FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – 124/18

Dear Sir/Madam

Your request for information has now been considered and the information requested is provided below.

Request/Response:

I am writing with a request for information about your local authority’s approach towards Community Asset Transfer (CAT), full details are below.

Locality supports local community organisations to be strong and successful, so they can unlock the power in their local community to build a fairer society. Locality provides its network of over 550 members with hands-on support, peer-learning, tools and resources, and uses evidence from members to influence government policy.

Locality works with communities and local authorities to support the process of Community Asset Transfer (CAT). CAT is the transfer of management and/or ownership of public land and buildings from its owner (usually a local authority) to a community organisation for less than market value to achieve a local social, economic or environmental benefit. In 2015/16 Locality delivered the Community Ownership and Management of Assets (COMA) programme on behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This supported 52 partnerships between local public bodies and community groups (including parish councils) to develop multiple asset transfer or single, more complex and ground-breaking, asset projects.

Through our work, we know that community ownership of local buildings and spaces can help transform neighbourhoods, support local community organisations to run services and spaces for local people, and also create financial savings for councils. Please see our research report Places and Spaces: the future of community ownership of assets for further information on this.

1. Does the authority have a published Community Asset Transfer* policy?

   *Community Asset Transfer enables local authorities to transfer the ownership/management of their assets to community organisations at less than full market value – in order to achieve a defined public benefit.

   Answer: Yes
2. If Yes, please provide a web link to the policy.

Answer: [https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/community-right-to-bid/](https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/community-right-to-bid/)

3. If No, is Community Asset Transfer (CAT) integrated into another policy within your local authority – such as wider asset management strategies or VCSE policies?

Answer: Not Applicable

4. If Yes, Please provide a web link to this policy, if published.

Answer: Not Applicable

5. How many of the authority’s land and property assets have been disposed of in the following periods: 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 (to date)?

For the purposes of this FOI “disposal” means a sale on the open market for monetary consideration or the letting of any council land or building, or part of a building, regardless of the length of term of the letting. Please note we are not concerned with any land or property transfers to other departments or changing the use of the land from one statutory purpose to another, so please exclude these figures from your return.

Answer: None

6. In relation to the number of disposals in Q5, how many were made to ‘for-profit* organisations in the same time periods?

*For-profit organisations make private profit for their directors, members or shareholders. Different types of organisation can be ‘for-profit’. It is not a legal structure in and of itself.

Answer: None

7. Typically, authorities operate a 5 year programme for the disposal of their surplus assets. Looking ahead over this period, how many of the authority’s current land and property assets are being considered for declaring as surplus to requirements?

“We define surplus to requirements as ‘not required for operational purposes any more and as a result identified for disposal’

Answer: Rutland County Council has a small property portfolio and at present do not have a disposal programme.

8. In relation to the potential land and property assets being considered for declaring as surplus to requirements in Q7, what percentage of the authority’s existing asset base do they represent?

If it is not possible to produce an exact percentage figure at this time, then please provide an estimate, and indicate if that is the case.

Answer: None

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You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545700

Yours faithfully

FOI Administrator
Corporate Support Team, Rutland County Council