

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Housing & Social Wellbeing Committee

19 June 2024

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ANNUAL REPORT 23/24

Strategic Lead – Housing and Communities (Report No. 24/192)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report seeks approval on the Community Empowerment Annual Report for 2023/24. The Annual Report provides an overview of the work to promote and respond to interest in Community Asset Transfer and Participation Requests.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council: -

- Approves the Community Empowerment Annual Report 2023/24

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background/Main Issues
- Section 5: Summary Of Community Asset Transfer (CAT) - Activity Over Financial Year 2023-2024
- Section 6: Related Community Empowerment Work by Other Council Services
- Section 7: Participation Requests
- Appendix: Full Community Empowerment Report 23/24

4. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 sets out rights for communities to have significant influence or control over decisions and services which are most important to them. These rights are summarised as follows:

- Part 3 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 enables communities to request to participate in processes to improve outcomes in their local community.

- Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 gives community groups the right to request ownership, lease, or access assets owned by the Council and other public bodies.
- 4.2 The Council has a statutory duty to report on the number of both Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Requests and Participation Requests it receives every year and the Council's activity to promote these rights.
- 4.3 This Annual Report outlines the Community Asset Transfer Requests and Participation Requests the Council has received from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The Report sets out some of the outcomes from these requests and the work done to promote CAT and Participation Requests to communities.

5. SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER (CAT) ACTIVITY OVER FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-2024

- 5.1 Since April 2023, Perth and Kinross Council has supported **thirty-one community organisations** who have expressed interest in the Community Asset Transfer process in Perth and Kinross. This report summarises some of the key activities that have taken place, and how Perth and Kinross Council has supported these community organisations with their Expressions of Interest (EOI) in a Community Asset Transfer. The full report is provided as Appendix 1.
- 5.2 This report also includes a summary of the activities that have been undertaken in the Estates team to support community organisations who have been looking to access Council assets but have not come through the CAT process. The Community Learning and Development Team work closely with Estates to support groups to find the most appropriate route to ownership or access. Below is a summary of the activity:

Former Child and Family Centre, Gowans Terrace, Perth

- 5.3 Centrum Edukacyjne Bajka deliver a Polish afterschool and a Saturday club and work with around 250 young people from local schools over the week. They have also been involved in supporting Ukrainian refugees and are a registered polling station for local Polish people to vote in Polish elections. They have support and some funding from the Polish government.
- 5.4 A lease arrangement was agreed by the Council and Centrum Edukacyjne Bajka on the 8 March 2023. Included in the terms of this lease, Centrum Edukacyjne Bajka agreed to undertake various improvement works including replacement of floor, heating, windows and doors, kitchen renovation, insulation, electrical works, painting and landscaping. Work has begun to complete these development works.
- 5.5 Centrum Edukacyjne Bajka remain interested in full ownership of the centre and a proposal is expected in 24/25.

Cloichard Depot, Pitlochry

- 5.6 Sprout are a Pitlochry based group looking to create an upcycling centre and climate café. They work closely with the local Men's Shed.
- 5.7 Following the initial interest in Burnside Toilets, Sprout submitted an EOI in December 2023 for the Cloichard Depot. They hope to house their upcycling centre, climate café, and a workshop for the Men's Shed. Initial feedback has been provided by the CAT team and the group will continue to be supported to submit a full CAT application.

Dunning Town Hall

- 5.8 Dunning Town Hall Group submitted an EOI in early 2024 for management rights of Dunning Town Hall. The group have met with the CAT team and following discussions it was agreed that the group would explore the potential to take on a full repairing and insuring lease. They wish to run the hall as a community run Town Hall. They are being supported to carry out community consultation and engagement with a view to submitting a full CAT request by March 2025.

North Muirton Multi Use Games Area, Bute Drive, Perth

- 5.9 North Muirton Community Group submitted an EOI for the North Muirton Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in early 2024. They would like to create accessible raised beds for food growing. Feedback has been provided by the CAT Team and the group will be supported to submit a full CAT request or alternatively to discuss a lease directly with Greenspace and Estates.
- 5.10 Perth Youth Futsal have also been in touch with officers and submitted an EOI for this land in March 2024. They would like to build a sports centre for Futsal and Netball. Both groups have been made aware of the others interest and officers will work with the groups to find a suitable solution for both.

Pitlochry Town Hall & Athol Leisure Centre, West Moulin Road, Pitlochry

- 5.11 Following the Pitlochry Asset Review groups within Pitlochry are interested in community ownership of the town hall and the leisure centre as there is concern that these community facilities will shut as a result of the review. The Community Learning and Development Team led a learning event with the national Community Ownership Support Service in Pitlochry to help inform community groups of their rights and options under the Community Empowerment Act (2015).
- 5.12 An EOI for both properties has been received and officers will meet with groups to support with next steps. There is interest in maintaining the Town Hall as a community managed Town Hall, whilst the proposal for the Athol Leisure Centre is for it to house a local museum and heritage centre. A full CAT request for the Town Hall is expected in January 2025.

Tulloch Community Centre, Tulloch Terrace, Letham, Perth

- 5.13 Perth Minority Association and TullochNET have both submitted independent EOIs. Having met with both groups, officers are supporting the groups to explore partnership working with the aim of both groups being able to make use of the facility. They hope to make the centre a community café, safe space, and warm space, whilst also allowing community groups and events to book and use the facility.

6. RELATED COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT WORK BY OTHER COUNCIL SERVICES

- 6.1 Community groups and organisations are often referred to PKC's Estates Team who work with other Services to grant, leases and sale of assets. This section of the report offers a summary of some of the activity since 1 April 2023.
- 6.2 Estates, Property Services and Community Greenspace colleagues have made some further progress in granting a sub-lease of the Pavilion at Pitlochry Recreation Ground (which the Council leases in) to Highland Perthshire Communities Partnership (HPCP) on behalf of Pavilion User Groups (PUGS). PUGS intend to make some alterations to the Pavilion to improve the usefulness of the building to the local community.
- 6.3 Saints in the Community Trust continue to aspire to lease the disused Tennis Courts, King George V Playing Field, Tulloch, where they propose to create and operate an all-weather sports facility, such as at Cruyff Court.
- 6.4 After initial discussions with the Community Empowerment Officer, Blairgowrie & Rattray Development Trust have agreed lease heads of terms with Estates regarding the Wellmeadow Public Toilets, which were recently declared surplus. The lease will include an option for the Trust to purchase the property at a later date. The date of entry has been provisionally scheduled for June 2024, at which point the Trust will take over the operation of the toilets.
- 6.5 Aberfeldy Development Trust have developed a proposal to build community-owned affordable housing on the Former Slaughterhouse Site, Aberfeldy, a vacant brownfield site where the Council previously operated a depot. The Trust has progressed feasibility work and it is anticipated that this will lead to them making an offer to purchase this land from the Council.
- 6.6 Draft Heads of Terms for a Alyth Development Trust to create a Skate Park in Jubilee Park Alyth have been completed and submitted to Greenspace.
- 6.7 The Council proposes to build a replacement primary school in Braco and the proposed land acquisition for this would include Braco MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area), which was installed and is operated by Ardoch Development Trust.

Initial discussions have been held between Estates and the Trust, and in the event that this land is acquired, it is proposed that the Council would lease or transfer the ownership of the MUGA to the Trust.

- 6.8 Estates, Community Greenspace & Property Services are working with Fair City Juniors Football Club on their proposal to adapt part of the South Inch Pavilion, Perth to provide changing rooms and other facilities to benefit youth football on the South Inch pitches.

7. PARTICIPATION REQUESTS

- 7.1 PKC have not received any Participation Requests in 2023/2024. Officers continue to be involved in the national review of Participation Requests led by the Scottish Communities Development Centre.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires the Council to produce an Annual Report, setting out the work done to promote and respond to Community Asset Transfer Requests and Participation Requests. In 2023/24, 12 Expressions of Interest were received for Community Asset Transfer, and no Participation Requests were received.

Author

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Sarah Kimmet	Community Empowerment Officer	ComCommitteeReports@pkc.gov.uk

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Elaine Ritchie	Strategic Lead, Housing & Communities	17 May 2024

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Full Community Empowerment Annual report 23/24

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	None
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This report supports all of the priorities within the Community Plan 2022-27.
- i. *Reducing Poverty (including child poverty, fuel poverty and food poverty)*
 - ii. *Mental and physical wellbeing*
 - iii. *Digital participation*
 - iv. *Skills, learning and development*
 - v. *Employability*

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 places several additional duties on local authorities and other public agencies. Community Asset Transfer (CAT) and Participation Requests give community groups greater rights and opportunities to influence or control decisions that affect them. This report supports the objectives within the draft new Corporate Plan:-

- (ii) *People and businesses are increasingly able to prosper in a local economy which support low carbon ambitions and offers opportunities for all;*
- (iii) *People can achieve their best physical and mental health and have access to quality care and support when they need it;*
- (iv) *Communities are resilient and physically, digital and socially connected;*
- (v) *Perth and Kinross is a safe and vibrant place, mitigating the impact of climate and environmental change for this and future generations.*

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 Not Applicable.

Workforce

2.2 Not Applicable.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 Not Applicable.

3. Assessments

3.1 Proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) are assessed as **not relevant** for EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 Not Applicable.

Sustainability

3.3 Not Applicable.

Legal and Governance

3.4 Not Applicable.

3.5 Not Applicable.

Risk

3.6 Not Applicable.

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 Not required.

External

4.2 Not required.

5. Communication

5.1 Not applicable.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 Not applicable.