Written submission from Falkirk Council

The Council does not have any arrangements in place to hold local authority assets in a separate land holding.

When disposing of assets, the Council has regard to its best value obligations. In disposing of assets other than in a competitive open market situation, the valuation would normally be carried out on the basis of market value unless there was a prior decision taken by elected members on policy grounds to proceed otherwise.

In relation to the attitude of the Council to disposal of assets, each request received is considered on its own individual merits. In relation to non-operational property assets [ie those properties leased out by the Council on commercial terms] the consequences of potential loss of revenue income from property rentals requires to be balanced against the benefits of the prospective capital receipt accruing. This situation is particularly relevant at a time when the Council is requiring to make significant revenue budget savings.

Whilst the Council does not currently have a specific policy in place in relation to encouraging asset disposals to community groups, as noted above, any such requests are considered on their own individual merits and the Council works constructively with local groups to consider such requests and the capacity for these to be progressed.

Key issues to be considered in this respect would be the need for the group to be formally constituted and sufficiently robust financially as to enable it to participate in property transactions; that the group’s intended activities are consistent with the Council’s Corporate Plan and Strategic Community Plan; and that the facility to be transferred will remain available for potential use and open to all members of a local community.

In addition it will be important for any such organisation to be able to demonstrate availability of any third party funding and/or continuity of membership etc enabling it to operate and maintain the facility for its agreed purpose over a given period of time eg for the duration of any lease.