

## Written submission from Moray Council

### Response from Moray Council

- **Does your authority have arrangements in place to hold some or all local authority assets in a separate land holding?**

Yes, once assets are declared surplus they are managed corporately and all capital receipts are credited to a single council account.

- **When disposing of, or transferring assets how are those assets valued. To what degree is this purely a financial valuation?**

Properties that are disposed of or transferred are mostly valued by the Council's Estates Surveyors. In some cases external agents are employed – usually the District Valuer. Valuations are purely financially based. However the Council does dispose of properties at less than best consideration in accordance with the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010 where the disposal would contribute to the purposes specified in the Regulations. Such discounted disposals are mainly Community Asset Transfers.

- **What is the attitude of the authority to the disposal of assets? Does your authority have a policy to encourage the disposal of assets to community groups?**

The disposal of property assets surplus to requirements minimises ongoing running costs, generates capital receipts and supports the Council's main priority of economic development, as well as other community benefits. The Council has a specific Community Asset Transfer Policy which has been publicised and the Council has run awareness briefings for community groups. As part of the council's response to a public consultation exercise on the budget in 2010 the council agreed to establish and promote arrangements for Community Asset Transfer. This was first formalised as a strategy by the council's Policy and Resources Committee on 12 April 2011. Since that time a working group of officers has been established to support community groups with CAT applications and a policy has been developed. The latest version of the policy was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 October 2014 and the web links to the report and policy document are provided below.

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/data/PR20141007/Item%204.Community%20Asset%20Transfer%20Policy.pdf>

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/data/PR20141007/Item%204%20Appendix-with%20track%20changes-PR.pdf>

- **What is your experience of disposal and what difficulties has the authority encountered?**

Since 2008 the main difficulty in relation to property disposals has been the depressed local property market. Although the local property market is now showing

signs of improvement developers are still encountering difficulties securing development finance.

Regarding CATs there have been numerous challenges and the level of support required by community groups can be quite extensive. A continuing issue is groups forming with a focus on simply wanting to take control of buildings as opposed to identifying the local services that would benefit from the use of particular buildings.