



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Ainsworth Community Association
Date:	17 April 2012
Reporting Officer:	Catherine Taggart Community Development Manager ext 3525
Contact Officer:	Jenny Oliver Community Services Unit Manager ext 3542

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Ainsworth Community Centre is located at 117 Mayo Street BT13 3AZ. Since the 1970s the centre has been locally managed by Ainsworth Community Association with the premises and land vested in Trustees by virtue of an Assignment of Lease dated 17 January 1975. The Association was funded under revenue and small grants by the Council for more than 25 years.
1.2	The Community & Leisure Sub Committee 29 November 2005 approved a Deed of Covenant and Charge by which the Council made a grant of £11,000 to the Association towards the expenditure to be incurred to complete the construction of a new community centre. Subsequent to this the Service continued to be in contact with the Association but indications were that the total funding package for the new build had yet to be achieved and work not yet commenced.
1.3	In late spring 2008 a site visit carried out due to non return of revenue grant monitoring information 2007/8 indicated that the Centre had permanently closed. Subsequent contact with the Secretary of the Association confirmed the current condition of the building had required closure but the hope was that a rebuild programme would still be achieved. At some stage subsequent to this the Association appeared to cease to exist.
1.4	In late 2011 the Service was invited to attend an interagency group established in the Ainsworth area and convened by Councillor Kingston. The group aim is to improve/ regenerate of the area specifically in regard to local services and community safety. Group membership is made up of PSNI, NIHE, BRO, local residents and representatives of a number of community organisations within the Greater Shankill area. A current focus of the group is the need for the demolition of the existing centre which is significantly deteriorated and development in due course of a new facility. BRO have indicated that they will make funding available for a feasibility study but there is not yet a specific timescale or funding source for a new build programme. A survey has also been carried out in the area in

	regard to the needs of young people.
1.5	As a consequence of this initiative a public meeting of local residents was held 25 January 2012 which resulted in Ainsworth Community Association being reformed and constituted. This new Association will drive forward current plans for the area.

2	Key Issues
2.1	DSD have written to the Council 14 February 2012 confirming that they plan to vest the property with a view to its demolition and seeking the Council's view in regard to the existence of the Deed and Covenant registered against the property. BRO have received a letter from the Trustees confirming consent to the community centre being vested and acceptance of the statutory evaluation of around £40K. This payment will be made to the Trustees as owners of the land and building.
2.2	Legal Services advice in regard to the Deed and Covenant indicates that there is an ability for the Council to recoup the grant awarded given that the project was never commenced. Legal have also confirmed their intention to write to DSD to register a Caution against the property in respect of the Deed of Covenant and Charge.
2.3	The Trustees have confirmed that when payment has been generated in terms of vesting this will be used to clear bank debts (£14,000) and a possible outstanding debt for caretaking duties (£5,000) and they are aware that there may be a requirement to repay the Council grant awarded under the Deed and Covenant. They confirm that all remaining funds will be transferred to the new Ainsworth Community Association to support delivery of their plans for the area.
2.4	DSD have advertised the Notice of Intention to Vest in three Belfast papers on 29 th March and 5 th April 2012. There is a 28 day objection period, which commences from 5 th April 2012.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The Deed of Covenant and Charge agreed a grant ward of £11,000 towards the expenditure to be incurred to complete a new building.
3.2	The Trustees have indicated an ability to repay the £11,000 to Council the source of which will be the income generated from vesting of the site

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
There are no Equality or Good Relations issues.	

5	Recommendations
That Members consider whether they wish Council to seek to recoup the monies registered under the Deed of Covenant and Charge and if so, that DSD and the Trustees are advised of this decision without delay.	

6	Decision tracking
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Agreed action to be completed by 31 May 2012 by Catherine Taggart (CDM)

7	Key to Abbreviations
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D.S.D. – Department of Development

B.R.O. – Belfast Regeneration Office

8	Documents Attached
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1. Minutes of the Community & Leisure Sub Committee 29 November 2005 (Appendix A)
2. Deed of Covenant and Charge dated 22 May 2006 (Appendix B)
3. Correspondence from DSD dated 14 February 2012 (Appendix C)