

Section 6

Strand 3 - Asset Transfer

The transfer of assets to the voluntary and community sector is very topical at the moment. The Government's launch of the Quirk review in May 2007 is intended to encourage such practice and illustrate the absence of real barriers to doing so. Sheffield is cited in the Quirk Review as an example of good practice and the work of the vcs Compact Premises Group in addressing the issue has put Sheffield ahead of many authorities.

The Quirk review has raised awareness amongst the vcs of the possibilities of seeking asset transfers and the Community Buildings team has noticed an increase in such requests.

If a vcs organisation is interested in taking on a lease for a building or wants to seek the transfer of a building or land to their ownership, there is a 'Premises Pack', as part of the Compact with the Voluntary Sector, that contains an application form and guidance on how to apply for such a transfer. This can be obtained from the Community Buildings Team or be downloaded from the Council's website as part of the Compact with Voluntary and Community Sector information.

A member of the community buildings team will support the application process and the applicant will be expected to provide evidence of

- Financial capability to run the building and sustain it over the next 10 years
- A business plan to show the security of operational capacity, committed users, income generation
- Links to other local initiatives and organisations to prove not duplicating provision in the area and
- Promoting integration in the community

Once the application is completed an assessment of the strength of it will be made by the Community Buildings Team and a recommendation for transfer or otherwise will be put before Elected Members. The readiness and quality of information provided by the applicant will determine the timescale attached to this process.

SCC is clear that no transfers will take place which would increase revenue funding demands upon the Authority.

As well as organisations applying to take on ownership of buildings they could

also apply to take on the facilities management aspect of looking after a local building. Asset transfer to the vcs of existing Council owned community buildings is recognised as a contributor to regeneration objectives and asset transfer could be undertaken for assets other than community buildings if this will serve to create more appropriate community space.