

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Communities Committee

Does this report require to be approved? Yes No

Ref SP/LP/GS Date 28/04/25

Community Ownership and Management of Assets: Application from Palm Church for the Asset Transfer of Rochsoles Community Centre

From: Stephen Penman, Chief Officer (Strategy and Engagement)

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Communities Committee with the details of a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) request made by Palm Church to purchase Rochsoles Community Centre, 4 Dykehead Rd, Airdrie ML6 6SQ plus the grassed area and access paths (as outlined in Appendix 1 of this report) and to provide information on the outcome of the assessment process together with a recommendation to approve the request

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Communities Committee:

- (1) Considers the detailed assessment of the application against approved criteria, included at Appendix 2, of this report
- (2) Approves the recommendation by the Community Assets Leadership Group to approve the Community Asset Transfer request from Palm Church to purchase of Rochsoles Community Centre as described at appendix 1, subject to finalisation of necessary technical details and satisfactory agreement to the conditions set out in Appendix 2, section.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Enhance participation, capacity, and empowerment across our communities
Ambition statement	(20) Improve the involvement of communities in the decisions, and development of services and supports, that affect them
Programme of Work	Resilient People

1. Background

- 1.1 Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 encourages community-based groups to take control of assets to be utilised for positive outcomes as driven and directed at a local level. Qualifying groups can apply to a relevant authority, which includes local authorities, to either lease or purchase an asset.
- 1.2 Upon a formal application being made, the relevant authority is bound to carry out an assessment of the request, establish that the applicant is a qualifying body and assess both the sustainability and likely benefit of the asset transfer. Benefits can include social wellbeing, economic benefit and provision of services and activities that would not otherwise be provided.
- 1.3 In general terms where a group meets qualifying and eligibility criteria, they can apply for almost any asset held by a relevant authority. The asset does not have to be surplus to the council's operational requirements. Exclusions apply in a few circumstances including:
 - NLP mortgaged properties
 - Common Good Assets
 - Where the council has entered into a legal agreement for sale or demolition of an asset
- 1.4 If it is determined that the asset is not surplus the council needs to assess the operational benefit of retaining the asset against the potential community benefits because of approving the transfer. An application can be rejected on grounds such as the business model is not sustainable, the group cannot evidence community support or community benefit, or the group cannot demonstrate that they have the capacity to manage the asset.
- 1.5 In June 2024 the Policy and Strategy Committee approved a new Community Ownership and Management of Assets Policy and associated resources aiming to improve the council's approach to building capacity and opportunity with organisations looking to take on ownership, lease or management of a council owned asset. The aim is to shift the focus to achieving positive outcomes and using available resources and tools to over time increase the pace and volume of successful outcomes while protecting the business of the council, considering any negative impact on the wider community and managing risk levels. The policy and approach can be accessed [here](#) and further information and tools are available on the [council website](#).

2. Report

- 2.1 Palm Church is a small, registered Christian church and charity.
- 2.2 The organisation has submitted a formal request to purchase Rochsoles Community Centre, 4 Dykehead Rd, Airdrie ML6 6SQ plus the grassed area and access paths (as outlined in Appendix 1 of this report). The charity has proposed an offer price of £40,000. Based on the internal valuation of £76,000 the offer price would be equivalent to 52% of the overall value and with a discount of 48%.

In addition to suing the centre as a place of worship the proposal outlines plans to create an inclusive community space delivering a wide range of social programmes including: -

- Money advice and debt support
- Food bank provision
- Parent and toddler groups, children’s clubs, and youth engagement
- Elderly support (social and wellbeing activities)
- Specialised ASN provision including a sensory room
- Activities and initiatives to address community needs and aspirations

2.3 A summary of the scores achieved through assessment is outlined in figure 1 below. Additional details of the proposal and assessment of the application can be found at appendix 2 and in the CAT application and supporting documents available on the council's website [here](#)

Figure 1.

Summary Grading	Very Strong	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Very Weak
1.Details of the asset		x			
2.Organisation information		x			
3.Type of Request		x			
4.Link to the NL Plan		x			
5.Community Proposal			x		
6.Support			x		
7.Financial Information			x		
8.Risk/Social Impact			x		

A description of assessment criteria is at appendix 3

2.4 In line with the council’s Community Ownership and Management Policy and associated scoring process the findings of the Officer Assessment Panel were reported to the Community Asset Leadership Group for consideration. The Group comprises of

- Chief Officers, Strategy and Engagement
- Chief Officer, Asset and Procurement;
- Chief Officer, Community Operations
- Chief Officer, Legal and Democratic
- Chief Officer, Finance and Technology


The recommendation is that the Communities Committee approve application based on the findings of the assessment attached at appendix 2.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 Support provided to community groups and organisations as a result of initial CAT or PR enquiries; and
 - 3.2 Positive outcomes or referrals because of initial CAT or PR enquiries.
 - 3.3 Increased completions for transfer of assets to community organisations
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4. Supporting documentation

- 4.1 Community Ownership and Management of Assets Policy and approach [here](#)
- 4.2 Further information and tools are available on the [councils website](#).
- 4.3 Full application can be accessed on the [councils website here](#)
- 4.4 Appendix 1 – Map of Asset
- 4.5 Appendix 2 – Assessment of application
- 4.6 Appendix 3 – Description of assessment
- 4.7 Equality Impact Assessment will be published [here](#)



Stephen Penman
Chief Officer (Strategy and Engagement)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty

Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty?

Yes No

If yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?,

The recommendation involves the transfer of an asset to community ownership for community use and recognises the associated community benefit that is expected from the proposal. This should benefit the community positively but an EQIA has been undertaken to consider any impact on equalities groups and will be available [here](#)

If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments>

Yes No

5.2 Financial impact

Does the report contain any financial impacts?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The charity has offered to pay £40,000 for the asset. Based on an internal valuation of £76,000 the offer price would be equivalent to 52% of the overall value and with a discount of 48%. The discount level is acceptable due to the social value of the free to access services and activities that will be offered by the charity. Additionally, as per section 7 of the Appendix 2 – revenue savings of £6,000 per year will be saved.

5.3 HR policy impact

Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.4 Legal impact

Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)?

Yes No

If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The council approach to community Ownership and Management of Assets reflects and supports the requirements of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Representatives from Legal and Democratic Services are involved in the

Corporate Community Ownership and Management of Assets Working Group and the Leadership Group.

5.5 Data protection impact

Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data?

Yes No

If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?

Yes No

If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk

Yes No

5.6 Technology / Digital impact

Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes No

5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.8 Communications impact

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

The main risk identified is around the financial uncertainty and reliance on grant funding and donations from church members. There is a limited opportunity for income generation that is often present for CVS organisations.

Also, there is an inherent reputational risk to the council of transferring an asset for community ownership. In this case, this may be linked to the faith-based nature of the organisation and the view of exclusivity and the council's role in ensuring equitable asset transfer processes.

The proposal provides sufficient assurance risks are tolerable and/or can be mitigated. Addition information is outlined in section 8 of Appendix 2.

5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

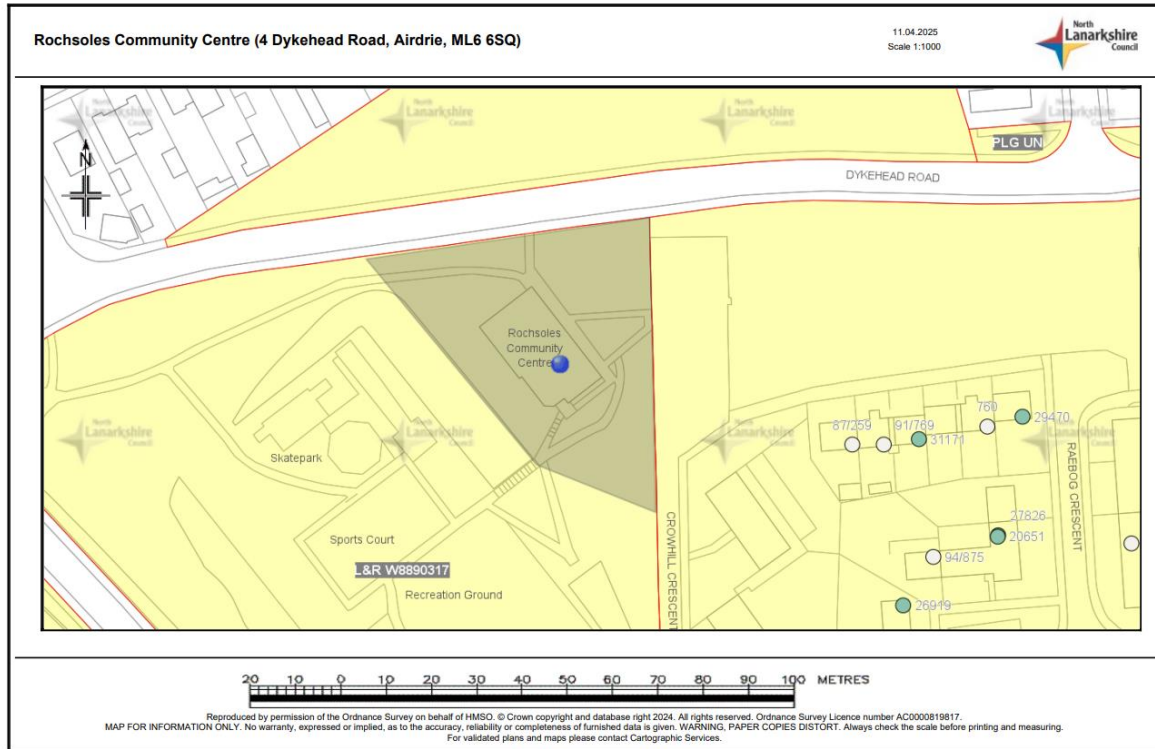
Yes No

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes No

Location Map



**Community Asset Transfer
Scoring Assessment**

Name of Organisation/Applicant	Palm Church
Details of the Asset	Rochsoles Community Centre
Community Area/Ward	Airdrie Thrashbush (Ward 08 - Airdrie North)
Date submitted	3 December 2024
Date of Scoring Panel	27 March 2025

Recommendation by Community Asset Leadership Group	Approve
Summary comments	<p>This assessment presents the findings of the scoring of a request to transfer ownership of Rochsoles Community Centre to Palm Church, a small Christian church and charity based in Airdrie. The church proposes to use the building both as a place of worship and a community hub, maintaining its accessibility to existing and future local users.</p> <p>The charity has offered to pay £40,000 for the asset. Based on an internal valuation of £76,000 the offer price would be equivalent to 52% of the overall value and with a discount of 48%</p> <p>The proposed transfer of Rochsoles Community Centre to Palm Church represents a strategic, socially valuable, and community-led solution for the future of an underused public asset. It aligns with local and national policy, reflects current best practice in community ownership, and offers broad-based benefit for church members and the wider community. The 58% discount reflects the clear social value of the transfer, and the organisation has provided credible assurances regarding inclusion, sustainability, and community access.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposal aligns with strategic plans for inclusive growth, community wellbeing, and empowerment, and presents an opportunity to bring an underused public asset into more sustainable, community-led use.</p> <p>This assessment recommends positive consideration of the transfer of Rochsoles Community Centre to Palm Church on the terms proposed.</p>

Summary Grading	Very Strong	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Very Weak
1.Details of the asset		x			
2.Organisation information		x			
3.Type of Request		x			
4.Link to the NL Plan		x			
5.Community Proposal			x		
6.Support			x		
7.Financial Information			x		
8.Risk/Social Impact			x		
1	Details of the Asset: Includes asset status and proposed use. <i>This section asks the council to ensure they are in a position to transfer the asset</i>				
Notes: <p>Rochsoles Community Centre is owned by North Lanarkshire Council and operated by NLC – Facilities Service. The asset is eligible for community asset transfer. At the Council meeting held on 10 December 2024, the facility was approved for closure and declared surplus to requirements.</p> <p>Palm Church seeks to purchase Rochsoles Community Centre (4 Dykehead Rd, Airdrie ML6 6SQ plus the grassed area and access paths.) On clarification the organisation has confirmed that the associated parking area is not part of the request. However, they will consider inclusion of this if the council believes it to be in the interests of all parties to do so.</p> <p>The charity is planning to create an inclusive community space delivering a wide range of social programmes including: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money advice and debt support (partnership with Christians Against Poverty) • Food bank provision • Parent and toddler groups, children’s clubs, and youth engagement • Elderly support (social and wellbeing activities) • Specialised ASN provision including a sensory room • Activities and initiatives to address community needs and aspirations <p>This is in addition to functioning as a place of worship.</p> <p>The current use of the building as a community centre, fits with the planned future usage. Albeit the charity hopes to deliver an increased levels of services from the site. The current condition of the building is also suitable. But the charity is planning an upfront capital investment of £70,000 for essential repairs and refurbishment work.</p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p>Strong: The proposal is cost neutral to the council, it does not impact on council direct delivery of services and there are no restrictions on the asset transfer.</p>					

2	Organisational Information – Includes governance and capacity to deliver
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Palm Church is a small, registered Christian church and charity based in Airdrie with a growing congregation, with a strong ethos of service, inclusion, and support. The church provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly worship services open to all • Community meals and food support • Youth and family activities • 1-1 pastoral care and social support • Volunteer development and informal training <p>The organisation is governed by a small board of trustees and run by volunteers and part-time staff. It has previously partnered with local groups and has demonstrated capacity to deliver community benefit sustainably.</p> <p>Trustees and volunteers have relevant experience in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business ownership, commercial property management • Community work, faith leadership, health and safety • ASN/SEND expertise (including published authors and social care professionals) • Internal training in safeguarding, health and safety, and PVG membership <p>The group’s leadership has relevant professional and community development experience, and they have actively participated in an organisational health check. The organisation has relevant policy and procedures in place and are committed to reviewing them to ensure they make sense for the facility; should the asset transfer be approved.</p> <p>The application outlines a community use model, with services targeting financial wellbeing, child and youth development, support for the elderly, mental health, food insecurity, and additional support needs (ASN).</p> <p>Assessment: Strong: Applicant has provided adequate evidence that they are a robust and viable organisation with satisfactory governance arrangements.</p>	
3	Type of request, payment and conditions <i>This section confirms the type of request and seeks and whether or not the price reflects a fair price for the asset taking into consideration community benefit</i>
<p>Notes:</p> <p>The charity has proposed to purchase the asset, and they have the funds available to meet the offer price of £40,000. Based on the internal valuation of £76,000 the offer price would be equivalent to 52% of the overall value and with a discount of 48%.</p> <p><u>Social Value and Community Benefit Drivers presented to support the discounted offer price:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustained Community Access: Ongoing use of the centre by a diverse range of local groups, preserving community infrastructure. 2. Increased Community-Led Activity: A trusted, rooted organisation expanding services in response to local need. 3. Tackling Inequalities: Provision of pastoral care, food support, and informal advocacy in an area of high deprivation. 4. Volunteer and Skills Development: New pathways for local people to participate, learn and lead. 5. Building Social Capital: Strengthening networks, trust, and shared responsibility in Thrashbush and Airdrie. 	

Other considerations:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion of standard security in favour of the council to reflect any discount agreed. 2. Public access to pathways included in the title will be required 3. Reserved rights of access to the pathways for essential repairs, maintenance and access to any utilities. 4. Common right to adjacent car parks will also be offered and should be included in any negotiations around terms of transfer 	
Assessment:	
Strong:	
Applicant has proposed terms, with prices reflecting Market/Fair Value.	

4	Link to Strategy– How the project links into the vision and ambitions set out in the Plan for North Lanarkshire (TPFNL)
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Notes:	
<p>Palm Church’s proposal aligns with The Plan for North Lanarkshire across several key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support children and families: The church runs youth activities, family outreach and pastoral care. • Improve the health and wellbeing of communities: By offering social events, mental health support, food aid, and a sense of belonging. • Enhance participation and empowerment: Ownership of the centre would enable the church to act as a community anchor, engaging residents in decision-making. • Reinforce inclusive economic growth: By maintaining community space, offering volunteering roles, and training for local people. <p>Likewise, the proposal complements the Airdrie Local Outcome Improvement Plan by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing inequalities: Especially for people facing social isolation, poverty, and food insecurity. • Creating stronger communities: Through increased activity in a trusted and locally rooted space. • Encouraging local participation: With an emphasis on co-production of community services. • Providing accessible services: Particularly in a high-need area such as Thrashbush. 	
Assessment:	
Strong:	
Satisfactory evidence that the applicant understands the importance of linking to the outcomes of the TPFNL	

5	Community Proposal – Includes project aims, community engagement and community benefit/need
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Notes:	
<p>The organisation’s overarching aim is to establish a community and faith-based hub that is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to local needs. Their objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering a diverse programme of community support services, such as: • Money advice and debt support (in partnership with CAP) • Foodbank provision • Elderly inclusion and wellbeing activities 	

- Parent and toddler groups
- Youth programmes and children's clubs
- Tailored support for children and families with additional support needs (Team Phoenix)
- Maintaining and increasing public access to the building, including for private hire (e.g. fitness classes, events, parties).
- Contributing to local economic and social development through skills development, social interaction, and potential employment (e.g. Centre Manager role).
- Improving wellbeing and reducing social isolation, particularly among disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.
- Promoting environmental responsibility, with plans to explore sustainable heating systems and a Net Zero strategy for the building.

Intended Outcomes

- A safe, inclusive, and multi-use space that enhances community cohesion.
 - Improved access to support services such as food, debt advice, and mental wellbeing activities.
 - Increased opportunities for children and young people through clubs and mentoring.
 - Specific provision for families with children with additional support needs.
 - Ongoing sustainability through a mix of donations, room rentals, and grant income.
 - A measurable social return on investment through volunteer hours and new employment.
- Palm Church's aims and outcomes are clear and grounded in identified community needs. The breadth of intended services reflects a reasonable understanding of local needs and gaps in existing provision.

Community Engagement:

Palm Church has undertaken a range of community engagement activities to support its application for the transfer of Rochsoles Community Centre. These efforts were designed to build relationships with the local community, identify local needs, and test community support for the proposed church and community hub.

Engagement Methods Used:

1. Community Events

- Easter Family Fun Day (2023): Held at Airdrie Academy, attracting over 100 residents. Activities included games and a bouncy castle, creating a welcoming environment for families.
- Open Day (August 2024): Hosted at Rochsoles Community Centre and attended by around 50 residents. Included children's activities, refreshments, and informal conversations to gather feedback about the proposed use of the building.

2. Public Consultation

- Formal Consultation Event (March 2023): Publicly advertised four weeks in advance through Facebook and the Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser. Despite the publicity, no members of the public attended.

3. Ongoing Community Presence and Relationship Building

- Weekly church services and activities held at Airdrie Academy, building a regular local following (20+ attendees).
- Pastor engagement through his role as chaplain for the local football team.
- Direct informal engagement at events and through existing relationships with local residents.

Palm Church's approach demonstrates a clear commitment to engaging with and serving the local community. Strengths include:

- Inclusive and Family-Oriented Activities: The use of accessible, family-friendly events helped to create a non-intimidating, inclusive environment and facilitated meaningful interactions with residents.

• Strong Local Presence and Informal Networks: Relationships established through the church, local school, and football club provide valuable informal feedback and support that complements formal consultation.

• Adaptability and Responsiveness: Despite a lack of attendance at the public consultation, Palm Church followed up with further direct engagement, indicating flexibility and responsiveness to community needs.

While the formal consultation had limited participation, this was mitigated by broader engagement efforts that reached a diverse cross-section of the local population. The consistent involvement in the local area over several years adds credibility to their long-term commitment.

Palm Church has shown a proactive and relationship-based approach to community engagement. While their formal consultation event did not yield direct responses, the combination of well-attended community events, informal networks, and sustained local presence indicates a strong foundation of community awareness and trust. These efforts are proportionate to the scale of the asset and are judged to be sincere in intent.

Social Benefit for Church Members

The transfer will enable Palm Church to:

- Expand their faith-based and charitable mission
- Offer a welcoming, stable environment for personal and spiritual growth
- Increase volunteering and leadership opportunities
- Create a stronger sense of identity, purpose and collective ownership

These points should lead to increased confidence, reduced isolation, and wellbeing improvements for members.

Social Benefit for Local Residents

Residents of Thrashbush and wider Airdrie will benefit from:

- Continued access to an affordable, accessible space for community activities
- Expansion of family support, youth work and informal care
- Improved access to volunteering, training, and support services
- A safe, welcoming hub offering social connection and inclusion

Social Value Commitment

The charity has estimated an annual social value at £35,392. They plan to create local employment and additional volunteering opportunities should the community asset transfer be approved.

Assessment:

Moderate:

Limited description of the aims, objectives and vision for the proposal. Some understanding of the community benefit but not underpinned by substantive evidence. Some evidence of need/demand provided including limited consultations, research and surveys.

6	Support – Includes stakeholder engagement and partnership working <i>This section looks Including evidence community and stakeholders have been engaged</i>
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Notes:

Support from wider community and key stakeholders:

Feedback from Palm Church members, Thrashbush residents, and wider Airdrie community reflects a reasonable level of support for the community asset transfer (reference community engagement details listed in part 5 above):

While the church is still relatively young (founded during the 2021 lockdown), there is emerging evidence of positive sentiment and interest from the local population and current

church members view the move as essential for expanding their charitable activities and enabling more consistent community outreach.

Partnership Working and Collaborations:

Palm Church has outlined working relationships or engagement plans with:

- Christians Against Poverty (CAP) – to support community financial advice and debt resolution.
- North Lanarkshire Council services – e.g. signposting through Health Visitors for parent/toddler groups, and partnership with the Tackling Poverty Team.
- Street Scene (NLC) – for youth-led litter pick and environmental activities.
- Future aspirations to involve local mental health charities, child development groups, and others in parent/toddler initiatives.

While some collaborations are currently informal or proposed, they represent a clear intention to foster integrated partnership working over-time.

Letters of Support / Consultation Findings:

Some consultation is reported, but formal letters of support are not included within the application. One formal representation was made during the 4-week statutory consultation period. This was in relation to centre car parks.

- A public consultation event was advertised widely and held in March 2023—but notably, no one attended.
- Positive community feedback is cited anecdotally from the Easter event and August open day but not supported by surveys or written responses.
- The application does not include formal letters of support from local organisations, elected members, or statutory partners.

This represents a gap in formal, external validation, although informal feedback appears positive.

Level of Support:

The level of support is broadly proportionate but could be strengthened. There is clearly interest and enthusiasm from a segment of the community, and the church has a strong internal capacity and committed volunteer base to initiate delivery.

Assessment:

Moderate:

Applicant has demonstrated limited links with groups and community engagement activity. Some evidence of partnership working provided.

7	Financial Information – Includes fundraising, financial planning and management <i>We will seek clarification of funding being in place or any potential delay in funding being in place in time for the final transfer deadline.</i>
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Notes:

Some attempt has been made to estimate costs, upfront and ongoing, however outgoings stated are conservative with no allowance for inflation year on year.

Monthly costs exclude things like gas, security, resources (toys, sensory equipment), food, washings, cleaning, lease of commercial food heating equipment etc.

The organisation states in their application that funding has been secured for renovation works. However, no further details have been provided over the legitimacy of this. It is suggested that the clubs/activities are to be free of charge, so they are reliant on only Church member donations and grant funding - both of which are temporary and can fluctuate regularly.

There are no details suggesting they have researched which grants they would be eligible for, and they are highly dependent on voluntary donations to fund committed, ongoing costs.

The organisation has mentioned allowing for a 10% contingency fund (on both capital & non-capital) costs which would be funded through Palm Church, rather than funding. However, again Palm Church funds are from voluntary donations which are not guaranteed.

The proposed transfer of Rochsoles Community Centre to Palm Church offers not only social and community value, but also clear financial benefits to North Lanarkshire Council. Based on current operational realities and asset management projections, the transfer would realise the following savings:

a) Revenue and Operational Savings

The council currently incurs annual running and maintenance costs of approximately £6,000 per year to keep the centre open, despite it operating at significantly under-capacity. Over a five-year period, this equates to an estimated £30,000 in avoided expenditure.

b) Avoided Closure and Demolition Costs

Should the asset be retained and subsequently closed due to underuse, the council could incur demolition and site clearance costs in the region of £40,000–£50,000, based on recent comparable disposal projects.

c) Avoided Capital Investment Requirement

To bring the building up to a more modern, usable standard for increased council-led activity would likely require capital investment of £80,000–£100,000, covering essential repairs, compliance upgrades, and minor refurbishment. Transferring ownership places the onus for future improvement costs with the acquiring organisation, removing the capital liability from the council.

Assessment:

Moderate:

Applicant has demonstrated there are some financial resources in place, but all finances may not be available within the timeframe. There is limited evidence of resource planning. Basic income and expenditure and cash flow forecast induced with limited consideration given to contingency planning.

8 **Risk/Social Impact – *Includes potential impact and barriers/challenges and understanding of managing the asset.***

Notes:

Key Risks:

While the proposal carries promising community benefits, the following risks have been noted:

Reputational:

The faith-based nature of the organisation and the view of exclusivity and the council's role in ensuring equitable asset transfer processes.

This risk could be mitigated by attaching clear conditions of inclusive access and enhanced post-transfer monitoring

Financial:

The operational model depends heavily on consistent voluntary donations from church members. While current financial projections suggest sustainability, fluctuations in donor commitment may present a cash-flow issue.

This risk could be mitigated by the charity looking at funding opportunities and income generation ideas.

Responsibilities relating to asset management

The application demonstrates a reasonable understanding of asset management, including responsibilities for maintenance, insurance, utility costs, and refurbishment. The business plan includes year-on-year financial planning and allows for contingencies.

The charity leadership includes individuals with relevant experience (e.g. in property, business, project management, and health & safety), indicating a degree of preparedness to take on the obligations of managing a community asset.

Renovation funding is fully identified, and contingency allowances are included. The plan also recognises legal and operational liabilities, such as PVG requirements and health and safety compliance.

Wider social impact (positive or negative)

Positive Impacts:

Tackling Local Deprivation:

The project is in a highly deprived area (SIMD rank as low as 100), and services proposed—money advice, food bank, toddler groups, youth engagement; are well-aligned to local needs.

Support for Vulnerable Groups:

Provision for families with children who have Additional Support Needs (ASN) through 'Team Phoenix' will provide extra choice for families seeking this type of activity and support.

Health and Wellbeing Benefits:

Proposed activities support mental health, reduce social isolation, promote physical activity, and offer informal education—all likely to generate positive social value.

Potential Negative Impacts:

Perceived Exclusivity:

As a church-led initiative, some in the community may view the building as being tied to religious activities, which could limit participation. Palm Church has acknowledged this and committed to inclusive access.

Barriers to success

Sustained Volunteer Commitment:

The business model is highly reliant on volunteer delivery. Sustaining long-term engagement and avoiding burnout will be critical.

Regulatory and Compliance Demands:

Managing a publicly accessible facility will require ongoing compliance with PVG, health and safety, and employment regulations, which may stretch volunteer capacity.

Scaling and Coordination of Services:

Implementing a broad range of community activities across all age groups will require structured planning, staff coordination, and potentially, professional support—particularly as demand increases.

Public Perception and Integration:

Ensuring the community perceives the space as a shared, inclusive hub rather than solely a faith-based facility will be essential to maximise use and public value.

Assessment:

Moderate:

Limited evidence to demonstrate capabilities to manage the asset. Some awareness of the potential impact of transfer on others and consideration given to potential barriers/challenges. Minimal information provided on the anticipated social benefit/impact of the transfer.

Appendix 3

Description of Scoring Criteria

	1.Details of the asset; <i>Includes asset status and proposed use. This section asks the council to ensure they are in a position to transfer the asset</i>	2.Organisation information; <i>Includes governance and capacity to deliver</i>	3.Type of Request: <i>This section confirms the type of request and seeks and whether or not the price reflects a fair price for the asset taking into consideration community benefit</i>	4.Link to the Plan for North Lanarkshire: <i>How the project links into the vision and ambitions set out in the Plan for North Lanarkshire (TPFNL)</i>	5.Community Proposal: <i>Includes project aims, community engagement and community benefit/need</i>	6.Support: <i>Includes stakeholder engagement and partnership working. This section looks including evidence community and stakeholders have been engaged</i>	7.Financial Information; <i>Includes fundraising, financial planning and management. We will seek clarification of funding being in place or any potential delay in funding being in place in time for the final transfer deadline.</i>	8.Risk/Social Impact <i>Includes potential impact and barriers/challenges and understanding of managing the asset.</i>
Very Strong	The proposal has a cost saving, does not impact on council direct delivery or service and there are no restrictions on the asset transfer.	Applicant has clearly evidenced that they are a robust and viable organisation with effective governance arrangements in place.	Applicant has proposed acceptable terms, with prices reflecting Market/Fair	Applicant has clearly evidenced that their project links into the key themes of TPFNL	Full consideration has been given to the aims, objectives and vision with clear thought to the future direction of the proposal. The proposal provides, for example, social/economic/environmental impact. Comprehensive evidence of need/demand provided including consultations, research and surveys	Applicant has clearly demonstrated links with relevant stakeholders and groups as well as strong local partnership and community engagement. Evidence of joint responsibility for delivery of other projects/service.	Clear Evidence that sufficient financial resources are/will be in place by the time of transfer and good resource planning for short/ medium/long term sustainability demonstrated. Detailed, realistic and achievable income and expenditure, cash flow forecast provided along with a comprehensive contingency plan.	Full evidence that applicant has in place the necessary capabilities to manage the asset. Considerable awareness of the potential impact of the transfer on others, and barriers/challenges clearly identified. Comprehensive information provided on the anticipated social benefit/impact of the transfer and how this will be measured
Strong	The proposal is cost neutral to the council, it does not impact on council direct delivery of services and there are no restrictions on the asset transfer.	Applicant has provided adequate evidence that they are a robust and viable organisation with satisfactory governance arrangements.	Applicant has proposed terms, with prices reflecting Market/Fair Value.	Satisfactory evidence that the applicant understands the importance of linking to the outcomes of the TPFNL	Adequate description of aims, objectives and vision for the proposal. A good understanding of the community benefits including adequate evidence. Need/demand evidence include some consultation and research.	Applicant has evidenced some partnership working arrangements. Relevant links with groups also evidenced along with strong community engagement activity.	Evidence indicates that sufficient financial resources are/will be in place by the time of transfer and some resource planning has been demonstrated. Satisfactory income and expenditure and cash flow forecast. Some consideration has been given to contingency planning.	Satisfactory evidence that applicant has the necessary capabilities to manage the asset. Sufficient awareness of the potential impact of the transfer on others with consideration given to potential barriers/challenges. Adequate information provided on the anticipated social benefit/transfer.
Moderate	The proposals presents difficulties on the council in terms of one or two of the following – direct cost, council direct delivery of services and or restrictions on the assets transfer.	Applicant has evidenced some signs of being robust and viable and partial information provided on governance arrangements.	Applicant has proposed terms, with prices well below Market/Fair Value.	Limited evidence that the applicant understands the need to ensure the projects reflect one of more of the strands of the TPFNL.	Limited description of the aims, objectives and vision for the proposal. Some understanding of the community benefit but not underpinned by substantive evidence. Some evidence of need/demand provided including limited consultations, research and survey	Applicant has demonstrated limited links with groups and community engagement activity. Some evidence of partnership working provided.	Applicant has demonstrated there are some financial resources in place but all finances may not be available within the timeframe. There is limited evidence of resource planning. Basic income and expenditure and cash flow forecast induced with limited consideration given to contingency planning.	Limited evidence to demonstrate capabilities to manage the asset. Some awareness of the potential impact of transfer on others and consideration given to potential barriers/challenges. Minimal information provided on the anticipated social benefit/impact of the transfer.
Weak	The proposals presents difficulties to the council in terms of cost, council direct delivery of services and restrictions on the asset transfer.	Applicant has shown no evidence of being robust and viable and no/little information being provided on governance arrangements	Applicant has failed to propose terms or prices.	Little or no evidence that the applicant has made a clear connection to the TPFNL	Inadequate or no description of aims, objectives and vision for the proposal. Limited reference to community benefit and associated opportunities. No evidence of need/demand provided	No/poor evidence of community involvement. No/poor evidence of partnership working	Insufficient financial resources currently in place and unlikely to be ready within the Time frame. No evidence to demonstrate resource planning. No income and expenditure and cash flow forecast provided, and no contingency plan outlined.	Inadequate or no evidence of capabilities in place to manage the asset. Little or no awareness of the potential impact of the transfer on others or possible barriers/challenges identified. No social benefit/impact monitoring outlined.
Very Weak	Unlikely to proceed because of ownership restrictions on the asset this would prevent a transfer of responsibility or ownership to another organisation.	Applicant has provided no evidence of being robust or viable. Governance arrangement does not meet the criteria for asset transfer.	Applicant unsure of securing funding to afford costs.	Applicant has no understanding of the TPFNL	No description of aims, objectives and vision for the proposal. No reference to community benefit. No evidence of need or demand provided.	No evidence of community involvement. No evidence of partnership working.	No evidence of financial resources in place. No evidence of resources or financial forecast to predict cash flow.	Applicant has provided no evidence of capabilities to manage the asset. No awareness of the potential impact of the transfer on others. No social benefit or impact monitoring in place.