

Response to Questions posed regarding Community Asset Transfer of Prudhoe East Centre

Response from NCC Strategic Estates Surveyor (in red).

1. Is a freehold asset transfer of the site now 'off the table'? **The Council preference would be to grant a long lease unless that would make it unviable for the TC, however please see below re the term of the long lease. We could agree freehold but the site would revert back to NCC if ever it was not used for community purposes.**
2. If a long-term lease is the only option, what would the terms of the lease be? 'Heads of Terms' would be required for a business plan, we would struggle to prepare one without these. **We could look at a long lease of 99-years at a peppercorn rent on a full repairing and insuring basis. Again, the lease would terminate in the event the building was no longer used for community purposes.**
3. What funds are available from NCC to make the building 'fit for purpose', as investment has been severely lacking over a number of years, whilst under the ownership of NCC? **As the site was due to be sold, no funds had/have been allocated towards the repairs.**
4. If there was no interest from PTC or another what plans would NCC have for the building? **The site would need to be reviewed again in terms of the Youth Service occupation as well as wider uses, given the building is under-utilised.**
5. The only users of the building at present are West Northumberland Youth Service; what are the future plans for the Youth Service in relation to delivery from this site? **The service's occupation remains under review. If the TC could put forward a proposed charge to the service to stay on site, that would help with further assessment of the options.**

When asked if an NCC Surveyor would be available to visit the site with the Town Council, the response was as follows:

Further to our conversation the other day, I can advise that NCC no longer has a building surveyor on staff but in any event, the TC would need to instruct its own surveyor to provide advice on any issues.

The clerk's advice would be the same, the Town Council need to instruct and pay for a surveyor to ensure professional indemnity against any decisions taken in view of the advice given. An approximate cost has been sought and it is expected that a survey would be in the region of £2,000.