

## **Written submission from North Lanarkshire Council**

I can confirm the following in relation to each of the information requested as follows

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

I can confirm that the vast majority of the council's assets are held directly in the Council's ownership. These assets will be held in the General Account or in the Housing Revenue Account. The council has transferred a number of properties to some of its Arms Length Organisations. Eg the bulk of commercial property portfolio was transferred to North Lanarkshire Properties LLP.

In addition long term leases have been granted to Culture NL Trust and North Lanarkshire Leisure Trust to facilitate effective operation of the various sports centres and community centres etc.

If you require any detailed information relating to this point then please let me know.

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

When a property is being sold the properties are valued by the Council's property Valuers, the valuation is undertaken in accordance with the current edition of the RICS Valuation – Professional Standards. Valuations are carried out by an RICS Registered Valuer who has the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding to undertake the valuation competently.

The main basis of valuation adopted is Market Value which is "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 wherein the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion".

Disposals are undertaken in accordance with the Council's policy for Land and Property Sales. This reflects the statutory obligations in accordance with the terms of Section 74 of the Local Government Scotland Act 1973, and updated by the Scottish Government via the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland ) Regulations 2010.

### **3. 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?**

In February 2014 council approved a draft Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy for consultation and agreed to select three CAT pilot projects which would inform the final draft Policy. Three projects were confirmed via a selection process for participation in the pilot in August 2014.

The vision for this new CAT policy is about developing plans and processes to further deliver community regeneration and unlock potential for local projects and services via the council's assets. The policy requires to be delivered in accordance with the current legislation framework including Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 (LGSA) and the subsequent Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010.

To inform and consult communities on the policy development, and call for pilot projects; information about the policy was published on the council website with a link to an on-line survey. An email was sent out to members of the Citizen's Panel including information about the policy and a link to an on-line survey. A total of 90 on-line survey forms were completed (80 individuals and 10 third sector organisations).

The Council recognises that community asset transfer can contribute towards stronger, cohesive and sustainable communities as set out in our Economic Regeneration Strategy and Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement.

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

As a large local authority the Council has sold a significant amount of surplus land and property since 1996. However only a few sales have involved community groups. The Council's experience is that the groups find it very challenging to find a path through funding and having expertise in project delivery. In some cases they are often very knowledgeable in the service they deliver, but find it challenging to secure the skills, knowledge and expertise to move the project forward.