from a voluntary approach by the public sector, and introduces a right for community bodies to make requests to all local authorities to either own or buy an asset.

A request can be made in relation to any land or building which is owned or leased by the relevant authority.

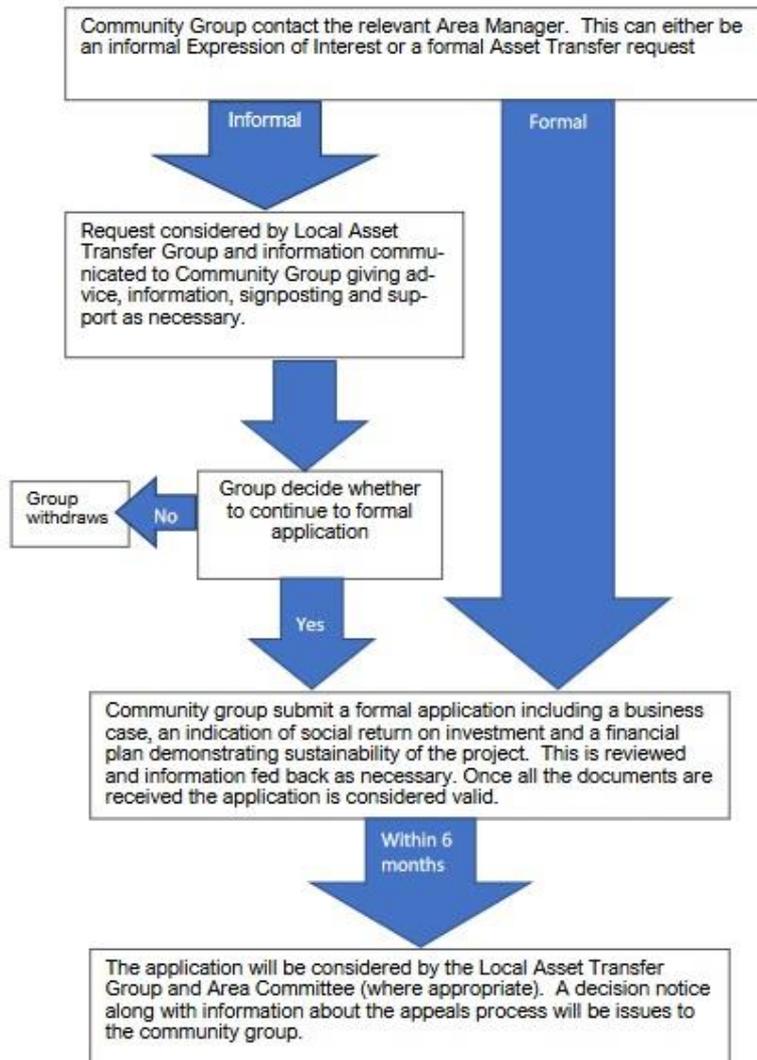
The Act requires local authorities to transparently assess requests against a specified list of criteria, and to agree the request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal.





From mountain to sea

## Aberdeenshire Council Asset Transfer Process



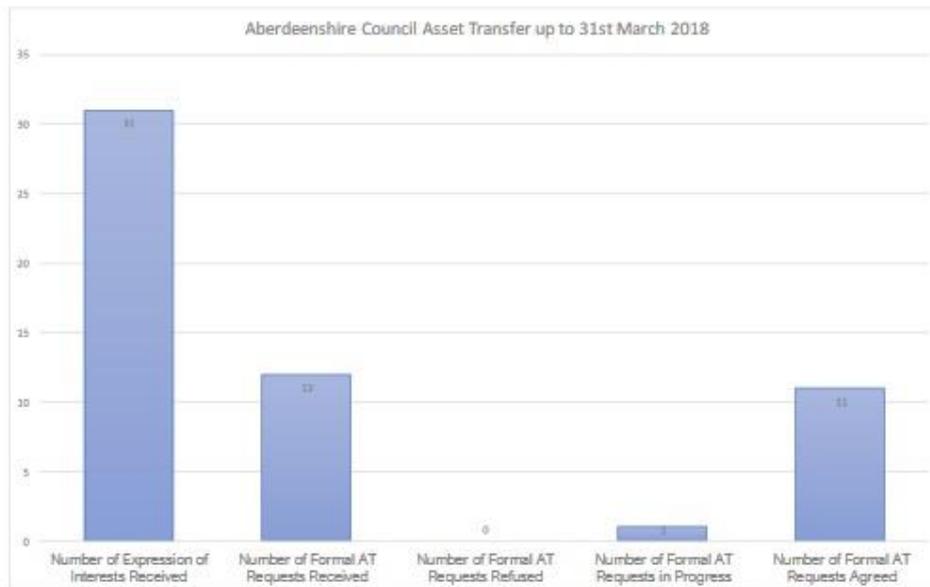
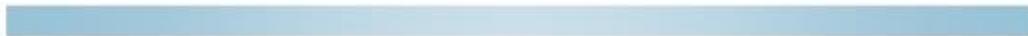
The Council's Asset Transfer process offers groups the option to engage in an informal Expression of Interest (EOI) prior to making a full application. This allows the group to be supported and provided with relevant information to support the development of a formal asset transfer request. Not all EOI applications progress to a formal stage as groups may decide to withdraw for a number of reasons. Similarly some groups do not feel the need to make an EOI application and progress directly to the formal stage.



A formal application is accompanied by a business case, an indication of social return on investment and a financial plan demonstrating how the community group will sustain the running of the property. The relevant Area Committee make the final decision on the application, with the option of an appeal if the group are unhappy with the decision made.



## From mountain to sea



### **A Number of informal Expression of Interest applications received by area: 31**

#### **Banff and Buchan—5**

Canal Park and Princess Royal Stadium – Did not progress  
Land at Deveron Terrace, Banff – Did not progress  
Portsoy Caravan Park – Did not progress  
Banff Town Hall - Did not progress  
Former Trinity and Alvah Church – Did not progress

#### **Formartine—4**

Ythan Centre, Ellon – In progress  
Markethill Primary School, Turriff x 2 – Did not progress  
Land adjacent to Turriff Caravan Park – Did not progress

#### **Garioch—6**

Kintore Townhouse—In progress  
Market Place School, Inverurie—In progress  
Hatton of Fintray School House—Did not progress  
Lawsondale Playing Fields, Westhill—Did not progress  
Strathburn Park, Inverurie—Did not progress  
Birley Bush, Kemnay—Did not progress





## From mountain to sea

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### **Kincardine and Mearns—10**

Former Community Centre, Laurencekirk – In progress  
St Laurence Hall, Laurencekirk –In progress  
Beach Toilets, Stonehaven – In progress  
Mill of Benholm, Johnshaven – In progress  
Tolbooth Museum, Stonehaven – In progress  
Newtonhill Allotments – Did not progress  
Beach Pavilion, Stonehaven x 4 - Did not progress

### **Marr—6**

Banchory Skatepark –In progress  
Networks of Wellbeing - In progress  
Banchory Heritage Centre - Did not progress  
Banchory Men's Shed - Did not progress  
Books Abroad, Rhynie - Did not progress  
Kinnor Hall - Did not progress

### **B. Number of formal Asset Transfer requests in progress: 1**

#### **Marr—1**

Lumsden Community Association — Public Toilets

### **C. Number of formal Asset Transfer requests agreed: 11**

#### **Banff and Buchan—2**

People First Fraserburgh – 51 Mid Street, Fraserburgh  
Portsoy and District Community Association – Sports Pavilion and Associated Land

#### **Buchan—1**

MACBI, Mintlaw— Mintlaw Library and adjacent parking area

#### **Formartine—2**

Turriff and District Heritage Society—Municipal Buildings and High Street public toilets, Turriff  
Ellon Castle Gardens—Deer Park, Ellon

#### **Garioch—1**

SensationALL—Westhill Old Schoolhouse

#### **Kincardine and Mearns—4**

Stonehaven Men's Shed-Beach Pavilion, Stonehaven  
Portlethen Men's Shed – former Toilet Block  
The Furniture Lodge, Cowie Lane building  
Stonehaven Men's Shed -Green Pavilion, Stonehaven

#### **Marr—1**

Alford & District Men's Shed—Old Alford Academy Technical Block off Murray Terrace

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## From mountain to sea

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### D. Other Information

#### **Banff and Buchan**

- Portsoy and District Community Association – Sports Pavilion and Associated Land – **Transfer of Ownership**

#### **Formartine**

- Turriff and District Heritage Society—Municipal Buildings and High Street public toilets, Turriff – **Transfer of Ownership**
- Ellon Castle Gardens—Deer Park, Ellon– **Transfer of Ownership**

There were no refusals or appeals to any formal asset transfer requests received.

Any group who has enquired about the asset transfer process has been fully supported in completing their application and looking for possible funding.

### Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager Contacts

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#### **Banff and Buchan**

Email: [banffandbuchanamo@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:banffandbuchanamo@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01487 537131

#### **Buchan**

Email: [buchanareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:buchanareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01487 537634

#### **Formartine**

Email: [formartineareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:formartineareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01487 538439

#### **Garioch**

Email: [garioch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:garioch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01487 539371

#### **Kincardine and Mearns**

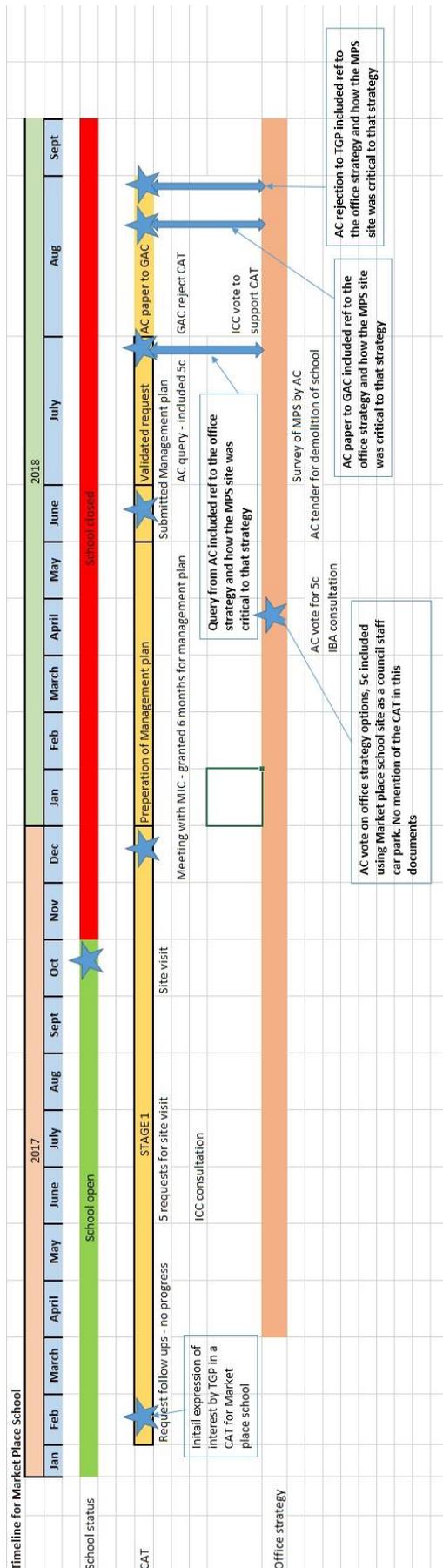
Email: [kincardine&mearnsareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:kincardine&mearnsareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01487 534684

#### **Marr**

Email: [marrareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:marrareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01487 536421

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# Appendix 7 – Timeline for Market Place School



## Appendix 8 – Service Level Agreement Between Aberdeenshire Council and The Garioch Partnership



### SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL AND THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP

#### 1 Scope

This agreement establishes the scope of work of The Garioch Partnership and the relationship with Economic Development and the Area Manager (Garioch) of Aberdeenshire Council.

#### 2 Background

Rural partnerships have played a key role in developing and engaging communities in their areas. To ensure that community economic development opportunities and engagement continues and to facilitate the development of the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership, it has been agreed that £35,616 for the year 2018 – 2019 (£32,616 Economic Development and £3,000 Area Manager Funding) and £33,900 for the year 2019 – 2020 (£30,900 Economic Development and £3,000 Area Manager Funding) will be allocated to support the development and activities of The Garioch Partnership for 2 years.

#### 3 Definition of Service

Working closely with Economic Development and the Area Manager, The Garioch Partnership will:

- (i) Promote Community Economic Development by helping additional groups throughout their area with information, implementation, and community engagement, to build inclusive/sustainable projects.
- (ii) Provide a local advice service to groups seeking to develop community assets and facilities. This should include options for organisational structures, governance, funding along with other areas required to help realise opportunities in their communities.
- (iii) Provide enterprise and administration advice to social/community enterprises seeking to develop economic opportunities.
- (iv) Develop and support Community Action Plans and other appropriate processes for engagement of communities.
- (v) Identify and implement ways to help communities understand issues around community planning and budget allocation. Together with

partner staff, they will seek innovative funding and management solutions to overcome challenges.

- (vi) Assist to facilitate a two way flow of information relating to the needs and priorities of voluntary sector partners, wider community contacts, Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning Partners, Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action and the Garioch Community Planning Group.
- (vii) To support and be an active participant in the Garioch Community Planning Forums.
- (viii) Positively promote equality of opportunity for the whole population of Garioch. Where the opportunity arises work with groups with protected characteristics to help them achieve positive impacts. Provide evidence of the work undertaken and the positive impacts achieved in your annual reporting and monitoring arrangements.
- (ix) Provide an agreed annual action/work plan for the year ahead indicating the outcomes and key milestones that the partnerships will support and facilitate with communities and community/social enterprises.
- (x) To support and administer the Area Initiatives Scheme in Garioch. Working with applicants to ensure that proposals fit with the scheme, as approved by the Area Committee.

#### 4 Finances

- (i) At the Infrastructure Services Committee on 2 February 2017, awards of £32,616 and £30,900 for the next two years were approved subject to the conditions of this Service Level Agreement and an agreed Annual Action Plan. The £3,000 per year Area Manager element is also covered within this agreement. This agreement is intended to last for 2 years, subject to available budget.
- (ii) The Area Manager element will be paid at the start of each year. The Economic Development element will be paid in advance quarterly payments as follows:-

1 April 2018  
1 July 2018  
1 October 2018  
1 January 2019  
1 April 2019  
1 July 2019  
1 October 2019  
1 January 2020

- (iii) The Council reserves the right to deduct any debts which may be due prior to making any further payments.

## 5 Monitoring and Reporting

- (i) Economic Development will undertake an annual monitoring visit each year, which will incorporate a review of activity, evidence of expenditure, annual action plans and future plans.
- (ii) An annual report will be provided by the Rural Partnership to Economic Development by 31 May 2019 and 31 May 2020. This report will be used as an update to the Infrastructure Services Committee, Area Committee and the Local Community Planning Group annually.
- (iii) To host an annual round table discussion with the Area Committee, Area Manager and Economic Development to provide an update of developments in the area.
- (iv) Aberdeenshire Council's procedures on "Following the public pound" will underpin any reporting requirements.
- (v) The rural partnership undertakes to allow any Authorised Officer of the Council, or its designated agents, access to the books of account and other records for the purpose of confirming the accuracy, validity and completeness of information provided in relation to this agreement.

## 6 Terms of Agreement

This agreement will commence on 1 April 2018 and will expire on the 31 March 2020.

Signed on Behalf of Aberdeenshire Council

Date

Signed on Behalf of The Garioch Partnership

Date 27/3/18



### The Garioch Partnership Action Plan April 2018 – March 2019

Key Actions	SLA actions	Intended Outcomes	Actual Outcomes
<p>Continue to develop the membership of TGP, providing ongoing support to our currently engaged 94 groups, both face to face and through social media and our newsletter, support local community participation, growing individual and group capacity, assistance to source and apply for funding on a local and national level, and continue to offer governance and structure support and information e.g. SCIO conversions, new groups, and support for the reporting requirements of OSCR on charitable groups. Also keep groups informed and compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) changes.</p> <p>Tailored support for community groups and projects – project management, business planning, support for groups going through the community asset transfer process, support for ensuring governance structures are fit for purpose.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3 and 7</p>	<p>Groups will feel supported and have an increased awareness of the opportunities locally and nationally for funding.</p> <p>Improved links within the groups in the Garioch area supported through our networking events (Summer and Winter Forum) and other learning events as required by the membership.</p> <p>Offer GDPR on a group by group basis as required</p>	
<p>TGP will work with our community planning partners, health and social care integration and other statutory bodies and our third sector to tackle barriers to participation, assisting groups to be engaged in consultations, community focused events and participatory budgeting locally</p>	<p>1, 2, 5 and 7</p>	<p>Groups will build capacity and confidence.</p> <p>Increase local knowledge of opportunities.</p> <p>Locally delivered tailored training and support to meet the group needs, around roles and responsibilities of trustees, volunteering support policies, other relevant policies and funding.</p> <p>Develop the member's only area of the TGP website so that there is a resource bank for community groups to access "self-help" advice and information.</p> <p>Recognise and support the opportunities for accredited volunteering.</p> <p>Continue to attend Community Planning meetings, LEADER, Third Sector Strategy group, relevant other third sector forums and other relevant opportunities, and ensure information is cascaded to our local groups in an understandable, timely manner.</p>	
<p>TGP will work with communities to develop, design and deliver on the community action plans, using a range of tools to support the engagement – Place Standard, Planning for Real, "How good is our..." We also have a commitment to</p>	<p>4, 6 and 7</p>	<p>We will complete the Kellands Community Action Plan Ongoing work with Insch to review and update their CAP (2017/18), and also support and assist the Health &amp; Social Care Partnership with the work they are planning in Insch</p>	

<p>support communities to be involved in ongoing review of the CAP. We will ensure that the CAP is shared with statutory partners and community planning.</p>		<p>We will also support and identify other communities that may be looking to develop actions plans in the future. Ongoing support to community planning partners for use of the Place Standard across Garioch settlements.</p>	
<p>TGP will continue to offer our Independent Examination of accounts to support groups that this could be a financial barrier to.</p>	3	<p>Continue to offer independent examination of accounts. Increase capacity of TGP to deliver this.</p>	
<p>We will continue to work in partnership with the ARPF, AVA, wider third sector, Aberdeenshire Council, Local Community planning, HSCI, LEADER and other relevant local groups, like the learning partnerships, sports hubs, and local strategy groups. We will continue to be engaged in the Scotland- wide Participatory Budgeting Stakeholders group.</p>	1, 5 and 6	<p>Create and support links for groups to engage with decision makers. Contribute and assist with the community plan. Build relationships with locally elected members. Attend the PB stakeholders group and cascade information from it, ensuring Aberdeenshire is well represented.</p>	
<p>Continue to engage with communities in a range of ways – our “Gad About and Gab About Garioch” (GAGAG) where we engage locally and support the community to share their views, and ensure this is represented at local community planning as an essential source of local knowledge. Develop knowledge and upskilling TGP members in learning with Summer &amp; Winter forums and sharing of with other TGP members.</p>	1, 3 and 4	<p>Continue to use GAGAG to engage locally where community events are already happening (fetes, coffee mornings, local events)</p>	
<p>Continue to provide advice and support on sustainable projects.</p>	1, 2 and 3	<p>Sustainable groups started up, ongoing groups supported and enhanced. Building the capacity of these groups to ensure they continue to be sustainable. Be available as support, and a critical friend to groups to enable them to feel supported and able to access opportunities, to help them grow and achieve their goals. Work with Aberdeenshire Council around the support, growth and further development of sports hubs across</p>	

			Garioch to support locally led community action for clubs and volunteers.	
Support the establishment of new community and third sector groups.	1, 2 and 3		Support new groups, and groups that are looking to expand into Garioch, to identify the correct structures to enable them to move forward, and provide advice and information on governance, funding and capacity building.	
Continue to work with Inverurie Business Improvement District	1		Support Inverurie BID to ensure they meet the needs of the community and support the third sector that enhances the BID (Inverurie Environmental Group, and Inverurie Events) Support events that celebrate community involvement (Pride of Inverurie, Young Pride of Inverurie)	
Work with planners of large infrastructure projects in our area that have an impact on communities.	1, 4, 5 and 6		Work with the organisations delivering large scale infrastructure projects locally (A96 dualling, train line improvements) to support communities to access the opportunities that the community benefit clauses of such work has. Support communities to have a say, and be engaged in the process.	
Develop the idea and business plan for a possible asset transfer of Market Place Primary School.	1, 2 and 7		Development of a third sector hub that is accessible and affordable for community groups to use. Develop high quality offering to the community to support the ongoing growth of the third sector locally. Build sustainability for the partnership and ensure our own longevity through the development of a building, offering services vital to the community to all come together in one space.	

## **Appendix 9 – Previous Appeals**

Refusal notice 31/08/2018

Appeal notice 28/09/2018

Request for further written submissions

MPPS valuation report October 2018

TGP response

CEA Area Manager response to additional info

Refusal Notice 22/01/2019

**ASSET TRANSFER UNDER THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACT  
REFUSED**

To: THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP  
FIRST FLOOR  
WYNESS HALL  
JACKSON STREET  
INVERURIE  
AB51 3QB

Date of Notice: 31 August 2018

This Decision Notice relates to the Asset Transfer Request made by THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP, (SCIO SC043548) on 4 July 2018 in relation to FORMER MARKET PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MARKET PLACE, INVERURIE, AB51 3XN ("The Request").

Outcome: Aberdeenshire Council has decided to refuse the request.

**Reasons:**

The reasons for this decision are:

**Statutory Grounds for Refusal:**

Aberdeenshire Council, has considered the request, in terms of S82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 "the Act " and reached the decision that they have (four) reasonable grounds in terms of S82 of the Act to refuse the request and these are:

**(First Ground) Consideration of the benefits of the Request has demonstrated insufficient evidence of these being achievable:**

The case for agreeing to The Request by the Applicant is substantially made in the Applicants Business Plan which was submitted to support The Request. Given the weakness and lack of evidence in the Business Plan, the Council consider there is insufficient evidence that the request will result in or is likely to succeed or promote or improve: (i) economic development; (ii) regeneration; (iii) public health; (iv) social wellbeing; (iv) environmental wellbeing or any other benefits Accordingly, it is not unreasonable for the Council to refuse the request.

The consideration of the Business Plan by the Council and its proposed benefits are as set out as under noted, and underlines the Council's reasoning when reaching the conclusion to refuse:

### **Proposal**

a) Although great emphasis is placed on the requirement for a 'much needed' Third Sector Hub little evidence of need and demand has been provided to substantiate this assertion. The Request does not include a market need assessment.

b) The ambition of reducing reliance on core grant funding support from Aberdeenshire Council is positive and one which the Council would support. However, the surplus figures calculated on page 24 of the Business Plan submitted by the Applicant are not factually accurate raising questions in terms of how this can be achieved.

c) There is no evidence of additional activities generated because of this Request other than those derived from the co-location of voluntary services e.g. synergy of space, collective working etc.

### **Overview and Structure**

d) The Council is content that the Board of Trustees have a strong skill set. However, given the high dependency on funding from Aberdeenshire it is unclear how the organisation itself will be sustained in the longer term should funding from the public-sector decrease.

### **Project Background**

e) The Council is supportive of the ambition set out in the Request. However, there is a general lack of information in terms of how the Partnership plans to deliver on key aspects of the project. Importantly there is a lack of evidence in terms of commitment and detailed usage from other voluntary organisations.

f) Great emphasis has been placed on the perceived lack of affordable meeting space. The Partnership's proposed hourly charge can be found on page 23 of the Business Plan. Upon comparison with Aberdeenshire Council's charging policy in all cases the Councils hourly rate is significantly less.

g) No additional evidence has been submitted to show that demand outstrips supply within the area. With respect to Inverurie Town Hall alone based on regular lets only, and not considering one off bookings, the hall is used on average 25.5 hours a week out of a possible 98 hours (based on availability between the hours of 8am to 10pm). High quality community space will also be available upon completion of the Inverurie Community Campus.

h) Although there is no financial projection associated with the 'affordable nursey provision' the implication within this section is that this would be a subsidised facility. This would have implications for nursery providers throughout the area and no

evidence has been provided to demonstrate how this would align with the Councils 1140 implementation strategy.

#### **Community Needs and Demands / Partnerships**

i) On initial reading the Council considered the community engagement element of the plan to be weak. In response to this feedback the Partnership launched an online petition, the outcome of which highlights a few issues which are factually incorrect, for example a perceived affirmation that the Inverurie Campus will not be accessible and affordable to all. Although the petition attracted several comments the Partnership has not undertaken any robust analysis of this feedback. The petition therefore adds very little in terms of the robustness of the Business Case. There is little information to demonstrate how the Partnership has adopted to engage with the wider community and there is little detail in terms of the outcome of this engagement.

j) groups have stated general interest, other than perhaps the Food Bank there is no detail in terms of actual commitment nor levels of anticipated usage. No guaranteed user groups have been identified nor potential customers seeking a lease.

k) The identified user groups themselves do not look like they would be financially strong and may well rely on donations etc for their own funding. Although there is an indication that business start-up is an area of interest there is no detail to support this demand, nor a clear indication as to how this could contribute to the sustainability of the project.

#### **Asset**

l) There is no evidence to suggest that the Partnership has undertaken an independent condition survey of the building. There is no depth to this section of the plan in terms of how the Partnership plans to raise the funds required to upgrade the facility, nor is there any indication throughout the plan as to the extent of required capital investment or ongoing maintenance costs, although the Partnership clearly consider these costs to be minimal. The Council agreed that it would have been prudent for the Partnership to conduct a full survey of the building to ascertain repair and maintenance costs. As the business plan takes no account of these costs and given the surplus figures have been calculated incorrectly, the Council are of the view that even a small unexpected capital cost could jeopardise the viability of the project. This is borne out by the survey instructed by the Council which advises that costs of £146,682.50 (excluding VAT and professional fees) should be allowed before occupation.

m) Given there is an expectation in the plan to attract office start-ups no consideration has been given as to the basic works required to upgrade the space to a lettable standard to attract potential high value leaseholders, for example; good quality refurbishment, wall and floor coverings, furniture, Wi-Fi, etc. Building Warrant costs are also not included.

### **Capital Cost**

n) There is also nothing within the section to indicate how the Partnership would meet the capital cost of purchasing the asset. Although the expectation is that it would be sold for £5,000, this asset has an independent market value of £560,000. Apart from the unexplored nursery provision, the Business Plan is heavily weighted towards the provision of a centralised location for users, rather than providing any new benefit or services to the community. Accordingly, due to the lack of evidence the projected benefits are ill defined and/or unrealistic and do not demonstrate value for money or Best Value characteristics which would competently justify any discount from the market value. If the transfer were to proceed this would result in a loss of a capital receipt of £555,000 with the resulting impact on the capital plan.

o) If the transfer was to proceed at such a discounted price, then it would be essential that the Council make it a condition of any sale that the Partnership be required to repay the difference in price if the benefits are not delivered or to return any increase in value to the Council if the use of the Asset is changed. This can be done by imposing conditions within the Contract to sell and or to seek securities over the title albeit due to the legislative complexities of these conditions there are risks in the absolute robustness of enforcing these in the future.

### **Project Plan**

p) The implementation of the Inverurie Town Hall element of the Aberdeenshire Office Strategy is heavily dependent on the provision of car parking at the Market Place site. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for the Partnership to assume that the Town Hall element of the strategy will be implemented should this site be disposed of through an Asset Transfer.

q) Should the Council be able to implement the Town Hall element of the Office Strategy it would look to secure the use of assets within its existing control to reduce costs and to provide temporary accommodation to displaced users where possible.

r) Aligned with previous comments, this section indicates that renovation will be in a planned manner. However, there is no clear asset management plan for the building and no indication that the applicant understands the requirements for capital investment and ongoing maintenance costs.

### **Management Plan**

s) The Council welcome the establishment of a user group but again there is little detail as to how the services would be delivered. A business start-up provision is suggested but there is no evidence of the demand for such a provision.

t) There is some potential for duplication of effort with the existing Business Gateway service. The plan states "Start-up Business opportunities are often the first step into long term employment for the unemployed, this could be achieved working with another partner in sections of the MPPS facility." However, business start-up support is already catered for at Crichiebank and Thainstone Business Centre.

u) The plan includes a Disaster Resilience Centre and again there is no indication as to what this means in real terms, or how this would generate income. The Council utilises a hub and spoke model for Rest Centres during the response phase of emergencies, in the case of Inverurie the Academy being the "hub" and the primary schools the "spokes". This model is embedded in policy and works very well.

## **Project**

### **Project Costs**

v) The business plan is well structured. However, Officers are concerned about the lack of substance from a financial perspective. It is very unusual for a three-year financial forecast to contain so little detail and Officers would reflect that the income figures within the Financial Appraisal seem highly optimistic.

w) The business plan does not recognise that a reduction in occupancy e.g. 20%, 30%, 40% does not equate with a comparable reduction in utility costs unless the opening hours are greatly reduced and set as such. If this approach were to be taken the operation would not be beneficial to the overall community. Due to this lack of correlation the breakeven costs would be higher than stated in the business plan (£165).

x) The running costs above have been calculated using current figures from Aberdeenshire Council. This does not include expenditure on items such as telephony, ICT, Broadband, administration, HR etc. An assumption has been made that as these are currently paid within the Councils revenue grant to the Partnership and that this would be sustained. The Partnership should not rely on this assumption. It appears that no calculation has been made regarding an increase in these costs as the organisation moves to a larger building. Therefore, they do not appear in the forecast.

y) The Council does not consider these costs to be competent and given the lack of detail and evidence provided throughout do not consider this to be a competent Asset Transfer Request.

### **Capital Cost**

z) Apart from the unexplored nursery provision, the Business Plan is heavily weighted towards the provision of a centralised location for users, rather than providing any new services to the community. Due to the lack of evidence and detail within the Request, The Council is unable to competently apply the discount model. Given the Partnership are only prepared to pay £5,000 for the asset, Officers are of the view that this does not provide Best Value and agree this is not a viable way forward.

**(Second Ground) Alternative Proposal:**

a) The benefits of the asset transfer request are judged to be less than the benefits of an alternative proposal, namely, there is insufficient evidence provided to demonstrate the benefits arising from the Request, as opposed to those benefits to be gained from the Council's decision of 26 April 2018 to progress the Aberdeenshire Council Workspace: Office Space Strategy, namely; an annual revenue saving of £676,000; a positive impact on the Inverurie town centre as demonstrated by Town Impact assessment and improved and more efficient office facilities for the whole Council.

b) After considering multiple options over an extended period, on 26 April 2018 Aberdeenshire Council agreed the Council's Workspace: Office Space Strategy. This decision included, as a wider programme of works across Aberdeenshire, an agreement to release Gordon House, Inverurie and undertake the refurbishment of Inverurie Town Hall including the provision of an extension to that building to accommodate a Service Point, Civic and Community space and an extension for office space, with associated parking at the former Market Place School.

c) It is important to emphasise that failure to provide a parking solution at Market Place is not only critical to the Inverurie Town Hall element of the Office Space Strategy, but to the strategy as a whole. The strategy incorporates significant changes to office provision at Stonehaven, Woodhill House, Aberdeen and Ellon, as well as Inverurie. The strategy, as approved, provides a cohesive solution to the Council's needs and jeopardising any element of it jeopardises the whole strategy.

**(Third Ground) Statutory Compulsion:**

The Council is under a statutory duty to obtain Best Value. Given the projected benefits as detailed in the request are ill defined and/or unrealistic the Council would be in breach of its duty to obtain Best Value as it could not competently justify any discount or transfer in terms of the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010 and accordingly the forgoing statutory duties prevent or restrict the Council's ability to agree to the request.

**(Fourth) Financial Loss:**

If the transfer were to proceed this would result in a loss of a capital receipt of £555,000 with the resulting impact on the Council's capital plan which is not sustainable in the current financial climate.

**Right to Review**

You have a right to apply to the Council to review this decision.

Any application for review appeal must be made in writing to:

Margaret-Jane Cardno  
Area Manager (Garioch)  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Gordon House  
Blackhall Road  
Inverurie  
Aberdeenshire  
AB51 3WA

By **Monday 24 September 2018**, which is 20 working days from the date of this notice.

Guidance on making an application for review is available at:

<https://beta.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/asset-transfer/>



**ASSET TRANSFER UNDER THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACT  
REFUSED**

**To:** THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP  
FIRST FLOOR  
WYNESS HALL  
JACKSON STREET  
INVERURIE  
AB51 3QB

**Date of Notice:** 31 August 2018

**This Decision Notice relates to the Asset Transfer Request made by THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP, (SCIO SC043548) on 4 July 2018 in relation to FORMER MARKET PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MARKET PLACE, INVERURIE, AB51 3XN ("The Request").**

**Outcome:** Aberdeenshire Council has decided to refuse the request.

**FORMAL REQUEST FOR REVIEW**

The Garioch Partnership (TGP) wish to apply for a review of this decision.

We request a review via written submission carried out by councillors as our preference.

In accordance with Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, section 84, Prohibition of Disposal of Land, we would expect that Aberdeenshire Council will be a responsible local authority and cease any action regarding the demolition of the asset until all avenues of appeal have been allowed to reach full conclusion, including and up to Scottish Government Ministerial review.

## Reasons for review

### 1. Incorrect site valuation

The Garioch Partnership feel that our asset transfer request has been refused, first and foremost, based on the grounds of value of the asset.

As the asset has been valued including lands not owned by Aberdeenshire Council, the value the decision was based on was inaccurate.

TGP feel that the value of £560K is an unfair value for an asset that you wish to demolish, and therefore we feel that with the plans to regenerate the building for community use, and the level of support we have that the offer of £5,000 from TGP is a fair request.

(see appendix 1. Email attachment from Margaret-Jane Cardno, Garioch Area Manager, dated 12/09/18)

### 2. Alternative Proposal

The decision on the alternative proposal was taken without due regard to the work the Garioch Partnership were doing around the asset transfer request. Our initial expression of interest was submitted in February 2017. The Office Strategy was developed after that time with no cognisance of the development of TGP plans. Many councillors out with the Garioch area would not have been aware that we were working towards a request for Market Place Primary School at that time, and we feel that without full disclosure, councillors did not have all the facts to be able to fully consider all implications.

As the valuation of the site has included the land not owned by Aberdeenshire Council, TGP has concerns over the ability of the site to house the possible car park development, as the site is smaller than Aberdeenshire Council had valued.

The timeline attached to this appeal clearly show the timescales of both developments. We feel this has an impact on the decisions made. (see appendix 2)

### 3. Wider Benefit

11.2. All relevant authorities have a duty to secure Best Value in their operations, including when disposing of or letting property. However, it has long been recognised that best value does not always mean the highest possible price, and all authorities have the ability to dispose of property at less than market value where there are wider public benefits to be gained. This is set out in the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010, and in the Scottish Public Finance Manual for other relevant authorities. It is also clearly defined in the Scottish Government statutory guidance for asset transfer requests. It is a question of balancing the financial and non-financial impacts, both positive and negative, of the different options.

<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/asset-transfer-under-community-empowerment-scotland-act-2015-guidance-community-9781786527509/pages/11/>

The Garioch Partnership feel that the refusal was based on the asset valuation, and not in terms of wider community benefit, in terms of the number of groups who want to co-locate and others who wish to use the building.

In terms of community wellbeing, accessible space in a central location are proven to reduce social isolation and loneliness, whilst reducing the stigma of accessing services. Having services co-located such as the foodbank, Alcohol and Drugs Action, community wellbeing projects, and a range of other groups removes any fear of identification and association with any particular service.

Within this balance, we do not feel that the negative impact of a car park being sited there has been taken into account in terms of the ecological impact, the transport and roads impact, and the impact of the loss of community space for Inverurie and the wider Garioch area.

In terms of promotion and improvement of...

economic development;

- In terms of economic development, the Garioch Partnership (TGP) will be creating new jobs (initially 3, with more to follow as the hub develops) and works required will be done by local companies, creating wealth and opportunity locally, with future development possibilities for local employment to be created.

regeneration;

- Repurposing the school would regenerate the building, and keep it as a community asset, and support the third sector locally to flourish and grow.

public health;

- We have health and wellbeing groups who wish to be based within the building, ranging from projects for mental health, recovery from domestic abuse, to alcohol and drugs services, as well as the Foodbank, and community kitchen.
- The health and social care agenda places more responsibility on communities addressing their own issues, and taking control. This relies on communities having accessible space to try out different approaches. Spaces like the Tesco Community Room show the demand for that is there as it is very busy, and often difficult to book.
- We will be working in partnership with Garioch Sports Trust to support people towards more healthy choices, both in terms of wellbeing and the Climate Change Fund project.

social wellbeing;

- An affordable and accessible hub, with community space to bring people together, offering new opportunities for learning and groups to come together.

environmental wellbeing or any other benefits

- Keeping the building in community use, and not as a car park will have a positive impact on the town centre as it will give a focal point for community groups within easy walking distance of public transport, and will not have the carbon emissions and environmental impact that bringing many more cars to the town centre would have.
- Reduction of social isolation and reducing loneliness are hugely important in building successful, sustainable communities. The provision of community space is an essential element in that.
- Reduction of stigma from accessing services is also achievable with many different groups co-located in one central point.
- The Scottish Government agreed the Town Centre First Principle with COSLA leaders in July 2014, marking a significant shift in public policy towards town centres. It asks that government, local authorities, the wider public sector, businesses and communities put the health of town centres at the heart of proportionate and best-value decision making, seeking to deliver the best local outcomes regarding investment and de-investment decisions, alignment of policies, targeting of available resources to priority town centre sites, and encouraging vibrancy, equality and diversity. We feel that the opportunity to redevelop Market Place Primary School into a community hub will do this.
- We would be willing to work with Aberdeenshire Council however it sees fit to enable this asset transfer to go ahead.

Within the business case, we had provision for a disaster resilience centre. This was to provide space to the community to come together after the short term rest centres are no longer needed, but space like the British Legion Hall in the aftermath of Storm Frank were central to the community working together, as a focal point for the longer term recovery process. The British Legion Hall has now been redeveloped and is no longer available to the community, and the loss of this space was marked as a major drawback from a number of volunteers and people involved in the recovery of the communities affected.

TGP board have a long history of involvement in a wide range of community focused activity and understand the challenges of the third sector, and have built sustainable groups already. The board have been involved over a number of years in the development of TGP, seeing it from the ideas stage to a respected organisation now. There were doubts over sustainability and longevity of other projects the board members have been involved in – all of which are now flourishing enterprises (e.g. Garioch Sports Trust, Axis Centre)

With the growth and development of TGP, we have supported numerous groups to look towards sustainability and further expansion to meet the needs of their communities. This would continue with groups and organisations using the space at Market Place Primary School, whilst accessing support to allow the third sector in Garioch to flourish.

Ownership of an asset would allow TGP to develop themselves and find alternative routes of funding and develop our own sustainability.

(See appendix 3)

#### 4. Community Need and Demand

TGP feel that insufficient weight was given to the needs and demands expressed by numerous community groups, through the e-petition and letters of support.

The level of community support was shown with our online petition, the number of requests for people and groups to use the space, and the wide range of people interested from community well-being, theatre, arts groups, drug and alcohol services, foodbank, Syrian New Scots, The Inverurie Business Association, and We Are INverurie (the BID) as well as Inverurie Community Council show the project has a wide ranging appeal and support, and offers something that Inverurie needs.

At the start of this process when TGP initially examined the asset, we had a timescale in mind to hopefully move in just after the school had vacated. Due to the previous area manager not progressing the request, we feel that the school property has been allowed to be damaged with a mind to Aberdeenshire Council wishing to demolish it.

We have tenants committed to refurbishing their own space to suit their requirements, and being in the third sector we can access charitable and grant funding to get the building upgraded to a high standard to make it attractive and fit for purpose.

We also feel that on the balance of the many positive community benefits we have outlined to you it is difficult for us to understand how a council car park could be viewed as being of higher importance, therefore we feel that the £5,000 offer from TGP is very fair both in terms of community support and in regeneration of the building.

(See Appendix 4 sections a and b)

For these reasons listed above, we feel that we would like to use our right to request a review on the decision.

We have attached appendices in line with the outlines for this request, and ask that you consider this as part of our appeal.

Appendix 1 – email from Margaret-Jane Cardno – re: valuation of site.

Appendix 2 – timeline of development

Appendix 3 – e-petition

Appendix 4 – letters of support

[REDACTED]

**Subject:**

FOR INFORMATION: Asset Transfer Request Former Market Place School

[REDACTED]

It has been brought to my attention that the report considered by the Garioch Area Committee on 28 August 2018 relating to the Asset Transfer for the former Market Place School contained an incorrect valuation of the site.

The valuation covered both the school site and the adjacent playing field which was held on lease until terminated on 31 October 2017. As the application only requested an asset transfer of the school, the valuation was incorrect as it included land out with the Council's ownership.

As a result of this error, and having consulted with colleagues in Property and Legal and Governance, it is my advice that a new valuation of the site be commissioned.

In refusing the application, the Area Committee gave four robust reasons for their decision, this error may impact on one of those reasons.

However, given the Decision Notice has been issued, there is no provision in the Act that it be rescinded.

As such, we await the feedback of the Partnership on whether they wish to appeal the decision. As you are aware if the Partnership wish to appeal, this will in the first instance take the form of an internal review. The internal panel can consider the error in valuation should it wish to do so.

I am very sorry for this mistake, which was down to human error. I am of course happy to discuss if this would be helpful.

Kind regards

*Margaret-Jane*

Margaret-Jane Cardno  
Area Manager (Garioch)  
Gordon House  
Inverurie

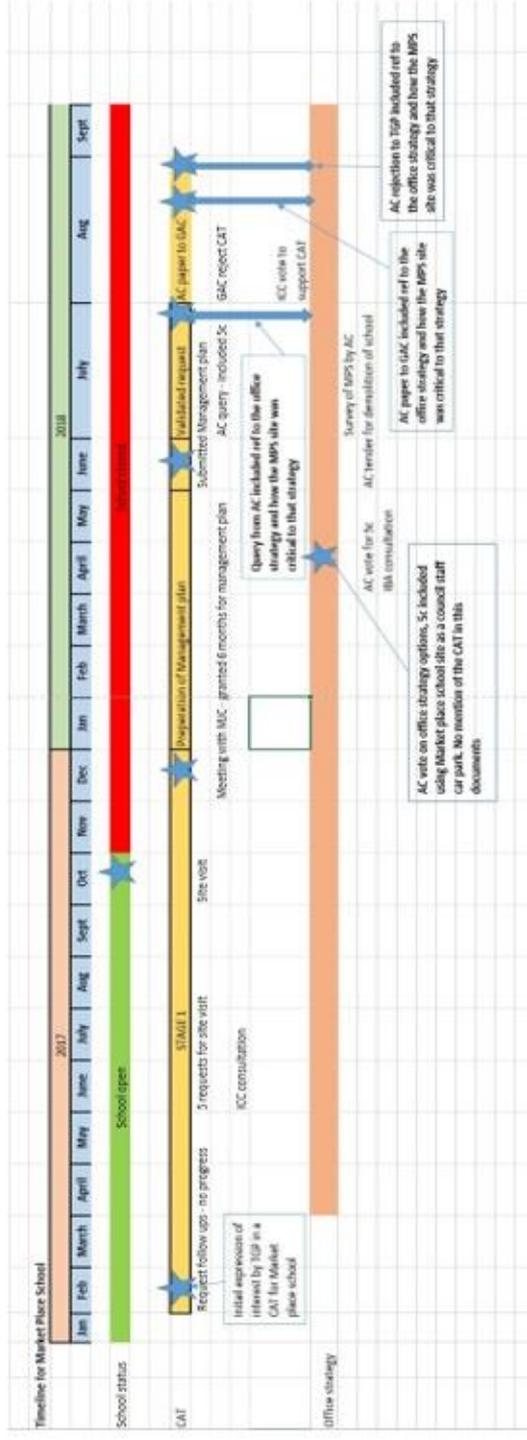
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Dh'fhaodadh fiosrachadh sochaire, a tha a-mhàin airson an neach gu bheil am post-dealain air a chur, a bhith an seo. Ma tha thu air am post-dealain fhaighinn mar mhearachd, gabh ar leisgeul agus cuir fios chun an neach a chuir am post-dealain agus dubh às am post-dealain an dèidh sin. 'S e beachdan an neach a chuir am post-dealain a tha ann an gin sam bith a thèid a chur an cèill agus chan eil e a' ciallachadh gu bheil iad a'

## Appendix 2 – timeline of developments



**Appendix 3: Online petition**

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/market-place-school-as-a-3rd-sector-hub/>

As of 23<sup>rd</sup> September: 264 signatures of support and 93 comments.

**Summary of comments:**

Suggesting a permanent user group	6
Suggesting regular user group (weekly or more)	9
Suggesting occasional use by a user group	7
Potential/suggested uses	33
General support	38
	93

**Full list of comments:**

1. This is what is need in the area, a proper community hub for everyone at the heart of Inverurie
2. We would be interested in moving into the hub so that we were in the heart of the community and alongside other 3rd Sector organisations,
3. A fantastic idea to be used by the whole community and improve services for everyone.
4. Inverurie would benefit greatly from such a facility, its central location and opportunity to offer community space for groups and co-location of community services to meet ever increasing demand for support would help meet local demand and support partnership working to maximise resources, enable signposting and referrals and minimise waste and duplication of services.
5. Inverurie is a very community minded Town. This facility provides a hub for the community based services and is greatly needed.
6. Tremendous idea - this great place needs to be saved
7. I believe an accessible hub for partners would be an excellent resource for Inverurie
8. Sounds like a fantastic idea to keep it open for community use. I'd definitely consider holding my workshops there. Not many other options for me in Inverurie.
9. The building should be used not flattened
10. It would help bring the community together.

11. Good for the whole community.
12. We are looking for a new rehearsal venue for our expanding community band. This would be perfect.
13. This would be a fantastic resource for third sector organisations. It has the potential to really bring the community together in a shared space.
14. Would be ideal as a 3rd sector community hub like JIC, Here4you, Compass Point etc.
15. To be used as needed by the locals in Inverurie and the surrounding areas.
16. winter bowling two days per week, would be interested in hall size/costs?
17. An accessible community centre with a gym would be nice, even if we had to crowdsource \$ to buy gym equipment. I would be interested in teaching dance classes there-tap, ballet, jazz, ect for all age groups kids-older adults.
18. I am involved with an organisation which could consider using part of the facility 2 or 3 times per week. In addition, the site may be suitable as a co-location opportunity for an existing 3rd sector organisation based elsewhere in Inverurie.
19. As a digital tutor I support (mainly) older people in the local community and work alongside 3rd sector groups who are in touch with those who need digital support or advice. It can often be hard to find a space to offer this service. A Hub providing the Garioch area community with a central point for these 3rd sector organisations and services within an accessible venue within the town would be a real asset to Inverurie and the locality. The 'hub' model is already being considered or rolled out as the future way forward in many communities offering a way to bring together and engage with local people and/or meet with others who can provide support or even help seed opportunities for entrepreneurs. It has been shown that such collaborative spaces are welcomed by local residents and provide a range of sustainable benefits across the social, creative and health aspects of the community.
20. I think the central hub would bring visibility and more information about the many local organisations whom TGP support. Our organisation would benefit if this hub provides a shared resource base such as IT that can be accessed by all TGP members.
21. Ideal location
22. Think this would be an ideal space for a variety of groups and people to talk; share ideas and simply get to know one another. It could put a sense of community back into the heart of the town!
23. We would use this as a fundraising facility
24. Twice a week, maybe more depending on the facilities available

25. As a self-employed Instructor, I have found community facilities to hold classes is very limited in Inverurie so a community hub would be excellent
26. Not sure, I am activity co-ordinator at Urybank House on Wallace Road along with other commitments there as well as being on hand for babysitting my grandson
27. TGP hosts many meetings and conferences for volunteer groups like ours. It would be great if they had the Market Place School as a base.
28. Think this would be great space for community use and could become a fabulous asset
29. Probably 2 or 3 times a week
30. It would be wonderful to have a facility for the people in the Garioch to use. Well done!
31. Always need affordable meeting space! Inverurie is the most central place in Aberdeenshire with good transport links for shire-wide organisations.
32. Trussell Trust (Food Bank) will welcome a joint office/warehouse approach within the Garioch Partnership project
33. This development will open up many new opportunities for the local community, and we know from our experience in Banffshire, it will be the catalyst for growing community-led development in Garioch. Banffshire Partnership and Garioch Partnership are already used to sharing knowledge and experience, and we will readily do that in this development too.
34. This is needed in the community!
35. I fully support this proposal. I have worked with many community groups and charities in and around Inverurie over the years and many get stuck in their start-up or development due to lack of appropriate and affordable space to carry out their activities. If The Garioch Partnership were to run Market Place as a Third Sector Hub, many such groups would be able to flourish, further enhancing and supporting the lives of residents and visitors to Inverurie.
36. Inverurie desperately needs this facility and The Garioch Partnership are the ideal people to run such a hub as they are impartial and able to support any community group / member accessing the Hub. Even though we have spaces available for rent here at Fly Cup there are many enquiries we cannot accommodate for a variety of reasons and there are just not the type of spaces they need available in the town.
37. This will keep facilities and services right in the town centre and support the Garioch Partnership to continue its support throughout Garioch Area.
38. This is what the community needs

39. I'm a photographer and would love a place to use in Inverurie with sensible costs.
40. Inverurie certainly needs more affordable venue space for not-for-profit/community use so we'd be in favour of the development of this community hub.
41. It would be great to see Market Place Primary School continue to serve the community as a hub for local groups.
42. Children attending the Gaitherin would get so much from this, and would hopefully reduce costs associated to organise which would be fantastic for the organisers
43. Such facilities are greatly needed in the area
44. An essential resource for the community.
45. Fantastic idea which fits perfectly with the Scottish Government Communities Bill. Ticks all boxes!
46. I support the Garioch Partnerships use of this community asset. Inverurie would benefit from the use of this community space in many ways. Local business start-ups, affordable childcare and access to local charities to name but a few. I have been involved in several local charities over the past 20 years, to access information locally would support many groups and families in a practical way.
47. The Gaitherin is a charity event held twice a year which benefits over 200 local young people a year. We always rely on using secondary schools in the local area and sometimes this is a struggle to do. Having access to this school would mean guaranteed housing for our event each year.
48. Used to live in the town, most of my childhood nests in the hubs of the community and I'd hate to see such integral parts of everyone's lives repurposed or lost.
49. If the site was to be used for this purpose, which I am in favour of, it would have to be made clear to people using it that they must not park in Urybank's car park as this is needed for carers, residents and visitors and was abused frequently when the school was there.
50. A Garioch co-working space (however big or small) would be great for local start-ups.
51. Would be terrific for Camera club meetings for around 50 members. Been looking for a space to use as a photography studio, with some kind of secure storage for studio equipment.
52. This is an important step in helping people to get back on their feet, reducing the costs of maintaining all the different services in different buildings by co-locating can only help more people.

53. Inverurie is a hub of activity which is great! yet often there isn't enough venues available to host community events. We have a number of initiatives we would like to provide for the community. We are looking to launch a Mainly Music group in the Autumn, a weekly youth meeting and community support groups such as the coffee and craft group that currently runs at the Tesco community room. Inverurie has the potential for so much more, but is limited by the lack of community venues, this proposal would be a great benefit to the wider community of Inverurie. Be great to see this happen.
54. We have a pottery group at present in the Community Centre and would love it if we could have space at Market Place School. As at the Community Centre at present, the space could be shared with other arts groups. Also I think a community cafe would be a great way for new people to feel included in the community.
55. Personally I sometimes organise meetings/trainings and this space would be ideal for that. So central and a good choice of room sizes.
56. We are a very small community group that meets weekly. Space here could be ideal for us as a group. Plus for committee meetings.
57. The Gaitherin could make use of the school to hold bi-annual, week long traditional music, drama and dance courses for local young folk during the Easter and October holidays. The central location and layout makes it ideal for us and we could possibly make use of it throughout the year for music/youth work related activities. We also meet as a committee and could use this space for our monthly meetings.
58. Local artists could perhaps hire working space.
59. Could be ideal for rehearsal space. At a time when Town Hall costs are rising dramatically lots of groups might find this a welcome alternative.
60. I'm sure this would support lots of voluntary and community activity in Inverurie
61. We need to have central, accessible venues for local people to access the support and services they need. A central hub is vital for our community.
62. I'd like to hold and attend groups at an Inverurie hub. I.e. Arts / yoga / Community forums. If it had a cafe I would use it to get lunch when I'm at work at Inspire Soaps.
63. It would be very useful to do discussions and workshops for mind-set, goal setting and EFT. It has access so all would be able to attend. eg. those with disabilities and wheel chairs etc.

64. Be great for Inverurie to have somewhere to go for a variety of different groups such as support groups/social meet ups for adults/teenagers and also all different groups for families too, like peep groups, free crèche to give opportunity for parents with low income to attend courses such as first aid etc or just somewhere for mums/dad's to get together for a cuppa and let little ones play.
65. The community would be well served to keep this valued centre available.
66. I'm moving out of the area but feel this would be a good central point for groups and people looking for somewhere to start up.
67. I would use the hub as often as I could, especially if it was used to run groups for social skills, anxiety, isolation etc, it would be good to have somewhere to come together and share support for each other
68. Unsure if I would personally use it. I would love to see the transformation of space as it used to be my workplace and it would be extremely beneficial to see it being used to give back to the community
69. I feel Inverurie could benefit from more community space as many groups are constrained on offerings just now due to space limitations in size or availability.
70. I'd also welcome hot desk style space for start-ups and business people who are meeting clients in Inverurie.
71. I wouldn't be using the facility but think it's an excellent use for the old school.
72. But know this would be a great asset to Inverurie.
73. Please make Market Place School useful to Inverurie!!
74. We are very much in support of this and would want to base our charity in the building
75. Members of our communities may use the facility in the future depending on what is offered there and when.
76. Much needed facility, obvious and sustainable solution. Any councillor worth their position should fight for this.
77. I'm a member of a childminding group and we may use the facilities for weekly meetings, if the space was affordable, we may also use it for facilitating training
78. Accessible, affordable community facilities are essential for so many 3rd sector and voluntary groups to use, support a wide range of populations and vulnerable groups and make a positive impact the larger community. The Garioch Partnership is a fantastic interface to facilitate this. Good luck!
79. My children are older now but we used to use the Community Centre three times a week for activities. The area needs a proper replacement for this facility.

80. A noble and practical cause,
81. I use the Community Centre for weekly pottery classes
82. Much needed space for Inverurie and surrounding area!
83. when we need one
84. I use the Community Centre for weekly pottery classes. I have also used it for painting class and took my young son to the mother and toddler group. This would be a valuable resource for the community when the current centre closes as there are no other comparable facilities in Inverurie.
85. We use the creche every week at the community centre and it's been invaluable for both me and my child, there doesn't appear to be any thought for it continuing once the new campus is set up
86. A much needed resource for Inverurie, if I can help in anyway.
87. A venue in the heart of the community for the community - don't rip out the heart and then put funding into mental health and loneliness projects - it's ludicrous!
88. A space for mums and mums to be to receive health and wellbeing support in the pre and postnatal periods
89. Could be used for meetings & groups. Art & photography classes &/or exhibitions. fundraising events, a collection and distribution centre for disaster & aid charities.
90. Use for meetings & groups. Potential office space. It is central ground floor with drop off space, parking and public transport links nearby.
91. Possible venue for fundraising events
92. This was my old primary school. I would hate to see it not being used. I think this is perfect for the younger generation to keep them out of trouble. I think fun activities ie gym, games etc is needed in this community
93. Garioch Women for Change will use the school as a weekly venue for meetings and additionally for workshops, exhibitions and for fundraising events. Additionally, we will offer support to other users and groups proposing to use the centre and will assist in any way we can other parties in the maintenance of the fabric of the building.
94. Hopefully the Food Bank will be able to be part of this venture and return to the centre of town.
95. The 3rd sector hub is badly needed in Inverurie and can provide a number of facilities for small businesses, charities and 3rd sector businesses.

#### Appendix 4a: Potential users

1. I would be interested in a hire of the hall area. 2 to maybe 3 times a week at lease an hour each time to teach my classes.
2. FYI, Fiona tried to book the town hall for a "group fest" and was told it was fully booked till Feb 2019.. we only got a Sept date due to cancellation..
3. Following our telephone conversation regarding the possible use of Market Place Primary School gym, I am writing to formally request it's use on behalf of the children, young people and adults that are currently members of Inverurie Boxing Club.  
Inverurie Boxing Club has been running for over one year now and already we have been in three different venues. Currently we are training out of Inverurie Academy gym hall, which is a good gym for our purposes, however the main problem we have is that we do not have any storage to keep our equipment. At present we train 3 days a week, if we had access to Market Place School this would be raised to 5 days a week, which would allow us to better separate the children and adults. We currently have a roll of 50 children and young people and 18 adults. Further to this having a dedicated venue would allow the club to invest in a ring.  
We are part of Boxing Scotland and as such we are continually participating in courses run by them. It would also make sense to use the classrooms of Market Place School when these courses are being run.
4. We would be interested in moving into the hub so that we were in the heart of the community and alongside other 3rd Sector organisations,
5. Sounds like a fantastic idea to keep it open for community use. I'd definitely consider holding my workshops there. Not many other options for me in Inverurie.
6. We are looking for a new rehearsal venue for our expanding community band. This would be perfect.
7. Winter bowling two days per week, would be in interested hall size/costs?
8. An accessible community centre with a gym would be nice, even if we had to crowdsource \$ to buy gym equipment. I would be interested in teaching dance classes there-tap, ballet, jazz, ect for all age groups kids-older adults.
9. I am involved with an organisation which could consider using part of the facility 2 or 3 times per week. In addition, the site may be suitable as a co-location opportunity for an existing 3rd sector organisation based elsewhere in Inverurie.
10. We would use this as a fundraising facility
11. Twice a week, maybe more depending on the facilities available
12. Probably 2 or 3 times a week

13. Trussell Trust Food Bank will welcome a joint office/warehouse approach within the Garioch Partnership project
14. I'm a photographer and would love a place to use in Inverurie with sensible costs.
15. Would be terrific for Camera club meetings for around 50 members. Been looking for a space to use as a photography studio, with some kind of secure storage for studio equipment.
16. Inverurie is a hub of activity which is great! yet often there isn't enough venues available to host community events. We have a number of initiatives we would like to provide for the community. We are looking to launch a Mainly Music group in the Autumn, a weekly youth meeting and community support groups such as the coffee and craft group that currently runs at the Tesco community room. Inverurie has the potential for so much more, but is limited by the lack of community venues, this proposal would be a great benefit to the wider community of Inverurie. Be great to see this happen.
17. We have a pottery group at present in the Community Centre and would love it if we could have space at Market Place School. As at the Community Centre at present, the space could be shared with other arts groups. Also I think a community cafe would be a great way for new people to feel included in the community.
18. Personally I sometimes organise meetings/trainings and this space would be ideal for that. So central and a good choice of room sizes.
19. We are a very small community group that meets weekly. Space here could be ideal for us as a group. Plus for committee meetings.
20. The Gaitherin could make use of the school to hold bi-annual, week long traditional music, drama and dance courses for local young folk during the Easter and October holidays. The central location and layout makes it ideal for us and we could possibly make use of it throughout the year for music/youth work related activities. We also meet as a committee and could use this space for our monthly meetings.
21. I'd like to hold and attend groups at an Inverurie hub. ie. Arts / yoga / Community forums. If it had a cafe I would use it to get lunch when I'm at work at Inspire Soaps.
22. We are very much in support of this and would want to base our charity in the building
23. I'm a member of a childminding group and we may use the facilities for weekly meetings, if the space was affordable, we may also use it for facilitating training
24. Garioch Women for Change will use the school as a weekly venue for meetings and additionally for workshops, exhibitions and for fundraising events. Additionally, we will offer support to other users and groups proposing to use the

centre and will assist in any way we can other parties in the maintenance of the fabric of the building.

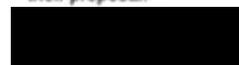
## Appendix 4b: Letters of support



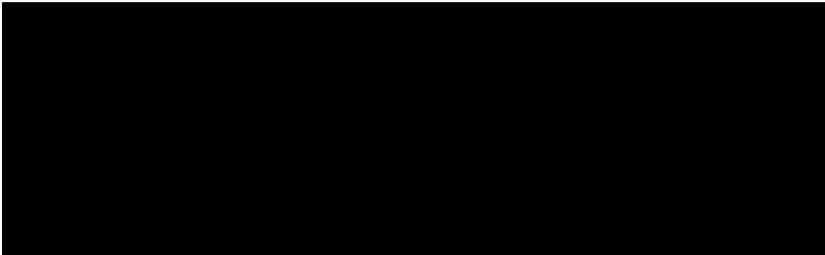
Sent: 09 July 2018 23:04  
To: info@gariochpartnership.org.uk  
Subject: Market Place School

I am writing on personally and on behalf of the Garioch Potters who use the Community Centre at the moment. I am very much in support of the Garioch Partnership's plan for Market Place School.

I was dismayed when I saw the plans for the Community Campus where the community groups were to be placed in all different parts of the building. As far as I am concerned, community means together and there is a great sense of community amongst the groups who use the present Community Centre. I think the Partnership's plan for Market Place School is coming at just the right time and fully support their proposal.



[The Pain Stop](#)  
[The Bowen Technique](#)



11<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Mr Jim Savege  
The Chief Executive  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB16 5GE

Dear Sir

**Marketplace School**

I write in support of the Garioch Partnership application to retain Marketplace School under a community asset transfer, as a hub for the third sector serving Inverurie and the local community.

Whilst the building may not be suitable for modern educational purposes, there is a substantial granite building which, correctly refurbished and maintained, will continue to be an excellent asset to the community.

The thought of losing this merely for car parking, when there is an adjoining playing field available, no longer required as part of the school and much cheaper to develop, would appear to be extremely poor value for the "tax payer".





I did actually raise at one of the early working group meetings and even more recently at one of the BID operational meetings, that we had to find a suitable alternative use for Market Place School.

Through all of the contacts that I have made over the years, I am well aware of the particular shortage of space for third sector groups in particular, with many community groups such as the Orchestra and Drama Groups having to make use of whatever space they can actually find to rehearse and practice. I have no doubt that there would be a large number of community groups who would be able to make use of the space and the accommodation available within the former Market Place School.

In the earlier part of my career with Aberdeen City Council, one of the projects that I was involved in managing, was the Fredrick Street School Development. This was a former school, which was no longer required for educational purposes, where the City Council utilised the space to promote, encourage and support new business ventures. In addition to a strong demand for space by community groups, I do believe that there would be a long term demand for space to support small start up businesses.

The business market has changed, and at the moment new businesses are probably being operated by the owners from either a back room in their house, or a shed or garage at the bottom of the garden. However, scaling up a business to normal retail or office type premises, can be a daunting and financially crippling exercise. We really do need to see something in between. That was the whole purpose of the Fredrick Street School Development, and I believe using Market Place School in a similar manner to even a small extent could help the future of our community as a whole. The building may no longer be suitable for modern educational purposes, but that does not mean that the building should be demolished and the ground turned into a car park. This would be an act of sheer folly, and would be little more than vandalism.

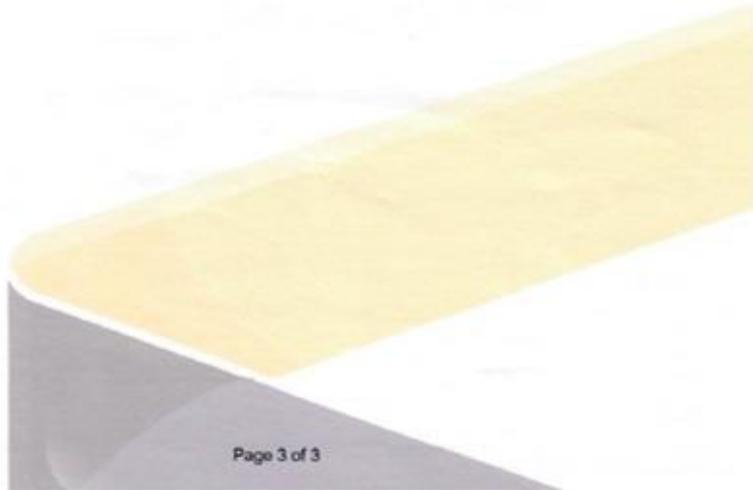
I believe that there have been numerous previous proposals including residential development, but the latest one to turn the space into a car park in my opinion simply wouldn't work. The existing access, which we currently utilise to get access to our office car park, is far from satisfactory. Any alternative access off Wallace Road, I think would also be fraught with issues. As I understand it, the proposal to convert Market Place School into a car park, is to facilitate the council headquarters/office development at the back of Inverurie Town Hall. Surely, the answer here is not to demolish a building which would have a viable future life for an alternative user, but rather to invest money into the enhancement of the car parking at the new transport interchange by the station.

In my humble opinion as a Chartered Surveyor, I believe that the planning authorities and council need to make a decision as to what sort of town centre we want to see in the future. I am firmly of the opinion that a town centre cannot survive on purely Charity Shops, Coffee Shops, and Hairdressers. The changed business reality, and the loss of high street businesses, means that we have to find an alternative way of encouraging footfall within the town centre. If the existing businesses in the town centre decline and die, then there will be no need for car parking.

In short, I would fully support the retention of the Market Place School, for use as community and/or small business hub facilities, and any alternative use of the site, should be a last resort.

I cannot support the demolition of the existing Market Place School buildings, the clearance of the site, and the formation of a car park. The space offered by Market Place School is required by the community and the community should be supported in whatever way possible by the Local Authority to make sure that the facility is retained for community use.

I hope this letter is of some assistance, but if there are any aspects of my comments that you feel you would be best enhanced, I would be more than happy to continue to support your proposal for the future use of Market Place School.





[REDACTED]  
The Garioch Partnership  
1st Floor, Wyness Hall  
Jackson Street  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB

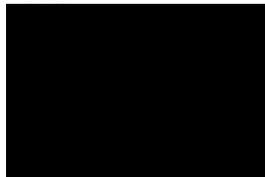
18 July 2018  
[REDACTED]

**RE: Asset transfer request for Market Place Primary School**

The Inverurie Business Association Committee (IBA) is pleased to support this proposal as not only will it increase town centre footfall but reinforce our social fabric and enhance community resilience. The provision for business start-ups is very welcome, and the central location appears to lend itself to a wide range of community uses currently restricted by the unavailability or lack of suitable accommodation.

A rapidly changing retail sector makes additional and more diversified town centre activities highly desirable. We have every confidence this proposal will bring more people in, especially given current public transport improvements adding to the accessibility of Inverurie town centre. With constraints on local authority spending a third sector hub to provide community support must also be beneficial to many, particularly those who may be disadvantaged.

We applaud this initiative by the Garioch Partnership under the Community Asset Transfer legislation, and trust Aberdeenshire Council will recognise the need for this facility and look on their application favourably.



IBA Hub, 1a High St, Inverurie  
Aberdeenshire AB51 3QA

31<sup>st</sup> July 2018

The Garioch Partnership  
1st Floor, Wyness Hall  
Jackson Street  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB



**Asset Transfer of Market Place Primary School to TGP**

As a member of the partnership, Port Elphinstone Community House (PECH) has received invaluable support from TGP over the years not only financially but also in keeping up to date with funding opportunities, training and best practice in how we operate. When we heard of the above proposal at the TGP AGM, we were fully in support. To keep the building in public use, as a hub for third sector, the community and small business start-ups in the middle of the town we believe will strengthen the 3rd sector and the key role it plays in supporting the community.

PECH would also like to see the partnership continue to develop and grow. PECH would benefit from a community hub which hosts an IT room where members could obtain support in preparing promotional literature and social media training.

PECH also agrees that TGP could offer our communities new and exciting opportunities to come together in affordable, accessible space. At PECH we often get contacted by new groups looking for space but PECH is a very small venue and cannot therefore accommodate. We believe that in Inverurie it can be difficult for user groups to find larger venues, particularly for children's groups.

We wish TGP all the best in its application and look forward to receiving up-dates on progress.

[REDACTED]

Co-Chair  
Port Elphinstone Community House

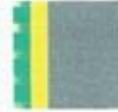
1 Pinewood House, Elphinstone Road, Port Elphinstone,  
Inverurie AB51 3UX

Tel: 01467 625206 [REDACTED]

[www.pechonline.co.uk](http://www.pechonline.co.uk)

Port Elphinstone Community House is a Registered Scottish Charity  
SCO 35192

We Are INverurie Ltd  
Top Floor, 1a High Street, Inverurie AB51 3QA  
07852 617092  
bidmanager@weareinverurie.co.uk



9<sup>th</sup> August 2018



The Garioch Partnership  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Wyness Hall  
Inverurie  
AB51 3QB



We Are Inverurie Ltd are pleased to support the Garioch Partnership in their application to retain Market Place School under a community asset transfer.

We feel that this would serve the community well as a hub for the third sector in Inverurie.

The provision for business start-ups in a central location in the town is also a very attractive part of the proposal.

We hope Aberdeenshire Council will look on their transaction favourably and that common sense will prevail in the end.

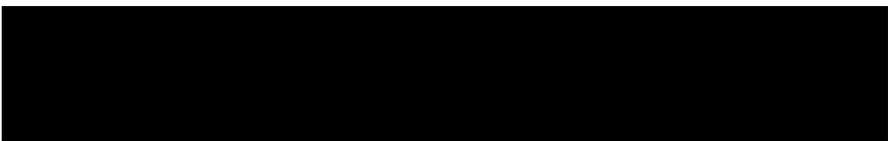


BID Manager

We Are INverurie Ltd

[www.inverurie.gov.uk](http://www.inverurie.gov.uk)





Sent: 14 September 2018 16:35



Subject: Meeting Today



It was nice to meet you today in Inverurie.

Just dropping you a line so that you have my email contact.

Very much interested in the Market School development, and you have our support and interest in the project. We are currently based in Chelsea House and likely to be there until March 2019 as it stands, but very open to moving to a community facing facility should that arise. From our perspective there is very much a demand for such provision in Inverurie, it is a very busy hub for us, and our staff who cover Inverurie, Kintore, Banchory, Huntly and Edon all use it widely.

Regards



Web: [www.alcoholanddrugaction.org.uk](http://www.alcoholanddrugaction.org.uk)  
Tel: 01224 577 120 | Mob:

Alcohol & Drugs Action is a registered charity. Scottish Charity Number SC013562.

Alcohol & Drugs Action  
Aberdeen  
AB11 6NU



Alcohol - Do you know your score? Click the pic to take our quiz!



### Support and Requirements for TGP 3rd sector Hub

HFSA is a local consultancy based in Inverurie, the company currently has two full-time staff and three Associates and works with clients both locally and internationally, including a company working in power generation in Saudi Arabia and Oman, offshore on drilling rigs and platforms and the transition of assets, as well as bakeries and social enterprises.

HFSA is looking to set up a local training centre in Inverurie to offer a wide range of training courses for local businesses and individuals. These courses cover a wide range of subjects including: Risk assessment, H&S legislation, Accident investigation, Auditing, OHSAS 1800, Business improvement i.e. WCM, TPM, TQM, Team building and Human Factors.

We have launched a community interest company (CIC) called sector3safety and are looking to provide free or reduced cost support to social enterprises and charities. Of course, this support must be cost efficient and enable the trustees to manage safety in an easy way.

HFSA and sector3safety are also looking to run seminars and invite local and international speakers to the Hub to cover a number of subjects.

HFSA and sector3safety will provide equipment and funding to set up a training room in the Hub and will look at weekly bookings of at least 1 day with a view to expanding this as the business progresses.

More information about Human Factors Safety Associates is available from the website - [www.hfsa.co.uk](http://www.hfsa.co.uk)





**NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS under Paragraph 8 of the Asset Transfer Request (Review Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 “the Regulations”**

At its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 the Community Empowerment Appeals Committee considered a request from the Garioch Partnership for review of the decision by the Garioch Area Committee of 31 August 2018 to refuse an asset transfer request in relation to the Former Market Place Primary School, Market Place, Inverurie, AB51 3XN.

The Committee determined that the review documents did not provide sufficient information to enable it to determine the review and agreed in terms of further procedure to request further written submissions on the following matters identified:-

- (1) **The valuation of the asset. In particular the Committee seeks further detail from the Garioch Area Manager on the correct valuation figure; and**
- (2) **The proposal to have the asset open and operating within the timeframe identified by the community body given its current condition. In particular the Committee seeks further detail from the Garioch Partnership on how it plans to achieve this.**

Notice of the request for further representations or information is therefore given to the following persons:-

**The Garioch Partnership, First Floor, Wyness Hall, Jackson Street, Inverurie, AB51 3QB**

**The Garioch Area Manager, Aberdeenshire Council, Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie, AB51 3WA**

The above persons are invited to submit any further representations or information in writing in relation to the matters specified above no later than **19<sup>th</sup> December 2018** to:-

Ann Riddell, Principal Committee Officer  
Legal and Governance  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
[ann.riddell@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:ann.riddell@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

**Please note that any further written submission made in response to this notice will be provided to the other person specified above who will have the opportunity to make comment.**

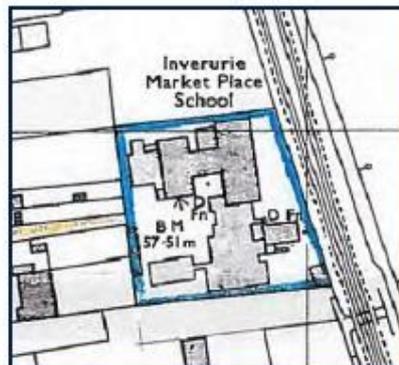


## Report and Valuation

In respect of  
Market Place Primary School  
Wallace Road  
Inverurie  
Aberdeenshire  
AB51 3XN

On behalf of  
Aberdeenshire Council

15 October 2018



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Instruction

1.1.1 In accordance with instructions received from Trevor Morgan, Aberdeenshire Council, we confirm that we have made the necessary enquiries in order to provide our opinion of:-

a) The Market Value of the outright ownership interest in Market Place Primary School, Wallace Road, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, AB51 3XN, assuming full vacant possession and subject to the following special assumptions:

- a. The purchaser will be responsible for the demolition of all buildings and site clearance.
- b. The site is clear of contamination.
- c. The site does not contain any abnormal or unusual ground conditions.
- d. Mains services are available on site or adjacent to the site boundary at reasonable cost.
- e. A servitude right of pedestrian and vehicular access to the site will be provided through the car parking area highlighted in the attached plan at Appendix 1.0.
- f. Due to the change in level between the car park referred to above, and the development site (approx. 0.75m), the purchaser will bear the abnormal cost of constructing a ramp access.
- g. The subjects have Planning Permission in Principle for the development of 24 flatted units.

1.1.2 We understand the interest to be valued to be the outright ownership interest.

1.1.3 The subjects to be valued are a site extending to 0.36 hectare (0.89 acre) comprising the former Market Place Primary School, Wallace Road, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, AB51 3XN. Unless valuing an interest in the property as part of an operational entity, it is usual to exclude trade fixtures, machinery, furnishings and other equipment from the valuation. Unless directly instructed otherwise, we have excluded these items from our opinion of value. We have also disregarded any tenant's improvements in the calculation of our valuation unless appropriate to include these. For the avoidance of doubt, our valuation also excludes major items of plant and machinery.

1.1.4 The subjects currently comprise a former Primary School.

- 1.1.5 This Valuation is to be considered private and confidential and has been prepared solely for the purposes of Aberdeenshire Council, and is not intended for the use or information of any other person or persons. Consequently, and in accordance with current practice, no responsibility is accepted to any third party in respect of the whole or any part of its contents. Neither the whole nor any part of this Valuation nor any reference thereto may be included in any published document, circular or statement or published in any way without our written approval as to the form and context in which it may appear. Our Valuation is provided for your benefit alone and solely for the purposes of the instruction to which it relates. Our Valuation may not, without our written consent, be used or relied upon by any third party, even if that third party pays for all or part of our fees, or is permitted to see a copy of our Valuation Report. If we do provide written consent to a third party relying on our Valuation, any such third party is deemed to have accepted the terms of our engagement.
- 1.1.6 Ryden LLP is a RICS Regulated firm. As a result, Ryden must ensure that all processes and valuations are fully compliant with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards 2017 (The Red Book), with the latest edition having taken effect from 1 July 2017. This report is also fully compliant with the International Valuation Standards (IVS) issued by the International Valuation Standards Council (IVSC).
- 1.1.7 Ryden previously prepared a report and valuation in respect of the surplus Market Place Primary School, Inverurie on 11 January 2017 on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council.
- 1.1.8 Ryden do not consider we have a conflict of interest in this instance.
- 1.1.9 The individual undertaking this Valuation has acted as an External Valuer.
- 1.1.10 Our opinion of value is reported in £ Sterling.
- 1.1.11 Unless otherwise stated, we have relied upon information provided by the client for all the information given concerning details of tenure, tenancies, planning consents, planning proposals, contravention of any statutory requirements, floor plans, building and site areas, the accuracy of passing rental information provided to us and associated tenancy information. When considering commercial property assets where the value is meaningfully influenced by the cashflow associated with tenancies in place, we will investigate the financial standing of the covenants by instigating a Creditsafe report or similar. It will, however, remain the responsibility of the client to also investigate the financial standing of these covenants to ensure that they are comfortable that they will be capable of meeting their rental and lease obligations. The extent of our investigations is contained within our report. The nature and source of information supplied by the client has been relied upon by the valuer.
- 1.1.12 We have highlighted the extent of our liability within the terms and conditions at Appendix 3.0.

**1.2 Inspection**

1.2.1 This report is to be carried out on a desktop only basis and has been prepared by our Associate, Rachel Naylor MA (Hons) MRICS. We would confirm that Rachel is experienced in valuing properties of this nature and has the appropriate knowledge to carry out this valuation. We would confirm that Rachel is an RICS Registered Valuer with Ryden LLP having sponsored her to join the RICS Valuer Registration scheme. All valuations are discussed between the valuer preparing the advice together with members of our transactional teams involved at the coalface of the geographic and sectoral market in which the asset exists. The figures contained within this document were agreed at Partner level prior to reporting.

**1.3 Purpose**

1.3.1 We understand this Valuation is required for internal purposes in connection with the potential disposal of the property.

**1.4 Valuation Date**

1.4.1 The valuation date is 15 October 2018.

**1.5 Basis of Value**

1.5.1 For the avoidance of doubt, our Valuation is subject to the following Basis of Value. The basis of value adopted for this report is:-

**a) Market Value (MV)**

The estimated amount for which an asset or liability should exchange on the valuation date between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's length transaction after proper marketing and where the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.

For the avoidance of doubt, this is the appropriate basis of valuation as contained within the RICS Global Valuation Practice Statement (VPS) 4 of the RICS Valuation – Global Standards 2017, effective from 1 July 2017. Accordingly, the interpretative commentary related to Market Value has been applied in arriving at our opinion of value.

**2.0 Market Place Primary School, Wallace Road, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, AB51 3XN****2.1 Location**

2.1.1 The subjects form part of the popular settlement of Inverurie, which is located around 18 miles north west of Aberdeen. More particularly, the subjects are situated within the very heart of Inverurie town centre, albeit occupy a back lying location situated to the rear of those properties which front Market Place. Access to the property is from Wallace Road, which leads off Market Place. The property is bounded to the east by the main Aberdeen to Inverness railway line.

2.1.2 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature, notwithstanding a number of retail premises which form part of the ground floors of those properties which front Market Place.

**2.2 Description**

2.2.1 The subjects comprise a former primary school, which has been formed in a number of distinct sections arranged over both single and two storey height. The main walls of the original buildings appear to have been constructed from traditional solid pointed stonework, whilst the roof sections over are timber framed, pitched and clad with slate.

2.2.2 Additional accommodation is included within a more modern two storey extension to the south, which appears of modern brickwork or blockwork construction under a pitched roof, clad with slate.

2.2.3 For the purpose of this valuation, we have not carried out an inspection of the property.

**2.3 Accommodation**

2.3.1 We have not had the opportunity to inspect the property and thus are unable to comment upon the accommodation and floor areas provided within. Notwithstanding, it is likely that any purchaser would demolish the buildings prior to any development taking place.

**2.4 Site Area**

2.4.1 Based on plans provided by Aberdeenshire Council, the subjects occupy a site that extends in total to 0.36 hectare (0.89 acre), as shown on the Site Plan at Appendix 1.0.

**2.5 Services**

2.5.1 We have assumed that the site is served by mains electricity, gas and water, with drainage assumed to be to the main public sewer.

2.5.2 None of the services have been tested by us, but we have assumed that services to the assumed development will be available at reasonable cost.

**2.6 Condition of Site & Buildings**

2.6.1 We refer to the terms and conditions as outlined in Appendix 3.0.

2.6.2 No inspection of the property has been undertaken for the purpose of this exercise and we are thus unable to comment upon the condition of the subjects.

- 2.6.3 Our valuation assumes that the site would be sold for residential development.
- 2.6.4 We were not aware of any invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, hogweed or buddlia or similar species.
- 2.6.5 We have not been provided with any site investigation reports or environmental reports for the purposes of this report. Our opinion of value assumes that the site does not contain any abnormal or unusual ground conditions and is clear from contamination.

## 2.7 Rating

- 2.7.1 We have investigated the Scottish Assessors' Association webpage at [www.saa.gov.uk](http://www.saa.gov.uk) and can confirm that the premises are currently entered in the Valuation Roll as follows:-

Description	Property Address	Proprietor	Rateable Value
School	Market Place School Market Place Inverurie Aberdeenshire AB51 3XN	The Aberdeenshire Council Per Head of Property Services	£43,250

- 2.7.2 The Uniform Business Rate for the 2018/2019 financial year is 48.0 pence in the pound for subjects with a Rateable Value below £51,000 and 50.6 pence in the pound where the Rateable Value exceeds this threshold. The owner of vacant properties can be liable for paying rates on the vacant premises at 90% of the full rate. We would expect the rateable value to be reduced to £0 or the property to be removed from the Valuation Roll should the buildings be demolished.
- 2.7.3 Water and sewerage charges will be levied separately by Scottish Water.
- ## 2.8 Planning
- 2.8.1 The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan was adopted in April 2017. The subjects form part of the Inverurie settlement boundary and the defined town centre area. The site itself does not include any specific use designation.
- 2.8.2 As a former primary school, we have assumed that the subjects will benefit from a Planning Consent specific to its former use.
- 2.8.3 Whilst town centre policies will seek to promote retail and office, it is notable that the subjects occupy a back lying location which is unlikely to be compatible with retail use. Demand for office use is also anticipated to be narrow at this time.
- 2.8.4 Having regard to the setting of the area immediately surrounding the property, it is notable that the majority of the surrounding properties are residential in nature, comprising several detached dwellings, modern terraced housing and apartments. Based on your instructions, we have provided our opinion of value under the special assumption that planning consent is in place for a hypothetical scheme of mainstream development.

2.8.5 In the absence of any considered scheme of development, we have based our calculations on a scheme of 24 residential units, comprising 12 mainstream two bedroom flatted units, 6 mainstream one bedroom flatted units and 6 one bedroom affordable units for low cost home ownership. A detailed description of our valuation approach and accompanying assumptions are referred to within Section 2.10 below.

#### **2.9 Tenure – Outright Ownership**

2.9.1 We have not inspected the Title Deeds and for the purpose of our Valuation, have relied on the information provided. In the absence of information to the contrary, we have assumed that the title is not encumbered by any onerous restrictions, unusual covenants or other burdens.

#### **2.10 Market Commentary & Valuation Methodology**

2.10.1 The subjects under report comprise a primary school which we understand is now surplus to requirements.

2.10.2 The subjects are well located, being situated within the town centre of Inverurie and a five minute walk away from the railway station. The site is, however, back lying and, as a result, would unlikely appeal to Class 1, 2 and 3 occupiers. The site is bounded by open grassland to the north, a railway line to the east, sheltered housing to the south and residential flats to the west. In preparing our opinion of value, we have had regard to the density of the surrounding area and the existing skyline.

2.10.3 Based on your instructions, we have considered our opinion of value for the former Market Place Primary School under the special assumption that planning consent is in place for a hypothetical scheme of mainstream development.

2.10.4 Unfortunately, we have not been provided with any scheme of development for the purpose of this exercise, nor any related development costs. As such, we have attempted to consider a hypothetical scheme of development based on typical development costs and site densities in an effort to determine the value of the subjects if sold on such a basis.

2.10.5 We have appraised the site under a number of different scenarios in order to release the highest value. In doing so, we are of the opinion the site would lend itself, following the demolition of the existing buildings, to a two storey flatted development comprising 12 two bedroom flats of 85 sq m, 6 one bedroom flats of 45 sq m and 6 one bedroom affordable flats for low cost home ownership. Externally, we have allowed for necessary car parking provisions and landscaping areas.

2.10.6 For the purpose of determining the Market Value of the site, we have undertaken a residual valuation appraisal, based on the scheme development described above.

2.10.7 This technique essentially estimates the sale price which could be achieved for the completed development and thereafter deducts the various costs required to complete the development (including construction costs, fees, interest charges, developer's profit, etc), to arrive at the residual value, which is an approximation of the price the developer would be prepared to pay for the land. Developers typically undertake a similar process when bidding for sites.

2.10.8 In the absence of any detailed scheme of development and related development costs, our opinion of value should be regarded with some caution, acknowledging that the value that is ultimately achieved by the sale of the subjects will correlate directly to the actual consented scheme of development and its associated costs.

2.10.9 The factors we have considered when preparing our valuation are as follows:-

Development Timescale

2.10.10 We have adopted a total development timescale of 21 months, which includes a construction period of 12 months, together with a 3 month period for demolition/pre-construction/infrastructure works. Our opinion of value assumes that sales will commence from Month 11 and will conclude in Month 21. This reflects a total absorption rate of approximately 1.8 per month, based on the mainstream units only.

Sales Revenue (GDV)

2.10.11 Following the demolition of the existing buildings and site clearance, we have assumed that Planning Consent in Principle will be in place for the development of 24 apartments, comprising 12 two bedroom mainstream apartments of 85 sq m, 6 one bedroom mainstream apartments of 45 sq m and 6 one bedroom apartments for low cost home ownership, each of 45 sq m that would be capable of generating net sale proceeds of £3,540,000. This hypothetical scheme reflects a density of 27 units per acre.

Construction Costs

2.10.12 In the absence of any detailed construction costs, we have assumed that the two bedroom mainstream apartments could be constructed based on an all-in construction cost of £1,100 per sq m and the one bedroom mainstream and affordable apartments at an all-in rate of £1,200 per sq m to reflect inverse quantum. Our calculations adopt a contingency of 3% of this total construction cost and, in addition, makes allowance for site servicing and infrastructure works, totalling £240,000 (£10,000 per unit).

2.10.13 In addition to the above, we have allowed £80,000 for demolition and site clearance, together with a sum of £7,500 for the construction of a ramp access due to the change in level between the site and the car park to the south which will be used to provide pedestrian and vehicular access to the subjects.

Professional Fees

2.10.14 5% of construction cost, equating to £89,460.

2.10.15 In addition to the above, we have adopted £19,200 payable to NHBC.

Disposal Fees

2.10.16 We have adopted a sales fee for conveyancing of 0.5% of GDV and, in addition, made an allowance of 2.5% for sales and marketing costs associated with the mainstream apartments within the development.

Acquisition Costs

- 2.10.17 Within our appraisal, we have allowed for various acquisition costs including; Legal Fee, LBTT, Building Warrant Fees, Planning Fees and a Valuation for secured lending.

Developer Contributions

- 2.10.18 Based on a development of 24 units, we have assumed that there would be a 25% requirement for affordable housing, which we have assumed would be delivered on the site for low cost home ownership comprising 6 one bedroomed apartments. Developer contributions will be a matter for future negotiation, however, in the meantime we have made a pre-application enquiry to Aberdeenshire Council who indicate that, based on the proposed scheme of development outlined above, Developer Obligations would equate to approximately £107,961. We have adopted this cost within our calculations.

Finance Costs

- 2.10.19 Our calculations assume a debt requirement to fund the proposed development based on a borrowing cost of 4% which, over the development period and including an arrangement fee, equates to £97,973.

Developer's Profit

- 2.10.20 Our calculations adopt a target profit on GDV of 20% on the mainstream units and 10% on the affordable units.

Residual Value

- 2.10.21 For the proposed 24 unit flatted development detailed herein, we calculate a residual site value of £290,000.

- 2.10.22 Our current development appraisal has been undertaken with reference to market evidence where available. However, our methodology is clearly subjective as it is based on a hypothetical scheme only and detailed development costs have not been estimated by a QS. Further, the suitability of the site for such a development is assumed, but there is no planning permission in place. We would caution that a developer would consider their offer price based on their own detailed scheme to arrive at a residual site value. Our opinion of value is based on a number of special assumptions as set out below and, should any of these assumptions prove incorrect, this could have a significant impact on our opinion of value reported herein. As such, our opinion of value should be considered as guidance only.

**2.11 Valuation**

- 2.11.1 Taking the above factors into consideration, we are of the opinion that the Market Value of the outright ownership interest in the subject premises at Market Place Primary School, Wallace Road, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, AB51 3XN, assuming full vacant possession, and based on the special assumptions set out below, as at the Valuation Date, is:

**£290,000 (Two Hundred and Ninety Thousand Pounds)**

As indicated above, our opinion of value is provided based on the following Special Assumptions:

- a. The purchaser will be responsible for the demolition of all buildings and site clearance.
- b. The site is clear of contamination.
- c. The site does not contain any abnormal or unusual ground conditions.
- d. Mains services are available on site or adjacent to the site boundary at reasonable cost.
- e. A servitude right of pedestrian and vehicular access to the site will be provided through the car parking area highlighted in the plan attached at Appendix 1.0.
- f. Due to the change in level between the car park referred to above, and the development site (approx. 0.75m), the purchaser will bear the abnormal cost of constructing a ramp access.
- g. The subjects have Planning Permission in Principle for the development of 24 flatted units.

We trust this is sufficient for your current purposes, however, should you require any further assistance or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.



-----  
Rachel Naylor MA (Hons) MRICS  
**Associate**  
RICS Registered Valuer  
For and on Behalf of Ryden LLP

-----  
Richard Lang BLE (Hons) MRICS ACI Arb  
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RICS Registered Valuer  
For and on Behalf of Ryden LLP

15 October 2018

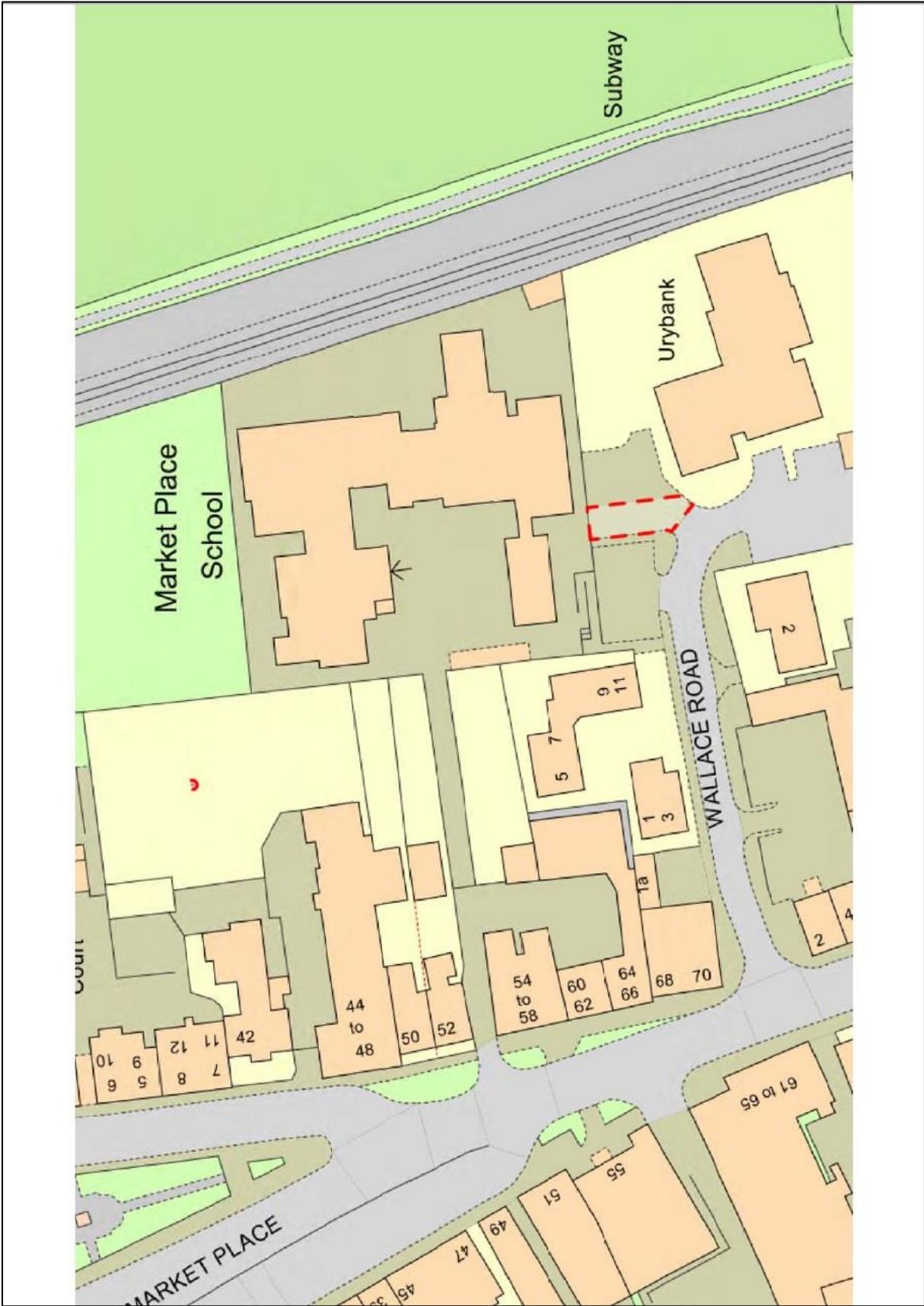
# Appendix 1.0

Site Plans

Ryden



Notes



# Appendix 2.0

Valuation Calculations

Market Place Primary School  
24 Units

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Market Place Primary School  
Inverurie  
Aberdeenshire

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Development Appraisal  
Licensed Copy  
15 October 2018

**APPRAISAL SUMMARY****LICENSED COPY****Market Place Primary School  
24 Units****Summary Appraisal for Phase 1**

Currency in £

**REVENUE**

Sales Valuation	Units	Unit Price	Gross Sales
Block 1	12	185,000	2,220,000
Block 2	8	145,000	870,000
Block 2 - Affordables	6	75,000	450,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>3,540,000</b>

**NET REALISATION** 3,540,000**OUTLAY****ACQUISITION COSTS**

Residualised Price			288,427	
				288,427
Stamp Duty			4,273	
Legal Fee		1.00%	2,884	
Building Warrant Fees			6,898	
Town Planning			9,624	
Survey			2,750	
				26,429

**CONSTRUCTION COSTS**

Construction	m <sup>2</sup>	Rate m <sup>2</sup>	Cost
Block 1	1,020.00 m <sup>2</sup>	1,100.00 pm <sup>2</sup>	1,122,000
Block 2	270.00 m <sup>2</sup>	1,200.00 pm <sup>2</sup>	324,000
Block 2 - Affordables	270.00 m <sup>2</sup>	1,200.00 pm <sup>2</sup>	324,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,560.00 m<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>1,770,000</b>

Contingency		3.00%	53,100	
Demolition			80,000	
Ramp Access			7,500	
Road/Site Works			240,000	
Planning Obligation			107,961	
				488,561

**Other Construction**

NHBC			19,200	
				19,200

**PROFESSIONAL FEES**

Other Professionals		5.00%	89,460	
				89,460

**DISPOSAL FEES**

Sales Legal Fee		0.50%	17,700	
Block 1			55,500	
Block 2			21,750	
				94,950

**Additional Costs**

Arrangement Fee			25,000	
				25,000

**Interest and Fees**

Interest paid to Debt Sources:

**APPRAISAL SUMMARY****LICENSED COPY****Market Place Primary School****24 Units**

Debt (4.000%)	72,973	
Total Interest paid to Debt Sources:		72,973
Total Interest Paid		72,973

**TOTAL COSTS****2,875,000****PROFIT**

Balancing Account	665,000	<b>665,000</b>
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**Performance Measures**

Profit on Cost%	23.13%
Profit on GDV%	18.79%
Profit on NDV%	18.79%
Ungeared IRR%	34.67%
Gearred IRR% (without Interest)	34.67%
Equity IRR% (without Interest)	N/A
Return on Equity%	N/A

**After Tax Performance Measures**

Gearred IRR% (without Interest)	34.67%
Equity IRR% (without Interest)	0.00%
Return on Equity%	N/A

# Appendix 3.0

Terms & Conditions

Ryden

## Terms & Conditions

### 1 TENURE

#### (a) Outright Ownership

We have not inspected the Title Deeds and for the purpose of our Valuation, have relied on the information provided. In the absence of information to the contrary, we have assumed that the title is not encumbered by onerous restrictions, unusual covenants or other burdens.

### 2 STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

We assume, unless we are specifically instructed to the contrary, that the property complies with the Factories Act 1961, the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963, the Building (Scotland) Acts, the Health & Safety at Work Etc., Act 1974, the Fire Precautions Act 1971 and other related legislation and regulations made thereunder. We further assume that the property is not adversely affected by any statutory notices or orders or proposals under the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Acts or any other public or local statute or regulation or order.

### 3 STATE OF REPAIR

We have not carried out a building survey, nor have we inspected those parts of the property which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and such parts have been assumed to be in good repair and condition. We cannot express an opinion about or advise upon the condition of uninspected parts and this report should not be taken as making any implied representation or statement about such parts.

### 4 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

We have not arranged for any investigation to be carried out to determine whether or not any deleterious or hazardous material has been used in the construction of the property, or has since been incorporated, and we are therefore unable to report that the property is free from risk in this respect. For the purpose of this valuation we have assumed that such investigation would not disclose the presence of any such material to any significant extent.

### 5 SITE CONDITION AND CONTAMINATION

5.1 Important provisions of the Environment Act 1995 came into force. This Act made amendments to previous environmental legislation and established a new regulatory regime. It includes new provisions relating to contaminated land (now contained in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IIA).

5.2 We are not aware of the content of any environmental audit or other environmental investigation or soil survey which may have been carried out on the property and which may draw attention to any contamination or the possibility of any such contamination. In undertaking our work, we have assumed that no contaminative or potentially contaminative uses have ever been carried out in the property. We have not carried out any investigation into past or present uses, either on the property or any neighbouring land, to establish whether there is any contamination or potential for contamination to the subject property from these uses or sites, and have therefore assumed that none exists.

However, should it be established subsequently that contamination exists at the property or on any neighbouring land, or that the property has been or is being put to a contaminative use, this might reduce the values now reported.

## 6 ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATES

The EU Directive on Energy Performance of Buildings has been implemented. Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) are now required for all commercial properties being let or sold.

Whilst our Report may comment in general terms on the energy efficiency properties of the property, it does not constitute an Energy Performance Assessment, as required by current legislation.

The Scottish Government is committed to achieving an 80% reduction in Scotland's emissions by 2050 and a 42% reduction by 2020 through The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 which received Royal Assent on 4 August 2009. Section 63 of the Act requires regulations to be made for:-

- the assessment of the energy performance of existing non-domestic buildings and greenhouse gas emissions from such buildings; and
- for building owners to take steps to improve the energy performance of, and reduce emissions from, such buildings.

The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-Domestic Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2016 introduce requirements on building owners for both the assessment, and the improvement, of the emissions and energy performance of non-domestic buildings with a floor area of more than 1,000 sq m that are not constructed to 2002 building standards or later.

Property owners will be required to assess their greenhouse gas emissions and energy performance and a plan to improve the energy performance of buildings and reduce emissions will be required to be produced.

There will be obligations on owners of certain Scottish properties to either:

- Carry out certain energy efficiency improvement works within 3½ years; or
- Accept an obligation annually to report energy consumption and to keep a Display Energy Certificate (DEC) exhibited at the property until efficiency measures have been implemented.

The regulations will apply to any commercial building in Scotland with a floor area of more than 1,000 sq m (or 10,764 sq ft), however, the following exclusions will apply:

- Properties that comply with 2002 (or more recent) Scottish building regulations;
- Properties that have benefitted from energy improvements under a Green Deal plan;
- Temporary buildings intended for use for two years or less;
- Workshops, and
- Properties with low energy demand, for example, where there is no heat provision.

The property owner must obtain an EPC on sale or rental and undertake a further assessment to identify a target for improvement of the carbon and energy performance of the building.

An action plan, set by an assessor, is required to detail the physical improvements required to the property to achieve the target. Once the plan is in place, the owner can choose to carry out improvements and has a period of 3½ years to do the physical work.

Alternatively, work can be deferred by instead recording and reporting actual metered energy use via a DEC on an annual basis.

Along with the EPC, the Action Plan must be made available to prospective buyers or tenants and the obligation will apply to the owner who commissioned the action plan and to future owners.

Improvements can include any of the following:-

- Installing draught stripping to doors and windows;
- Upgrading lighting controls;
- Upgrading heating controls, low energy lighting, or installing insulation in an accessible roof space – if the payback period of the works is 7 years or less;
- Replacement of a boiler if more than 15 years old;
- Any other works, measures or steps to improve the energy performance or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases associated with the property.

The following are exempt from the requirements:-

- The renewal of a lease to an existing tenant;
- The grant of a lease for 16 weeks or less where the property has not been let by the owner during the preceding 36 weeks;
- The grant of a sub-lease;
- A sale or lease of a property in the course of construction.

Once in force, the new regulations will be triggered once a commercial property owner wishes to sell the property or grant a lease to a new tenant.

Similar rules do not come into force in England and Wales until 1 April 2018 and will not apply to sales.

Further explanation is still required and the publication of guidance notes is expected in the coming months to accompany the regulations to clarify the approach.

Property owners in Scotland must now take account the requirements for energy efficiency measures when they sell or lease properties from 1 September 2016.

#### **7 SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

Unless otherwise stated, we have relied on information provided by the client for all the information given concerning details of tenure, tenancies, planning consents, planning proposals, contravention of any statutory requirements, outstanding statutory notices and building and site areas. Unless already available, the client is recommended to seek confirmation, in writing, from the appropriate parties, concerning information supplied to us on the above matters.

#### **8 EQUALITY ACT 2010**

Our valuation assumes that the premises are compliant with the above Act. The Equality Act 2010 now incorporates matters involving Disability Discrimination. Should this not be the case, we would reserve the right to amend our valuation accordingly.

#### **9 SUSTAINABILITY**

In carrying out a valuation, we have also had due cognisance to the contents of the RICS Guidance Note on Sustainability and Commercial Property Valuation (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). In summary, we have complied with best practice in reporting on sustainability matters where they affect value.

#### **10 SECONDARY LENDERS**

Ryden do not carry out valuations for secondary lenders unless with prior written agreement.



**NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS under Paragraph 8 of the Asset Transfer Request (Review Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 “the Regulations”**

At its meeting on 28th November 2018 the Community Empowerment Appeals Committee considered a request from the Garioch Partnership for review of the decision by the Garioch Area Committee of 31 August 2018 to refuse an asset transfer request in relation to the Former Market Place Primary School, Market Place, Inverurie, AB51 3XN.

The Committee determined that the review documents did not provide sufficient information to enable it to determine the review and agreed in terms of further procedure to request further written submissions on the following matters identified:-

**(1) The valuation of the asset. In particular the Committee seeks further detail from the Garioch Area Manager on the correct valuation figure; and**

**(2) The proposal to have the asset open and operating within the timeframe identified by the community body given its current condition. In particular the Committee seeks further detail from the Garioch Partnership on how it plans to achieve this.**

**Question 2, The Garioch Partnership response.**

As identified in The Garioch Partnership (TGP) business plan (page 17) “Modifications will commence when the needs of new groups are identified and suitable funding is secured. This is anticipated to be 2019.”

Obviously as the timescale for the asset transfer has been driven by Aberdeenshire Council, this timeline will slightly alter to allow for the delays that are outwith the control of TGP. The length of the process has been controlled by Aberdeenshire Council, with TGP doing all they could to ensure it was as quick as possible. Our submission to the Garioch Area Manager was Validated on 4/07/2018, queries responded to by 20/07/2018. At the time of submission, we had been of the understanding that there would be a recess hearing, which then got altered to the 28/08/2018 Garioch Area Committee meeting, and the refusal there, and subsequent timing for appeal documentation to be prepared has been within the expected timeline for Asset Transfer.

TGP have funds in our reserves that would allow some work to commence on securing the ownership of the property. Other funds would then be applied for immediately to allow further development and the repair of the vandalism that has been allowed to occur due to the premises being left vacant for a long period. This period of vacancy was not something we had initially planned for due to our initial interest in the property being notified to the previous Garioch Area Manager in November 2016, with a view to having the asset transfer processed and accepted, therefore the date of transfer would be much sooner after the school had vacated (being minded of the rates burden an empty property would place on Aberdeenshire Council) and to avoid the building deteriorating and possible vandalism of a vacated property.

We are now facing having to source additional funding to allow us to repair the building as it has sat empty for so long, and been allowed to be vandalised, therefore this will inevitably have a knock on effect to how quickly we can have the building open for safe use, however saying this, TGP believe we can still have the asset up and running within a reasonable timeframe to allow us to deliver on our business plan and to meet the needs of the Garioch community.

TGP have had exploratory conversations with grant giving bodies and funders in advance, and will have the ability to apply for these funds if and when the transfer goes ahead. We cannot apply for funds prior to the asset transfer decision. There is a precedent of funding for third sector hubs across the funders we have been in discussion with.

TGP also have some of the user groups who are awaiting notification from us, who have the funds in place for their own fitting out of the space they require (HFSA and sector3safety) and an agreement that this space could also be used by other community groups when they did not require it, giving TGP the option of high quality, well equipped space for community use.

TGP also have plans for a crowdfunder type approach to develop the asset and allow us to offer more for the community, and offers of support from local businesses to keep the asset in community use. There is a continued need being identified by the community for this asset to remain in public use, and a desire and demand to see this building being used.

With all of these factors, we believe that TGP would be able to have the building back to a useable state within a matter of weeks of the request being granted, and then would have further time to develop more funding applications to ensure a fit-for-purpose and useful community hub over the following few months, with the centre being fully operational within 6 - 8 months of the asset transfer being granted, and then TGP can affect an ongoing planned redevelopment of the property to attract a wider variety of user groups, which would create the revenue to support the upkeep and future renovation of the building to ensure a hub that has a lasting impact and legacy for Inverurie and the wider Garioch area.



**A. Comments from the Garioch Area Manager on the written submission from the Garioch Partnership**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the response received from the Garioch Partnership regarding the potential Asset Transfer of the former Market Place Primary School.

The comments on the timescales pertaining to the Asset Transfer process are noted, specifically the initial interest in November 2016. These comments imply that the Council should have been maintaining the building as soon as this initial interest was submitted. It is important that the Appeal Committee note that the Councils priority is to manage assets in a manner which meets the needs of Council service delivery not any individual or third party. In this instance the Council determined that the site was surplus to requirements and was ultimately to be demolished. The building was therefore managed in line with this decision and has attracted no investment in terms of repairs and maintenance, other than essential works to maintain public safety.

It is noted that the Partnership "have funds in their reserves that would allow some works on securing ownership of the property". The extent of what the reserves would be able to finance is not made clear and while there is no doubt some works would be able to be financed from The Garioch Partnerships reserves, given the small surplus the Partnership generate (£2,794 in 2017/18), it is unlikely they will have sufficient reserves to carry out even minor repair works let alone making inroads into the £146,682.50 (excluding VAT and professional fees) estimated by Ryden for maintenance works identified before occupation.

The Garioch Partnership acknowledge that applications will need to be made to secure funding for the works required they also acknowledge that the repair works required will have a "knock on effect" on how quickly the building will become operational. The Partnership have not defined what they consider to be a "reasonable timeframe", however given the building has deteriorated further since the original report to Garioch Area Committee on 28 August 2018 this issue will only become more difficult for the Partnership to address moving forward.

Should the Community Empowerment Appeals Committee wish to refuse the appeal, The Garioch Partnership have indicated they would wish to submit a final appeal to Scottish Ministers. It is worthy of note that although it is the ambition of Scottish Government to deal with appeals within six months, currently this timeframe is not being met, with anticipated timeframes in the region of 12 months. This further reinforces the problems highlighted within the Garioch Partnerships response regarding the deterioration of the building. Given the level of funding required to carry out the necessary repairs is way beyond the reserves of the Partnership, this additional time frame will only serve to widen the funding deficit.

Officers recognise the challenges faced by applicants in terms of securing external funding during the Asset Transfer process. However, this is an ambitious project of significant scale. Applications to funders to meet the funding deficit come with the inevitable risk that they may not be approved. The type of user groups that would

occupy the building are likely to have limited funds too, funds which may be prioritised for the delivery of core activities.

The crowdfunding element is more difficult to assess. The Garioch Partnership have the expertise to launch a successful crowdfunding campaign. However, there is no evidence to suggest that there is a significant level of community interest in this project to generate a meaningful response from the wider public.

The Garioch Partnership also state that they have "offers of support from local businesses to keep the asset in community use". That would appear to indicate that local support is already available, but the nature of the support remains unclear, for example if such support is able to be expressed in purely cash terms would it make any positive difference towards the cost of what needs to be spent on the property?

Officers remain concerned in relation to the on-going burden for the community beyond the possible initial enthusiasm to financially support such a project. The Partnership do not seem to have an exit strategy for when individual groups are unable to sustain their part of the facility, if for example other groups cannot be identified to fill the gaps.

The additional comments provided by The Partnership strike an optimistic tone but they provide no evidence that they would be able to secure the necessary funding to make a success of the project.

The impression given by The Partnership is that such applications would be more likely to be successful than fail but nothing is provided to justify such optimism.



**ASSET TRANSFER UNDER THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACT**

**REFUSED**

To: THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP, FIRST FLOOR, WYNESS HALL, JACKSON STREET, INVERURIE, AB51 3QB

DATE OF NOTICE – 22 JANUARY 2019

This Decision Notice relates to the asset transfer request made by THE GARIOCH PARTNERSHIP, (SCIO SC043548) on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018 in relation to FORMER MARKET PLACE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MARKET, PLACE, INVERURIE, AB51 3XN (“The Request”)

**OUTCOME - Aberdeenshire Council has decided to refuse the request.**

**Reasons for Decision**

In terms of Section 82(2) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 the Council has carried out a review of the decision confirmed by notice dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018 to refuse the request. Following review, the Council has confirmed the decision subject to modifications.

The reasons for the decision as modified following review are; -

**Statutory grounds for refusal**

The Council has considered the request in terms of Section 82 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“the Act”) and reached the decision that they have **(four)** reasonable grounds in terms of Section 82 of the Act to refuse the request and these are;-

**( First Ground ) Consideration of the benefits of the Request has demonstrated insufficient evidence of these being achievable**

The case for agreeing to the request by the Applicant is substantially made in the Applicant’s Business plan and which was submitted to support the Request, but given the weakness and lack of evidence in the Business plan ,the Council consider there is insufficient evidence that the request will result in or is likely to succeed or promote or improve;(i) economic development, (ii) regeneration,(iii) public health,(iv) social wellbeing, or (iv) environmental wellbeing or any other or other benefits ,and accordingly, it is not unreasonable for the Council to refuse the request .

The consideration of the Business Plan by the Council and its proposed benefits are as set out as under noted, and underlines the Council’s reasoning to coming to the conclusion to refuse;-

## **1.1 Proposal**

Although great emphasis is placed on the requirement for a 'much needed' Third Sector Hub little evidence of need and demand has been provided to substantiate this assertion. The Request does not include a market needs assessment.

The ambition of reducing reliance on core grant funding support from the Council is positive and one which the Council would support. However, the surplus figures calculated on page 24 of the Business Plan submitted by the Applicant are not factually accurate raising questions in terms of how this can be achieved.

There is no evidence of additional activities generated because of this Request, other than those derived from the co-location of voluntary services e.g. synergy of space, collective working etc.

## **1.2 Overview and Structure**

The Council is content that the Board of Trustees have a strong skill set. However, given the high dependency on funding from the Council it is unclear how the organisation itself will be sustained in the longer term should funding from the public-sector decrease.

## **1.3 Project Background**

The Council is supportive of the ambition set out in the Request. However, there is a general lack of information in terms of how the Partnership plans to deliver on key aspects of the project. Importantly there is a lack of evidence in terms of commitment and detailed usage from other voluntary organisations.

Great emphasis has been placed on the perceived lack of affordable meeting space. The Partnership's proposed hourly charge can be found on page 23 of the Business Plan. Upon comparison with Aberdeenshire Council's charging policy in all cases the Councils hourly rate is significantly less.

No additional evidence has been submitted to show that demand outstrips supply within the area. With respect to Inverurie Town Hall alone based on regular lets only and not considering one off bookings the hall is used on average 25.5 hours a week out of a possible 98 hours (based on availability between the hours of 8am to 10pm). High quality community space will also be available upon completion of the Inverurie Community Campus.

Although there is no financial projection associated with the 'affordable nursery provision' the implication within this section is that this would be a subsidised facility. This would have implications for nursery providers throughout the area and no evidence has been provided to demonstrate how this would align with the Councils 1140 implementation strategy.

#### **1.4 Community Needs and Demands / Partnerships**

On initial reading the Council considered the community engagement element of the plan to be weak. In response to this feedback the Partnership launched an online petition, the outcome of which highlights a few issues which are factually incorrect, for example a perceived affirmation that the Inverurie Campus will not be accessible and affordable to all. Although the petition attracted several comments the Partnership has not undertaken any robust analysis of this feedback. The petition therefore adds very little in terms of the robustness of the Business Case. There is little information to demonstrate how the Partnership has adopted to engage with the wider community and there is little detail in terms of the outcome of this engagement.

Whilst groups have stated general interest, other than perhaps the Food Bank there is no detail in terms of actual commitment nor levels of anticipated usage. No guaranteed user groups have been identified nor potential customers seeking a lease.

The identified user groups themselves do not look like they would be financially strong and may well rely on donations etc for their own funding. Although there is an indication that business start-up is an area of interest there is no detail to support this demand, nor a clear indication as to how this could contribute to the sustainability of the project.

Further submissions were made in the request for review from the Applicant which included additional information on user groups and community engagement. However the proposals are still lacking in detail and do not add anything to the overall Business Case which in the Council's view is not sufficiently robust to demonstrate the benefits of the project.

#### **1.5 Asset**

There is no evidence to suggest that the Applicant has undertaken an independent condition survey of the building. There is no depth to this section of the plan in terms of how the Applicant plans to raise the funds required to upgrade the facility, nor is there any indication throughout the plan as to the extent of required capital investment or ongoing maintenance costs, although the Applicant clearly consider these costs to be minimal. The Council agreed that it would have been prudent for the Applicant to conduct a full survey of the building to ascertain repair and maintenance costs. As the business plan takes no account of these costs and given the surplus figures have been calculated incorrectly, the Council are of the view that even a small unexpected capital cost could jeopardise the viability of the project. This is borne out by the survey instructed by the Council which concludes costs in the sum of £146,682.50 would be incurred (excluding VAT and professional fees) to reinstate the asset to a condition prior to any of the improvement works proposed under the Business Plan.

Given there is an expectation in the plan to attract office start-ups no consideration has been given as to the basic works required to upgrade the space to a lettable

standard to attract potential high value leaseholders, for example; good quality refurbishment, wall and floor coverings, furniture, Wi-Fi, etc. Building Warrant costs are also not included.

As part of the review process, further information was sought from the Applicant on this issue however the response lacked sufficient detail and failed to provide any further assurance.

### **1.6 Capital cost**

The Applicant in the request for review submitted that the asset valuation of £555,000 was incorrect and following a request for written information from Council officers, the correct valuation figure of £290,000 has been noted. However the valuation of the asset remains significant therefore the change in valuation does not materially impact the reasons for refusal as set out below.

There remains nothing within the section to indicate how the Applicant would meet the capital cost of purchasing the asset. Although the expectation is that it would be sold for £5,000, this asset has an independent market value of £290,000. Apart from the unexplored nursery provision, the Business Plan is heavily weighted towards the provision of a centralised location for users, rather than providing any new benefit or services to the community. Accordingly, due to the lack of evidence the projected benefits are ill defined and/or unrealistic and do not demonstrate value for money or Best Value characteristics which would competently justify any discount from the market value. If the transfer were to proceed this would result in a loss of an asset with a value of £290,000 with the resulting impact on the capital plan.

If the transfer was to proceed at such a discounted price, then it would be essential that the Council make it a condition of any sale that the Applicant be required to repay the difference in price if the benefits are not delivered or to return any increase in value to the Council if the use of the Asset is changed. This can be done by imposing conditions within the Contract to sell and or to seek securities over the title albeit due to the legislative complexities of these conditions there are risks in the absolute robustness of enforcing these in the future.

### **1.7 Plan**

The implementation of the Inverurie Town Hall element of the Aberdeenshire Office Strategy is heavily dependent on the provision of carparking at the Market Place site. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for the Applicant to assume that the Town Hall element of the strategy will be implemented should this site be disposed of through an Asset Transfer.

Should the Council be able to implement the Town Hall element of the Office Strategy it would look to secure the use of assets within its existing control to reduce costs and to provide temporary accommodation to displaced users where possible.

Aligned with previous comments, this section indicates that renovation will be in a planned manner. However, there is no clear asset management plan for the building

and no indication that the applicant understands the requirements for capital investment and ongoing maintenance costs. The response to the request for information sought by the Council as part of the review provided no further assurance on this point as it lacked sufficient detail.

## **1.8 Management Plan**

The Council welcome the establishment of a user group but again there is little detail as to how the services would be delivered. A business start-up provision is suggested but there is no evidence of the demand for such a provision.

There is some potential for duplication of effort with the existing Business Gateway service. The plan states "Start-up Business opportunities are often the first step into long term employment for the unemployed, this could be achieved working with another partner in sections of the MPPS facility." However, business start-up support is already catered for at Crichtonbank and Thainstone Business Centre.

The plan includes a Disaster Resilience Centre and again there is no indication as to what this means in real terms, or how this would generate income. The Council utilises a hub and spoke model for Rest Centres during the response phase of emergencies, in the case of Inverurie, the Academy being the "hub" and the primary schools the "spokes". This model is embedded in policy and works very well.

## **1.9 Project**

### **1.9.1 Project Costs**

The business plan is well structured. However, Officers are concerned about the lack of substance from a financial perspective. It is very unusual for a three-year financial forecast to contain so little detail and Officers would reflect that the income figures within the Financial Appraisal seem highly optimistic.

The business plan does not recognise that a reduction in occupancy e.g. 20%, 30%, 40% does not equate with a comparable reduction in utility costs unless the opening hours are greatly reduced and set as such. If this approach were to be taken the operation would not be beneficial to the overall community. Due to this lack of correlation the breakeven costs would be higher than stated in the business plan (£165).

The running costs relied upon by the Applicant have been calculated using current figures from Aberdeenshire Council. This does not include expenditure on items such as telephony, ICT, Broadband, administration, HR etc. An assumption has been made that as these are currently paid within the Councils revenue grant to the Partnership and that this would be sustained. The Partnership should not rely on this assumption. It appears that no calculation has been made regarding an increase in these costs as the organisation moves to a larger building. Therefore, they do not appear in the forecast.

The Council does not consider these costs to be realistic and given the lack of detail and evidence provided throughout the Business Case, this can be considered a competent reason to refuse the request.

### 1.9.2 Capital Cost

Apart from the unexplored nursery provision, the Business Plan is heavily weighted towards the provision of a centralised location for users, rather than providing any new services to the community. Due to the lack of evidence and detail within the Request, The Council is unable to competently apply the discount model. Given the Applicant is only prepared to pay £5,000 for the asset, Officers are of the view that this does not provide Best Value and agree this is not a viable way forward.

#### **(Second Ground ) Alternative Proposal**

The benefits of the asset transfer request are judged to be less than the benefits of an alternative proposal, namely, there is insufficient evidence provided to demonstrate the benefits arising from the Request, as opposed to those benefits to be gained from the Council's decision of 26 April 2018 to progress the Aberdeenshire Council Workspace: Office Space Strategy i.e. annual revenue saving of £676,000, a positive impact on the Inverurie town centre as demonstrated by Town Impact assessment and improved and more efficient office facilities for the whole Council.

After considering multiple options over an extended period, on 26 April 2018 Aberdeenshire Council agreed the Council's Workspace: Office Space Strategy. This decision included, as a wider programme of works across Aberdeenshire, an agreement to release Gordon House, Inverurie and undertake the refurbishment of Inverurie Town Hall including the provision of an extension to that building to accommodate a Service Point, Civic and Community space and an extension for office space, with associated parking at the former Market Place School.

It is important to emphasise that failure to provide a parking solution at Market Place is not only critical to the Inverurie Town Hall element of the Office Space Strategy, but to the strategy as a whole. The strategy incorporates significant changes to office provision at Stonehaven, Woodhill House, Aberdeen and Ellon, as well as Inverurie. The strategy, as approved, provides a cohesive solution to the Council's needs and jeopardising any element of it jeopardises the whole strategy.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Applicant's submissions in the request for review regarding the timeline of the case and the Council's decision on the strategy are noted. In considering the application the Council has to look at the substance of the alternative proposal, not the decision making process that sat behind it. Accordingly the Council did not consider this to be of relevance to its determination of the application. The Applicant has, through the asset transfer process, put forward its case for the asset to the Council which has resulted in extensive discussion and

debate. The Council has therefore had the opportunity to assess the benefits of the request against the benefits of the alternative proposal.

#### **(Third Ground) Statutory Compulsion**

The Council is under a statutory duty to obtain Best Value and given the projected benefits as detailed in the request are ill defined and/or unrealistic the Council would be in breach of its duty to obtain Best Value as it could not competently justify any discount or transfer in terms of the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010 and accordingly the forgoing statutory duties prevents or restricts the Councils ability to agree to the request. Following review of the decision, the Council considered that the reduction in the value of the asset from £555,000 to £290,000 did not materially impact on this reason for refusal as a discount in the sum sought by the Applicant was still significant and could not be justified where there were no clearly defined and realistic benefits outlined by the Applicant.

#### **(Fourth Ground) Financial Loss**

If the transfer were to proceed this would result in a loss of an asset of £290,000 with the resulting impact on the Councils capital plan which is not sustainable in the current financial climate.

As noted above, the reduction in the valuation of the asset from £555,000 to £290,000 does not materially impact this reason for removal following review. Having regard to the value of the asset it remains a significant loss that cannot be sustained.

#### **Right to appeal**

You have a right to appeal this decision to the Scottish Ministers. An appeal must be submitted within twenty working days of the date of this notice to:-

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DD or by email to [community.empowerment@gov.scot](mailto:community.empowerment@gov.scot).

Guidance on the process can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/asset-transfer-under-community-empowerment-scotland-act-2015-guidance-community-9781786527509/pages/20/>