Dear Sirs

Asset Transfer Request - Decision Notice
Western Isles Citizens Advice Service
Castlebay iCentre, Castlebay, Isle of Barra

This Decision Notice relates to the asset transfer request made by Western Isles Citizens Advice Service ("the Community Transfer Body") in respect of the subjects comprising the former Tourist Information Centre at Castlebay on the Isle of Barra ("the Property"), the asset transfer request having been validated on 19 May 2020.

I write to confirm that VisitScotland has decided to agree to the request.

The request was evaluated by VisitScotland and the proposals outlined by the Community Transfer Body were considered. Approval was thereafter sought from the Board of VisitScotland to approve the asset transfer request. Such approval was granted on 11 June 2020.

The reasons for the decision are as follows:

1. The Property has been declared surplus to operational requirements.
2. VisitScotland must agree to the request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal.
3. The Property requires repairs and maintenance which exceed the value of the Property and a surveyor's report has recommended demolition and sale of the land. This would have realised a financial loss to VisitScotland. The Property is currently leased to the Community Transfer Body for 5 years from February 2019 at a nominal £1 rental.
4. The service provided by the Community Transfer Body provides employment for 2 full time employees and is estimated to generate a minimum of £93,502 of additional income to local community of Harris.
5. The proposal by the Community Transfer Body to expand their current Citizens Advice Bureau services in Barra is considered positive and will provide support to other Western Island CAB offices.
The asset transfer to the Community Transfer Body will remove any ongoing costs / obligations from VisitScotland in respect of the Property and the offer price reflects the valuation of the Property.

VisitScotland are prepared to transfer ownership of the Property to the Community Transfer Body, but that subject to the following terms and conditions:

(One) The sale price shall be EIGHTEEN THOUSAND POUNDS (£18,000) STERLING (excluding VAT, if any).

(Two) The Property shall be used solely for community use by the Community Transfer Body, as outlined in their constitution and in accordance with the proposals contained in the Community Asset Transfer Request made by the Community Transfer Body. Any change in use will require the prior written consent of VisitScotland which shall not be unreasonably withheld where the proposed use is consistent with the aims of the Community Transfer Body’s constitution. This condition will require to be framed as a real burden in terms of any Disposition to be granted by VisitScotland to the Community Transfer Body.

(Three) The transfer will be conditional on:

(a) satisfactory confirmation that any offers of grant/funding for delivery of the project are in place at the date of transfer to the Community Transfer Body;

(b) the Community Transfer Body confirming that they are satisfied with the terms of the titles to the Property / confirming that any title issues have been resolved to the Community Transfer Body’s satisfaction (both parties acting reasonably); and

(c) any consents including planning and other statutory consents and permissions required to deliver the project being in place at the date of transfer.

If you wish to proceed, you must submit an offer to VisitScotland to acquire ownership of the Property no later than 6 months from date of this Decision Notice. The offer must reflect the terms and conditions stated herein and may include other reasonable terms and conditions as may be necessary or expedient to secure the transfer within a reasonable period of time.

The offer must be prepared by a firm of solicitors and should be addressed to:-

FAO Amy Entwistle
Morton Fraser LLP
Quartermile Two
2 Lister Square
Edinburgh
EH3 9GL

The offer must also contain the following:

1 The name of the Property for which the offer is made.
2 The name of the Community Transfer Body.
3 The date of the Decision Notice.
4 Confirmation that any offers of grant/funding will be in place at the date of transfer.
5 Confirmation of the necessary consents and permissions that are in place and those that remain outstanding at the time of the offer (if any).

6 Confirmation that the specific terms and conditions under which the Decision Notice was issued are acceptable.

**Right to appeal**

If you consider that this Decision Notice specifies material terms or conditions which differ to a significant extent from those specified in the asset transfer request, you may appeal to the Scottish Ministers.

Such an appeal must be made in accordance with The Asset Transfer Request (Appeals) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 and must be served on the Scottish Ministers within 20 working days of the date of this notice.

There is also a right of appeal where no contract is concluded within a period of 6 months beginning with the date of the offer.

Guidance on appeals is available within the Scottish Government’s publication “Asset Transfer under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 – Guidance for Community Transfer Bodies.”

Yours faithfully