



The purpose of this paper is to record the decision of the Isle of Wight Council's Executive about the future development of Ventnor Central and to ask Members to confirm their support for the proposal in it.

No. DETAIL

1) BACKGROUND

- a) The Town Council took on a Lease of the Ventnor Youth Centre building with effect from 1 October 2014 following the decision of the Isle of Wight Council to close it along with its Youth Service provision on 30 September 2014.
 - b) The Lease is for the period to 31 March 2017 and the decision to become responsible for the management of the building was taken to prevent its closure while options for its future development were explored, including the potential for relocating the town's Library in its ground floor.
 - c) The Town Council rebranded the building as Ventnor Central and provided for its running costs in its Precept Budget and offset some of those costs by continuing occasional lettings, restricted in response to the Fire Risk Assessment.
 - d) In the financial year 2015/16 the recorded costs were £7,459, offset by receipts of £2,689, leaving a net cost of £4,770 against a Budget provision of £6,000.
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2) DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

- a) By the end of the first six months of the Lease period, estimates of the investment required to make the current building fit for purpose ranged between £350k and £500k.
 - b) It was also increasingly clear that there was little prospect of developing a Business Case for the sustainability of the building based on normal community uses as the foreseeable income streams could not support the servicing of the borrowing that would be required.
 - c) The case of the relocation of the Library, however, continued to strengthen in the context of the maintenance costs of its current building and its out-of-town situation without parking availability.
 - d) Following discussions of the development potential of the site with David Norville of D N Associates drawings were commissioned that showed the site could contain 12 one-bedroom flats over three floors above the ground floor Library.
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3) SPECTRUM HOUSING GROUP

- a) Informal discussions with Spectrum Housing Group of the possibility of funding this development were positive their willingness to proceed was confirmed in an email of 13 May.
 - b) Their proposal was for it to be funded through a Housing Association Grant that requires works undertaken with it to be completed by 31 March 2018.
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4) EXECUTIVE PAPER

- a) The Isle of Wight Council, as the landowner, was informed of this development and a meeting was arranged with their Head of Planning Wendy Perera and Head of Economic Development Ashley Curzon on 23 May attended by the Mayor and Clerk.
 - b) Following a very positive discussion of the significance of the potential development for the town, they said they would endeavour to include the next stage in a paper for the 9 June meeting of the Executive.
 - c) The resultant paper, previously circulated to Members, includes the Ventnor Site alongside two others – the former Island Learning Centre in Lake and Taylor Road, Newport – with the recommendation that Spectrum Housing Group be appointed as Special Purchaser for them.
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