

Report to - Cabinet  
Date - 3 September 2018  
Report of the - Executive Director  
Subject - Land at the Salts, Rye

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**Recommendation:** It be **RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) the proposed disposal by lease of land at the Salts, Rye be advertised on 2 consecutive weeks as required by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972; and
  - 2) subject to completion of this process, a lease be granted to Rye Amenity Community Interest Company for a term of 25 years at a peppercorn rent and other terms and conditions to the satisfaction of the Executive Director.
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**Head of Service: Joe Powell**

**Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Ganly**

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**Introduction**

1. Rother District Council (RDC) has been approached by Rye Amenity Community Interest Company (CIC) with a view to taking on an area of land at the Salts, Rye (shown on the map in Appendix A).
2. Rye Amenity CIC currently holds a 25 year lease to operate the two allotment sites in Rye (Love Land and South Undercliff) and these have been well managed since the CIC took over the operation.

**Discussion**

3. The area in question was formerly a putting green, but there are no longer any holes etc. present and it has not been used for that purpose for a number of years. The wider ground is popular with dog walkers and strollers.
4. This Council has already undertaken some improvements to the land with the installation of picnic benches etc. These appear to have been received favourably as a useful addition to that area of the Salts in general and used quite regularly by locals and visitors alike.
5. Rye Amenity CIC has considered a plan to further enhance that area of the Salts, with the longer term aim of making it more attractive for locals and visitors, while also improving its environmental benefits. The proposal is to turn the land into a 'managed wildflower meadow' or 'managed perennial meadow'.
6. Rye Amenity CIC believe this would not only be an attractive and eye-catching addition to the Salts but would also have a positive environmental

impact for the town by attracting all sorts of wildlife, particularly butterflies and insects, while providing a much needed food source for pollinators. Their research also tends to suggest that they might be able to attract funding to undertake the project from external stakeholders.

7. The plan includes retaining the current picnic benches in situ and they may even be added to if the need proves to be high enough.
8. If the initiative is successful, there is the potential for RDC to complement it by changing the current grass maintenance regime in part of the surrounding area. This would be a matter for discussion with the CIC and Rye Town Council at a future date.
9. Due to the length of the proposed lease, the Council would be required to go through a formal process of disposing of public open space requiring an advert to be placed in the paper for a 2 week period.

## **Conclusion**

10. The granting of a lease to Rye Amenity CIC is in line in with RDC's policy of devolving assets to local groups and the recommendation is supported by both the Ward Members.

Malcolm Johnston  
Executive Director

## **Risk Assessment Statement**

Any risks associated with this report are mitigated by the fact that the Rye Amenity CIC have clearly demonstrated they can responsibly manage activities.

