

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

The form must be completed and passed to the Chief Officer responsible for Legal and Democratic Services no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 working days have passed and the Chief Officer responsible for Legal and Democratic Services has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

- (1) That the disposal, subject to contract, of the Council's freehold interest in the Bedford Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, 155 Barkers Lane, Bedford, be approved on the terms outlined in Confidential Appendix B to the report prepared to accompany this decision.**
- (2) That the Head of Property & Regeneration be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services & External Relations, to conclude the disposal on the terms set out in Confidential Appendix B subject to any necessary amendments other than the purchase price.**

2. Date of decision

20 July 2026

3. Reasons for decision

The disposal will:

- generate a capital receipt to the Council;
- reduce future ownership and management liabilities;
- provide long-term security for the current operator to continue delivering health services;
- support the Council's Corporate Asset Strategy, Asset Management Plan 2024–2028 and Capital Receipts Programme by disposing of an asset no longer required for operational purposes.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

The alternative of the Council continuing to lease the property was considered but rejected because it would retain long-term ownership liabilities and prevent the tenant from obtaining the security needed to invest in the property.

The alternative of open market disposal was considered but rejected because the premises are occupied by the existing tenant who is the purchaser and a direct disposal provides greater certainty and represents best consideration under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. How decision is to be funded

No additional funding is required.

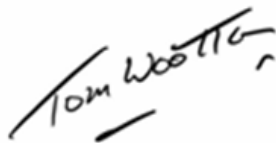
6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Not Applicable

Signed:



Date: **20 July 2026**

Name of Decision Taker: **Mayor Tom Wootton**

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Chief Officer responsible for Legal and Democratic Services as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published: ...21 July 2026

Date decision can be implemented if not called in:30 July 2026.....

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....NO.....)

Bedford Borough Council – Report to Mayor

Date of Report: 20 July 2026

Report by the Head of Property & Regeneration and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services & External Relations

Subject: DISPOSAL OF THE BEDFORD MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS THERAPY CENTRE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report has been produced to request approval to dispose of the Council's freehold interest in the Bedford Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, located at 155 Barkers Lane, Bedford, to the tenant, operating as the Bedford Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre.
- 1.2 The property, which is currently occupied on a ground lease by the tenant, has been used by the charity for a number of years and the proposed disposal will secure the long-term future of the organisation from its existing premises whilst generating a capital receipt for the Council.
- 1.3 The proposed disposal terms are set out in **Confidential Appendix B** and represent best consideration in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Executive is invited to consider the report, seek clarification where required and, if satisfied, to:
 - (1) Approve the disposal of the freehold interest in the Bedford Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, subject to contract, in accordance with the terms in **Confidential Appendix B**.
 - (2) Delegate authority to the Head of Property & Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services & External Relations to conclude the disposal on the terms set out in **Confidential Appendix B** subject to any necessary amendments other than the purchase price.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The disposal will:

- generate a capital receipt for the Council which represents the best consideration reasonably obtainable in accordance with s123 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- remove any ownership and management responsibilities from the Council.
- provide the existing occupier with long-term security to continue delivering local health services.
- support the Council's Corporate Asset Strategy and Asset Management Plan 2024-2028 by disposing of an asset that is no longer required.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The Council owns the freehold interest in the Bedford Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, the property, located at 155 Barkers Lane, Bedford, shown edged red on the plan at **Appendix A**.
- 4.2 The property comprises a two-storey purpose-built therapy centre covering approximately 10,441sq ft (NIA), together with associated external areas including approximately 50 car parking spaces. The premises are currently occupied by Beds and Northants MS Therapy Centre under an existing ground lease.

5. DETAILS

- 5.1 The tenant has approached the Council expressing a desire to acquire the freehold interest in the property to secure its long-term occupation of the premises and provide greater certainty for their plans to invest in the premises to expand their operations and continue supporting individuals and families with Multiple Sclerosis.
- 5.2 Heads of Terms have been agreed for the proposed sale of the property as set out in **Confidential Appendix B**, subject to contract and Executive approval.
- 5.3 The proposed disposal terms have been subject to professional valuation and represent best consideration in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

6. **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

1. **Retain the freehold:** The Council could retain ownership and continue leasing the property. However, this would leave the Council responsible for long-term ownership risks and future asset management responsibilities, preventing the tenant from obtaining the security necessary to invest further in the premises.
2. **Seek an open market disposal:** The Council could dispose of the property on the open market. However, the premises are occupied by the existing tenant who has expressed a desire to purchase the freehold so they can invest in the premises, and to expand their operations to continue supporting individuals and families with Multiple Sclerosis. The disposal terms agreed with the tenant represent best consideration.

7. **KEY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Legal Issues	The disposal of the property will be subject to contract and completed by the Council's Legal Services team. The Council must satisfy itself that the disposal complies with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 by obtaining the best consideration reasonably obtainable.
7.2 Policy Issues	The disposal supports the Council's Corporate Asset Management objectives by rationalising the Council's property portfolio and disposing of assets that are not required for operational purposes. It also helps to support the Council's Capital Receipts Programme.
7.3 Resource Issues	The Council will not be required to appoint additional resource to undertake the disposal.
7.4 Risks	Failure to complete the sale (reputational and financial).
7.5 Environmental Implications	There are no immediate impacts on the environment arising out of the recommendations of this report although it is recognised that the property will no longer be monitored as part of the Council's Carbon Reduction Delivery Strategy.

7.6 Equalities Impact	There are no immediate impacts on equalities arising out of the recommendations of this report.
7.7 Impact on Families	This will allow the MS Centre to continue and expand their operations to continue supporting individuals and families with Multiple Sclerosis.
7.8 Community Safety and Resilience	There are no immediate impacts on families arising out of the recommendations of this report.
7.9 Impact on Health and Wellbeing	This will help support important health and community facilities to continue delivering an important service by securing funding to invest in the premises.
7.10 Human Rights	There are no immediate impacts on human rights arising out of the recommendations of this report.

8. **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS AND OUTCOME**

8.1 The following Council Units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:

Legal Services
Finance

No adverse comments have been received.

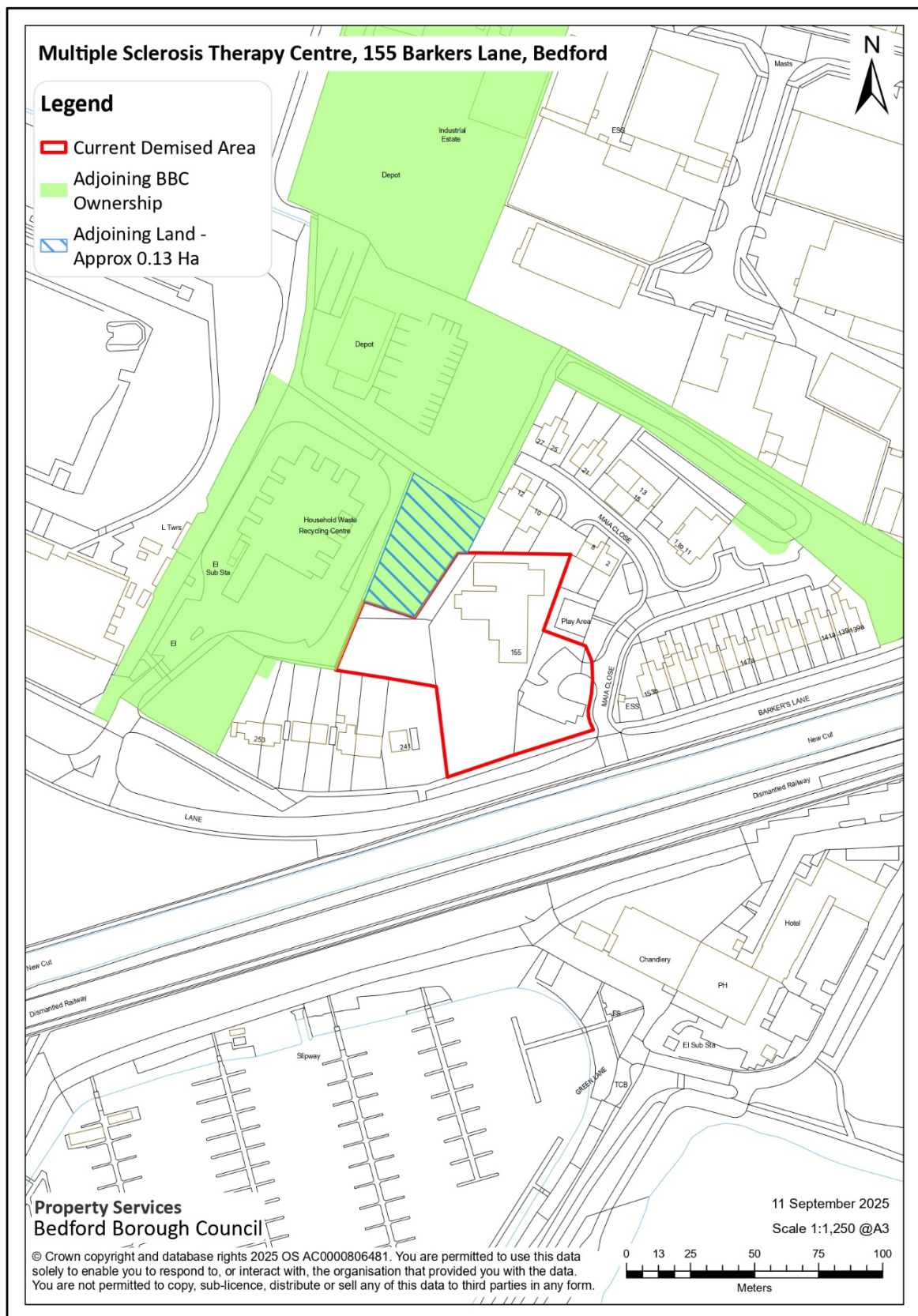
9. **WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS**

9.1 Views sought at time of report issue.

10. CONTACTS AND REFERENCES

Report Author and Contact Officer	<i>Ed Palmieri, Head of Regeneration & Property</i>
File Reference	<i>None</i>
Previous Relevant Minutes	<i>None</i>
Background Papers	<i>None</i>
Appendices	<i>Appendix A: Site Plan</i> <i>Appendix B: Heads of Terms for the Disposal – CONFIDENTIAL</i> <i>Not for publication (Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a to the Local Government Act 1972).</i> <i>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information).</i>

Appendix A – Site Plan



(Disposal of Multiple Sclerosis Centre/Executive Decision/20 July 2026)