

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Council
Date:	29 th January 2026
Subject:	Petition – Sai Seva UK Cultural Hub & Community Centre
Chief Officer:	Pat Hayes, Executive Director Property and Housing
Contact Officer:	Peter Hopkins, Director Property and Assets
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	None

1. Summary and Recommendations

1.1 This report informs Full Council of a petition entitled 'Sai Seva UK Cultural Hub & Community Centre.' The petition received 1,519 valid e-signatures and 842 handwritten signatures thereby surpassing the threshold for a Council debate under the Council's Petition Scheme. The petition asks the Council to support provision of suitable premises via lease, Community Asset Transfer, or facilitation of funding for a town-wide cultural and community hub.

Recommendations:

Council is recommended to:

- a. Note the petition and the officer information contained within this report.
- b. Note that Sai Seva UK have recently met with Officers to discuss and visit a few potentially suitable assets.
- c. Note that Officers will provide Sai Seva UK with details of available assets, which are to be published on the website, and that are available for a possible Community Asset Transfer.
- d. Note that Officers have provided the details to the petitioner on how an organisation can put forward a business case to take on an available asset for community asset transfer.
- e. Note that The Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy enables the transfer of council owned land or buildings to voluntary and community organisations, known as Third Sector Organisations (TSOs) to deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits. It supports the Council's financial recovery aligning with the Council's corporate priorities.

Reason:

Article 17 of the Council's constitution contains the petition scheme. This confirms that where the threshold is met for a Council debate, if the issue is one on which the Council's Executive (Cabinet) is required to make, the final decision the Council will decide is whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. Full Council has no power to direct Cabinet to make a specific decision, but it can make recommendations.

Commissioner Review

This report is outside the scope for pre-publication commissioner review; please check the [Commissioners' instruction 5 to CLT to sign off papers](#) for further details

2. Report

- 2.1. The petition was received by the Council in December 2025. The Council's Petition Scheme states that petitions with 1,500 or more valid signatures are debated at a Full Council meeting. Full Council may discuss the petition and make recommendations to Cabinet but cannot make an executive decision itself.
- 2.2. Petitioners request that the Council supports Sai Seva UK to secure premises for a Cultural Hub & Community Centre. The stated benefits include strengthened social cohesion, youth engagement, volunteering opportunities, reduced isolation, and a central space for charitable initiatives and partnerships. Such a Centre would provide a dedicated space for residents of all ages and backgrounds to connect, learn, celebrate diversity, and access community support.
- 2.3. Sai Seva UK is a 100% volunteer-led, community-focused charity dedicated to fostering inclusivity, development, and wellbeing in Slough. Sai Seva UK organise over 50 cultural and social events annually, bringing the community together, offering vital support services, and promoting civic pride which has been recognised through local awards and nominations, including being nominated for the King's Award for Voluntary Service 2025.
- 2.4. Sai Seva UK welcome the opportunity to meet with Council representatives to discuss pathways for making this vision a reality. A dedicated hub would allow Sai Seva UK to expand its programs, including providing a food bank, community kitchen, and initiatives such as blood donation drives, while continuing to provide safe, educational, and cultural opportunities for the entire community.
- 2.5. Sai Seva UK believes this proposal aligns closely with the Council's vision for community wellbeing, inclusion, and regeneration. By supporting this initiative, Slough Borough Council can play a pivotal role in providing a lasting, positive impact for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Options considered

Council officers met with Sai Seva UK in December 2025 to discuss requirements and have shown them several potential assets, full detail of the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy has been provided to enable submission of a completed application for consideration and approval of available and suitable assets.

Supporting Information for Debate

The Petition Organiser will be invited to the Council meeting to speak on the Petition (for up to five minutes), and the Petition will then be discussed by Members of the Council for a maximum of 15 minutes. The mayor has discretion to extend this time taking account of the degree of public interest in the issue, the level of support given to the petition and the number of elected members wishing to express their views on the subject.

Following this discussion, the Council will need to decide what action to take regarding the Petition. As this matter relates to an executive function, the Council can only decide whether to make recommendations to Cabinet since it (the Council) has no power to decide on an executive function.

The Scheme indicates that the Council's response to a petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it but may include one or more of the following (for executive functions, these could be formal recommendations to Cabinet).

- Taking the action requested in the Petition.
- Considering the Petition at a Council Meeting.
- Holding an Inquiry.
- Commissioning relevant research.
- Organising a public meeting.
- Mounting a wider public consultation.
- Meeting with the Petition Organiser or representatives of signatories.
- Providing a written response outlining the Council's views on the subject.
- Referring the issue to the Council's Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee OR
- Referring the issue to the relevant Committee/Cabinet.
- Consulting statutory partners and local service providers.
- Instigating discussions with the voluntary and community sectors; and
- Making representations to Commercial or other Interests.

Any assets already identified for disposal prior to sale need to be declared surplus and will not be considered as part of the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy.

As a general principle, all disposals should be on commercial terms and demonstrably evidence that the test in Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 is met, namely that the disposal is for best consideration reasonably obtainable. Any decision to dispose of an asset for less than best consideration except for disposals to comply with statutory obligations, should be approved by Cabinet.

A Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy has recently been adopted by the Council that clearly sets out the framework for elected members, council officers and local communities, and provides a consistent and transparent approach to dealing with both applications that can be supported and those applications which are unsuccessful.

3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

- 3.1.1 Any proposal from an external organisation to secure premises for a Cultural Hub will require the Council to undertake a full financial appraisal, including capital and revenue implications, funding routes, and ongoing operating costs.
- 3.1.2 Should Officers upon this review decide the offer meets the Council's financial and non-financial requirements then a further cabinet report would be required to ask Councillors to consider and approve this. This report would contain financial implications to enable this.
- 3.1.3 Any proposed agreement (licence or lease) will be set at Market Rent Value (MRV) to ensure the Council achieves best consideration and avoids any rental subsidy.
As part of this the freehold is retained by the Council.

3.2 Legal implications

- 3.2.1 Slough Borough Council's Petition Scheme provides that petitions meeting the signature threshold are debated by Full Council.

3.3 Risk management implications

- 3.3.1 Political support underpins the acceptance of any risks in return for wider community and policy benefits,

3.4 Environmental implications

- 3.4.1 No environmental implications have been identified as a direct result of this report.

3.5 Equality implications

- 3.5.1 A screening EIA will be completed once a suitable site has been identified.

4. *Background Papers*

There are no background papers arising from this report.