



Andover Town Council

To **receive** a short explanation of the land purchase project and to **note** how the Council will proceed in considering actions transparently.

Item No. **13**

Produced for: Full Council

By: Cllr H Neate & Town Clerk.

Date of Report: 15 Nov 2023

Background:

Andover Town Council is actively considering buying land at Picket Piece for more sport and recreation facilities for Andover residents.

The land, part of the Locksbridge Park development, was initially reserved for a junior sports pitch, but this was not delivered. The land measures approx 1.2 acres. There are hedgerows on 3 sides which support the local dormice and bat population.

To meet the cost of the land, Andover Town Council may look to apply for government funding targeted at investing in assets which are at risk of being lost to the local community.

The Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUHC) has made a £150m Community Ownership Fund (COF) available to help communities, including Town Councils, take ownership of a physical community asset at risk, such as land, which benefit local people in the long term. The fund is UK wide and competitive, with regular bidding windows spread until March 2025. Bids can include both capital funding capped at £2m, and revenue funding capped at £50k or 20% of the capital funding. Some match funding is needed. Bids against the fund must be set out in a robust business case which demonstrates how the proposed land purchase meets the fund's objectives and criteria. DLUHC provides considerable guidance and support to applicants in completing the business case. Ministers decide if funding may be awarded after the bid has been assessed against the criteria, then subjected to moderation and due diligence.

Steps to be taken to enable the Town Council to submit a bid against the Community Ownership Fund (COF).

- Public consultation on potential land use;
- Raising match funding in line with the COF prospectus; and
- Full Council approval of:
 - the business case for the proposed land use
 - the completed application form
 - submission to the COF.

For this meeting

Actions	Review and Approve: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feasibility options, 2. Project risk assessment. 3. Press Release 4. Work programme paper
Costs for approval	Consider Officer time as specified in the programme paper
Delegations to be made	Consider who will make Press Release amendments if required.