



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject	Property at Tamar Street
Date:	25 April 2012
Reporting Officers:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects, ext 6217
Contact Officers:	Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager, ext 3493

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Approximately 0.125 acres of land at Tamar Street, Ballymacarrett held by Development Committee is currently leased to the Scout Association. Location Map enclosed at Appendix 1.
1.2	The Scout Association hold the site under a 25 year lease from the Council from 1 st October 1994. The lease was originally granted to the Save the Children Fund who erected a modular building on 1 st August 2000. The former Community & Recreation Sub- Committee approved an assignment of the lease to the Scout Association on 16 th May 2001. Under the terms of the lease the rent for the site is reviewable every 5 years. A rent of £900 per annum is currently payable by the Scout Association with effect from 1 st October 2009, with a review due 1 st October 2014.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Development Committee agreed at its meeting on 18 th August 2004 that the Estates Management Unit (now in Property & Projects Department) would proactively manage certain leased property assets, which included the lease of this site.
2.2	The Scout Association currently do not have any groups meeting in the Scout Hall in Tamar Site. They have been trying for two years to assign their lease in the premises but to no avail.
2.3	The Scout Association have requested that that the Council agree to accepting a surrender of the remaining term of their lease. The lease ends on 30 th September 2019 although there is a break option in their lease in October 2014. However due to the financial burden of the rent to the Scout Association and the upkeep of the premises, they currently consider that they are no longer able to continue with the lease. Council could require the Scout Association to remove the building and make good the site however the group do not have the funds to undertake this work.

2.4	Members are therefore being asked to agree to lease surrender and accept the lease site back from the Scout Association with the building remaining on site, to be demolished, removed and disposed of by BCC. Due to the poor condition of the modular building it is not feasible to re-locate it elsewhere.
2.5	BCC had a planning assessment prepared on this site by a Planning Consultant in December 2010. The site is designated a 'white land' within the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 and as such is free from constraint and may be suitable for development subject to normal development control considerations. The return of the site to BCC may therefore facilitate future development along with the adjoining land in BCC ownership. A future report can be brought back to Committee in due course on future use options for the site.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>£900 p.a. rent payable by the Scout Association will be lost to the Council. However, the Scout Association are currently struggling to meet the rental commitments.</p> <p>An estimated cost for demolition and site clearance has been obtained at £6250 + VAT. However, a demolition / refurbishment asbestos survey must be carried out prior to works commencing and full costs of demolition will only be known following completion of this asbestos survey and information obtained from utility providers.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>Staff resource primarily from Property & Projects to progress lease surrender and demolition.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Asset & Other Implications</u></p> <p>There are potential longer term redevelopment opportunities for this land given its planning status and its proximity to adjoining Council land. Removal of the building should deter anti-social behaviour and vandalism.</p>

4	Equality & Good Relations Considerations
	None

5	Recommendations
	It is recommended that Members agree to accept a surrender of the current lease on the Tamar Street site from the Scout Association and to approve the demolition and removal of the modular building on the site.

6	Decision Tracking
	Director of Property & Projects to ensure lease surrender completed and demolition and site clearance completed within 6 months.

7	Key to Abbreviations
BCC – Belfast City Council	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – Location Map	