



## RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION

Key Decision ✓

Operational Decision

**SUBJECT: RCT Together - Community Asset Transfer of Ferndale Infants School**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To approve the asset transfer of Ferndale Infants School to Ferndale Partnership and Arts Factory by way of a 21 year lease.

In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended officer decision of the Director or Corporate Estates and Procurement.

**DELEGATED DECISION (Date): 4/01/17**

Agreed to approve the asset transfer of Ferndale Infants School by way of a 21 year co-tenancy lease to The Fern Partnership and The Arts Factory Community Groups.

  
Chief Officer Signature

COUN ATYGO  
Print Name

4/1/17  
Date

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution



**CONSULTATION**

Jay Rasser

**CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE**

4/1/17

**DATE**

D. Henry

**CONSULTEE OFFICER SIGNATURE**

4/1/17

**DATE**

**CALL IN PROCEDURE RULES.**

**IS THE DECISION DEEMED URGENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**

**YES      NO ☒**

**Reason for urgency:**.....

*If deemed urgent* - signature of Mayor or Deputy Mayor or Head of Paid Service confirming agreement that the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances for it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rule 17.2:

.....  
**(Mayor)**

.....  
**(Dated)**

**NB - If this is a reconsidered decision then the decision Cannot be Called In and the decision will take effect from the date the decision is signed.**



FOR CABINET OFFICE USE ONLY

### PUBLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATES

#### PUBLICATION

Publication on the Councils Website:- 05/01/17

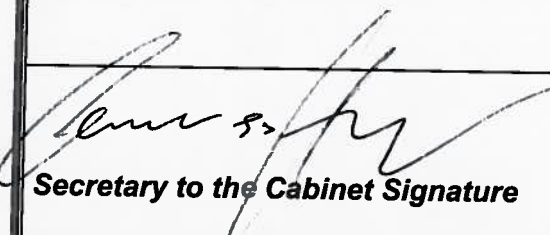
DATE

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

**Note:** This decision will not come into force and may not be implemented until the expiry of 5 clear working days after its publication to enable it to be the subject to the Call-In Procedure in Rule 17.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Subject to Call In the implementation date will be 13/01/17

DATE

 Secretary to the Cabinet Signature	CHRISTIAN S3 HAWAGAN Print Name	4/1/17 Date
---	------------------------------------	----------------



#### Further Information

Directorate:	Corporate & Frontline Services – Corporate Estates & Procurement
Contact Name:	Debra Hanney
Designation:	RCT Together – Community Asset Transfer Development Officer
Tel.No.	01443 744517

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016/17**

**REPORT TO ACCOMPANY DECISION OF GROUP DIRECTOR,  
CORPORATE AND FRONTLINE SERVICES**

<b><u>Part 1</u></b> <b>(Non-Confidential)</b>
---

RCT Together - Community Asset Transfer of the former Ferndale Infants School
---

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended Officer decision of the Director of Corporate Estates and Procurement.

**2. DECISION**

Decision to:

- 2.1 Endorse the transfer of the former Ferndale Infants School to shared occupancy between The Fern Partnership and Arts Factory by way of a 21 year lease as set out in paragraph 7.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council's RCT Together Approach for progressing Community Asset Transfers was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014. This approach will see the Council working with communities and partner agencies to sustain delivery of services that the Council may no longer be able to deliver on its own.
- 3.2 Applications are considered from non profit distributing voluntary and community groups or companies for activities, services and facilities which benefit residents within Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 3.3 To date over 112 formal Expressions of Interest have been received from a variety of existing and newly established groups with proposals ranging from taking over small paddling pools to museums and day care centres. The asset transfer of the Muni Arts Centre has been recognised by the Welsh Government as a way of good practice and was referred to in its recently published document "Community Asset transfers in Wales" Best Practice Guide.

- 3.4 At the Council meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016, it was agreed that applications for asset transfer could now be dealt with under the Council's Delegated Decisions framework. High Level Asset Transfers may still need to be reported to Cabinet, if officers and the appropriate Cabinet member feel this is appropriate.

4. **APPLICATION FROM "VIVA! (WALES)"**

- 4.1 Viva! (Wales) was established as a registered charity in 1990 and has over 23 years experience of delivering services to children and young people aged 11-30 years with and without disabilities. Their current membership stands at 230 children and young people and their work engages members from across the Cwm Taf region. Their core work is to create leisure, training, life skills opportunities and support this target group to be more independent in order to give them a stronger voice in society. In 2009, Viva became a Company Ltd by Guarantee with Charitable Status. Their aim is to expand their current delivery programme and utilise the opportunities within the Ferndale Infant School complex ie. Environmental projects, volunteering opportunities, accredited learning opportunities in gardening, growing projects etc. They have identified gaps to provide more family opportunities as well as building life skills to assist independent living.
- 4.2 All members of the organisation are assessed to ensure Viva can provide tailored support to address any complex and challenging needs and this is done using a multi-agency approach.
- 4.3 They are currently based in a ground floor office building in Pontypridd which has small staff offices and a small room for meetings. Their current venue does not have accessible parking for children, young people and families that enables them to access the building. There is no room to expand their services and currently they have to pay additional room hire in venues across RCT.
- 4.4 The move to Ferndale would allow the relocation of up to 14 staff and expansion of activities to include a diverse life skills programme including gardening, growing projects, cooking and healthy eating etc as well as their current programme of activities such as Condom Card Scheme, youth club, Roots forum etc.
- 4.5 Their preferred proposal is to take on a 21 year lease of the **whole** of the Ferndale Infants School building. This is to support their long term sustainability. They have also advised they would be willing to reduce their occupation to 60% of the building if a shared basis was the preferred option for the Council in ensuring sustainability.
- 4.6 They also aim to become a registered centre for Touch Trust (Cardiff) to deliver specialist services for children, young people and families who are affected by autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and complex

needs. They aim to secure funding for a sensory room and wet room facilities. At present families have to travel to Cardiff.

- 4.7 Viva's main sources of income is through Families First Funding of £98,000 per annum which will run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and £114,936 from Big Lottery (which will run until July 2017). Viva have applied for a 2 year extension on the Big Lottery Funding but this has not yet been confirmed yet. Due to the anticipated changes in Families First funding, there is uncertainty around what organisations will continue to be commissioned post March 2017. This raises concerns over the sustainability of Viva.
- 4.8 Their current proposal provides additional focus on maximising use of the Ferndale Infants School to generate income through room hire, community events and activities.
- 4.9 Viva have also advised they are keen to work collaboratively and already participate in a number of local networks. They have a wide range of policies and compliance procedures in place.
- 4.10 Viva advise they capture feedback on the effectiveness of their service in a number of ways including user questionnaires, impact summaries and quarterly returns for funded activities. 375 activities were held throughout the year, with 4 young people going on to volunteer and 64 Agored accreditation outcomes.

#### **4.11 PANEL ASSESSMENT OF VIVA! (WALES) PROPOSAL**

- 4.11.1 Projected income and expenditure levels were thought to be unachievable and unsustainable especially the figures presented on projected room rental income which were calculated at £286,000 per annum. Charging hourly rates of between £10-£30 were felt to be too unrealistic to achieve in the current economical climate. Other community buildings in the area charge on average between £10-15 per hour and have available occupancy so panel officers felt Viva are potentially out-pricing their options.
- 4.11.2 Concerns were also raised around future commissioning options. Feedback from referring service areas, felt the current service offered by VIVA did not reflect the current needs of young people and that services were still not fully integrated for the diverse needs of young people.
- 4.11.3 The issue of Viva's ability to pick up and transport clients to the various activity venues was highlighted as a concern and a barrier to making the service more accessible and integrated.
- 4.11.4 Strengths highlighted included a mixture of board members with a range of appropriate skills and experiences including appropriate financial experience and ability to manage community buildings. The



fact that they have been able to sustain their activities for 23 years also indicates a solid track record.

## **5. APPLICATION FROM "ARTS FACTORY"**

- 5.1 Established as a "not for profit" community organisation in 1990 and has over 26 year track record in engaging local residents and developing local community initiatives. Their strap-line and mission statement is "No more throw away people" and want to support people to grow, develop and thrive as individuals. They offer life changing opportunities for disadvantaged people and communities using an "Asset Based Community Development" approach.
- 5.2 Arts Factory now own the converted Trerhondda Chapel building in Ferndale after developing the facility in 1996 using European funding. They also hire out a unit on Highfield Industrial Estate, which is where they currently base their Factory Books warehousing activities.
- 5.3 They employ 2 full time staff and have over 40 active volunteers supporting their range of activities each week. They have a Board of 4 local trustees. They provide a range of flexible volunteering opportunities each week including building repair and maintenance, finances, customer service, E-commerce, warehousing, van driving, advertising, promotion and social media.
- 5.4 The Arts Factory has submitted a flexible proposal on entering into either a co-tenancy or sub-lessee role at Ferndale Infants School and only require 1 large classroom and 2 small rooms to house their warehousing learning and volunteering opportunities as part of their Factory Books activities. They are currently tied into a rental agreement until January 2017 on a unit at Highfields Industrial Estate, Ferndale and will need to inform their current landlord if they wish to terminate this current lease by December 2016. Their current warehousing facility is based a mile up the road from Trerhondda Chapel and minimises their ability to offer additional volunteering opportunities in this field of work due to transport barriers and it is too far for volunteers to walk. The current unit is cold and very old. By relocating to Ferndale Infants School which sits directly opposite their main base in Trerhondda Chapel, it would allow them to increase the active volunteers supporting this initiative which in turn they state supports improved literacy and numeracy skills for their volunteers.
- 5.5 Arts Factory are able to generate income through a number of sources including;
- Graphic Design - Social Enterprise
  - Factory Books – Social Enterprise
  - Managed Workspace at Trerhondda Chapel
  - Playgroup Income



This resulted in a combined sales income from the above activities amounting to

- 2015 - £214,079
- 2014 - £287,131
- 2013 - £269,996

In addition to this generated income, they are also commissioned by:

- Adult Social Services      £17,628 per annum
- Families First                £15,000 per annum

The percentage of their dependency on grants and commissioned work in relation to their total income is shown as follows;

- 2015 – 16.02%
- 2014 - 11.80%
- 2013 – 14.71%

5.6 They have also received financial assistance from the Enterprise Support Programme to support the graphic design business. This funding is shortly due to come to an end and it is unlikely they will be able to reapply for the same project.

5.7 Arts Factory through its managed workspace programme at Trerhondda Chapel, support a range of community organisations to deliver activities that support, health, prosperity and safety outcomes including housing a Citizens Advice Drop-In, Essential Skills programme, training opportunities, Credit Union, Rhondda Rockets Cheerleading group and computer club etc. Trerhondda Chapel is promoted as a “one stop shop” community hub in the heart of the Ferndale village. Another key focus of their work is supporting local networks such as “Stronger Rhondda” which enables a range of voluntary sector organisations to work collaboratively together and maximise their collective resources.

5.8 Reported outputs for the year ended March 2016 include;

- 3601 people attending activities
- 42 volunteers helped run the social enterprises
- 17 new volunteers started
- 257 health & wellbeing activities were delivered
- 3 families signposted to appropriate agencies for further support
- 21 advice and signposting session were delivered

## 5.9 **PANEL ASSESSMENT OF ARTS FACTORY'S PROPOSAL**

- 5.9.1 Families First funding of £15,000 is currently being utilised to cover the building/running costs of Trerhondda Chapel and officers reported they are not meeting appropriate performance outcome measurements attributed to Families First funding criteria. Any successful future commissioning from this fund would need to provide relevant targeted activity, clarity of outcomes and clearer reporting mechanisms to ensure the Families First fund criteria is met. No confirmation of commissioned funding has been provided post March 2017 currently. Therefore if the group were to be considered for further commissioning moving forward, then they would have to re-profile their activities to focus on support for young people and families in order to meet Families First outcomes.
- 5.9.2 Feedback from panel officers is that they would like to see the Arts Factory take on additional adult day centre client volunteers within the Factory Books warehousing activities. They are currently commissioned to work with 18 adults but there is a list of additional people looking for volunteering opportunities. The service area representative confirmed that any future commissioning arrangements are not known past March 2017 as this point in time.
- 5.9.3 Although the Arts Factory have been financially vulnerable in previous years, the move from Highfield Industrial Estate could save them monies on commercial rent of £21,136 in 2015 and £26,318 in 2014 to enable them to become more sustainable by using space at Ferndale Infants School potentially reducing their rent. Moving forward they will need to demonstrate and evidence positive outcomes and progression routes for their adult day centre commissioned clients.

<b><u>Reported surpluses / (deficits);</u></b>	<b>£</b>
• 2013	(41,050)
• 2014	5,890
• 2015	(20,977)
• Anticipated for year end December 2016	40,691
• Anticipated for year end December 2007	40,815

## 6. **APPLICATION FROM "THE FERN PARTNERSHIP"**

- 6.1 Registered as a charity since 2008-14 and originally known as "Friends of Ferndale", this group have recently transitioned to become a Company Ltd by Guarantee with Charitable Status and are now known as "The Fern Partnership". They have a Service Level agreement with Ferndale Community School and the shared objectives and ethos of both organisations are to "advance the education of pupils and working with community organisations and businesses, assist in developing the lives and wellbeing of the community".
- 6.2 The strategic management of the organisation is carried out by 6 directors who meet three times per year and all have a direct link with

Ferndale Community School to ensure the advancement of their shared vision can be achieved. The board have a strong mix of appropriate skills and experiences to effectively manage and sustain their varied delivery programme going forward. The organisation currently employ 22 staff, of which 4 work within Ferndale Community School.

- 6.3 The business activities of "The Fern Partnership" have increased and diversified year on year since they formed, as follows;

Date	Activity
2008	Received £16,000 annual funding for first 2 years
2008/14	Accessed £40,000 funding to establish "Fern Photography"
2014	Successfully tendered to run Flying Start "Little Ferns" childcare at Ferndale Community School. Flying Start commission Little Ferns in Maerdy for 40 childcare spaces.
2015	Successful community asset transfer of the former Maerdy Library which they have revitalised as "The Community Hub" and currently deliver community learning programmes and a book lending service. On average 100 users access the former library each week.
2015 and ongoing	Commissioned by Communities First funding to employ 2 development workers and deliver family learning and accredited training programme for adults. They work in partnership with a variety of agencies to source appropriate training opportunities for the community including working with Welsh Education Association, University of South Wales and UHOVI. <b><i>The Communities First Co-ordinator reports that during 2016/17, priorities have been reviewed and delivery of employment support and learning co-ordination is now in place with increased level of funding to support this change.</i></b>
2016	Successfully tendered to run Flying Start "Little Ferns" childcare at Cwmparc Primary School. Flying Start commission Little Ferns in Treorchy for 12 children. They advise 30 families on average access the provision on a weekly basis.
2016	Secured £33,750 from the People's Health Trust and Older Persons Grant to run "Generations Together" an intergenerational programme to reduce isolation and increase awareness of challenges faced by children, young people and older people. Aim to reach a minimum of 150 service users per year.

**Anticipated 2016/17:**

Date	Proposed Activity
2017	Currently in negotiations to purchase a soft play facility to operate as a social enterprise and generate additional sources of income which can be re-invested to safeguard

	existing and future developments. Anticipate knowing if funding has been secured in February 2017.
2016	The Group have also tendered for a Flying Start childcare provision in Ebbw Vale. Outcome of tender not yet known.

- 6.4 Their primary reason for their proposal to lease Ferndale Infants School is due to the success of the Maerdy "Community Hub" which they have now outgrown and require additional premises to house their successful learning programmes. The current building due to its size restricts what they can offer and can only accommodate up to 10 learners at a time. They have also evidenced unmet need for additional childcare support including the specific need to support children with additional support needs (advised Law yn Llaw will no longer be providing services in RCT). The provision of childcare is aimed at breaking the barrier of providing affordable and flexible childcare for those who wish to access on-site training and accreditation as well as the provision of transport to support service delivery. NB. The Councils Early Years and Family Support representative advised they have brought the existing service provided by Law Yn Llaw in house and will be purchasing places in existing Flying Start Childcare settings. Their reduced budget will be unlikely to support surplus income generation for tendering groups as any additional income will need to be countered by needing additional staff due to the support needs of the children. The officer advised there is no demand for specialist childcare provision and evidence suggests that children should wherever possible be integrated into mainstream provision..
- 6.5 Their preferred option for Ferndale Infants School is to have a long term lease on the whole building in order to create an intergenerational community training hub and childcare facility that is open 5-6 days per week from 7am-6pm with occasional sessions open until 9pm. Their three year action plan includes developing a dementia friendly facility, youth club, parenting programmes, hot-desking opportunities, drop-in for professionals as well as community gardening and forest school opportunities. They have advised they would be prepared to share the building if needed but require a significant footprint within the building to achieve their aspirations.
- 6.6 They report a minimum of 5 jobs will be created through this proposal and additional childcare for up to 40 families.
- 6.7 They have developed an appropriate risk management plan to anticipate and mitigate against any deviations in anticipated outcomes.
- 6.8 They are compliant with key policies and operational regulations. They complete "Results Based Accountability" cards showing the quantitative and qualitative outcomes for their projects in line with the Council's Shared Outcomes Framework for Communities First and

Flying Start funding for which they have clear service level agreements in place.

6.9 Reported outcomes to be addressed include;

- Increase registered childcare opportunities
- Increase school attendance due to improved family wellbeing
- Increase standards due to parental engagement & support
- Increase skills and qualifications
- Increase numbers into employment
- Increase income through benefit take up \*\*\*
- Reduce household costs by using online providers \*\*\*

\*\*\* In relation to the last two bullet points, concerns were raised by panel members that if the Fern Partnership were not signposting individuals into other specialist agencies to access this specific support that they would be duplicating provision and essentially delivering against them.

6.10 **PANEL ASSESSMENT OF FERN PARTNERSHIP'S PROPOSAL**

6.10.1 Officers felt even though they are currently commissioned from Flying Start and Communities First funding and have levered in a range of other grants, their current projected generated income is 4.34% of their total income. Panel members thought that the potential to purchase an existing, viable business to generate additional income was a positive step.

6.10.2 Commissioning officers confirmed they are a competent organisation who provide excellent high quality provision in childcare and community development opportunities. They were mindful of the speed in which the organisation has grown but were also keen to clarify they were currently achieving their planned goals. A concern was raised that some third sector organisations have historically grown beyond their ability and have not been sustainable in the long term. The Group report three new trustees have recently joined the board who have extensive Finance, Legal and HR experience which will ensure a scrutiny role in preventing overstretching their resources and expanding beyond their means.

6.10.3 Panel members felt they were less concerned about risks to the sustainability of this group. Officers also clarified in relation to their childcare proposals could address current unmet need. The Early Years and Family Support representative questioned whether the provision of paid childcare would be economically viable in this area. Feedback from the Councils Childcare Development Officer confirmed that from the cluster wide parent consultation, it became apparent that the only significant demand was from parents in Darran Park and so the Fern Partnership have been working to set this up with the aim of

offering a pickup service from other local schools (probably just Tylorstown and YGG Llyn y Forwyn). This should be opening by February 2017.

The officer agrees with their statement that there is limited childcare facilities in this area. Their target of becoming a Registered Education Provider (REP) is something that has not been discussed with them. All the schools in this cluster currently offer full time nursery education and have also indicated that they will be admitting pre-nursery children in the January and April terms. So the officer does not believe that there is a need for an additional Registered Education Provision in the Ferndale area at this current moment in time. The officer advised the Welsh Government 30 hour offer may change this situation and it is good to know that there is a childcare provider in the Upper Rhondda Fach who is able and willing to accommodate additional childcare demand.

If they were to secure a lease on the former Ferndale Infants School it would no doubt offer the opportunity to expand childcare provision in this area. The after school provision planned in Darran Park School will always be limited by availability of suitable rooms etc (as it is in most school settings).

- 6.10.4 Information has been provided by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Officer that there was surplus capacity at Ferndale Community School to house some of the Fern Partnerships proposals. This would need to be explored through a school planning strategy meeting to best utilise this space. The advice therefore was that it would be prudent for the Fern Partnership to utilise the current and future surplus space at Ferndale Community School. This could potentially be a solution to expand their childcare proposals.

## **7. Report Summary**

- 7.1 At the meeting of the Community Asset and Service Transfer Panel (CAST) on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016, a comparative assessment of the three business proposals was undertaken. A summary of the scorings can be provided if requested.

- 7.2 The benefits of Community Asset Transfers are potentially substantial and varied, depending on the extent to which the asset can be utilised for maximum community benefit.

Community based organisations develop styles of engagement that are more effective than other forms of ownership because they are directly accountable to their customers. Communities that come together to plan and deliver services can make them more inclusive and responsive than state run services.

**By transferring control to community based organisations, asset transfer can:**

- Empower communities to shape the places in which they live and work.
- Involve communities in co-designing, transforming and delivering the services from which they benefit.
- Be a catalyst for skills development / volunteering opportunities / job creation / business development.
- Promote 'community anchors' and resilience in deprived neighbourhoods through the provision of space / opportunities for local enterprise activity.
- Lever in capital and revenue funding dependent on the proposal and evidenced community need.

7.3 The Corporate Estates caseworker has confirmed the following arrangements would be established prior to confirmation of any tenancy arrangements;

- There are two restrictive covenants in place on Ferndale Infants School which will limit what range of services and activities can be delivered from the building to only those with an "educational purpose". These will need to be taken into consideration when reviewing the community groups proposals or for any future sale of the building.
- A market rent valuation of £20,925 has been estimated for the whole building. The Council has policies in place to allow reduced and or delayed rent payments should the organisations current financial capacity merit it.
- If there is to be shared occupancy of the building, each group would have responsibility for their own internal areas and split the costs of any common (shared) areas. The average utility and maintenance running costs for the last three years average out at £17,431.
- Any leases agreed could be aligned and reviewed in line with any future commissioning/service level agreements.
- If none of the community proposals were deemed to provide sufficient benefits and advantages then given the location and the condition of the building a potential sale valuation in excess of £125,000 may be obtained.

7.4 In conclusion, all three proposals demonstrate key strengths and some weaknesses/risks within their business cases. All proposals contribute to key strategic priorities including tackling poverty, reducing isolation, promoting active citizenship, health and well-being and promoting a learning environment.

7.5 Panel members raised concerns around the uncertainty of future commissioning opportunities post March 2017. This was particularly relevant to the sustainability of both Viva! (Wales) and the Arts Factory proposals but that a move to Ferndale Infants School could evidence



efficiency savings and contribute to the sustainability of both organisations.

- 7.6 The Fern Partnership is a new organisation and has less of a track record compared to the other two groups but officers felt had adequately evidenced quality service delivery and produced relevant outcomes since their launch in 2008.
- 7.7 The panel's recommendation for the leasehold transfer of Ferndale Infants School was influenced by the proposals which they felt met local needs, provided a quality service and was both viable and sustainable and are as follows;
- 7.8 **Option A** – Preference was given for shared use between the Fern Partnership and the Arts Factory. The proposals from both these groups regarding community learning and volunteering opportunities for all ages was viewed to be complementary to each other. Shared use by two groups was felt to be the more sustainable option. Panel members felt the synergy between the Fern Partnership's "Generations Together" programme and the Arts Factory's "Factory Books" volunteering programme proved a good fit and could support shared use of key rooms in the building such as the kitchen and main hall area. The panel felt the childcare element of Fern Partnership's proposal could be potentially met at its existing Ferndale Community School site and this should be explored prior to establishing any childcare at the Ferndale Infants School site. Officers are aware that the Arts Factory currently support a Parent and Toddler session at Trerhondda Chapel which generates a small income for the organisation so would not want this provision duplicated unnecessarily.
- 7.9 **Option B** – If the Arts Factory were unable to give appropriate notice to their current landlord and therefore would be in a tenancy at Highfield Industrial Estates until January 2018, then officers felt the whole of the school should be transferred to the Fern Partnership to house both their intergenerational community hub activities and their childcare proposals.

## 8.0 **CONCLUSION**

Both these options could be the catalyst for sparking greater community involvement and increased use of the facility which should in part help to contribute to improved engagement, learning and health and well-being outcomes in the Rhondda Fach area.

Each of the three Groups' proposals would contribute in part to addressing some of the priorities outlined within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Well-being of Future generations (Wales) Act 2015 which focus on empowering voluntary sector organisations and social enterprises to provide innovative and creative opportunities which have an early intervention and preventative

approach. These proposals can address a range of health and well-being needs by providing social, recreational, learning and cultural activities.

Along with 44 public bodies across Wales, the Council is subject to the statutory requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which sets a common vision for the long-term well-being of people and communities through seven national well-being goals and provides a framework for public services to work differently through five sustainable development principles. The principles include: thinking about the long-term impact of our actions; seeking to prevent issues from occurring in the first place or from worsening; involving people and communities in decisions made that affect them; working together with other organisations and integrating our work to understand the 'knock-on' effects of what we do.

The Corporate Plan also contains principles that include 'Helping people and communities to help themselves' stating that:

*"(The Council) believes that if you give power to local people you get better results and achieve better value...(the Council) wants to work more closely with RCT's community and voluntary sector to stimulate innovation and encourage communities to step forward and take on new roles in providing local services and solutions."*

The Council is approaching this principle in different ways and has launched *RCT Together* as a means of engaging and involving residents in how services are best sustained in communities:

*"The Council's vision is to develop a new relationship with residents that enable them to be independent and resilient and to take on greater responsibility for their local communities. This is not about the Council shifting its responsibility – it is about recognising that residents want to be more involved in what happens in their community".*

By supporting these proposals we will be contributing to the above principles and supporting an asset based community development approach which places a positive focus on utilising local people as assets.

