

#### **Appendix 4: Extract of Minutes of Meeting of Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee 31 October 2017**

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented the report relating to the disposal of land adjacent to the Gallagher Stadium.

Councillor Naghi addressed the Committee on this item.

It was noted that:

- This Committee had previously considered the matter on 4 April 2017, at which time it was decided not to declare the land as surplus to requirements and that the possibility of granting a licence to Maidstone United Football Club be considered.
- A licence had been considered and was not deemed an appropriate method of disposal because it allowed shared use of the land. The Club wished to fence the land and to have sole use of the land for their spectators; therefore, the options were a freehold or a leasehold disposal.
- The Council's Policy on Disposal of Property required that the land be disposed on a leasehold basis where there was a strategic benefit to the Council in retaining the freehold. This would allow the asset to remain within the Council's ownership but would provide significant benefits to the Club and the wider community by accommodating the Club's growth.
- Discussions with the Club had taken place and their preferred option was that the land be disposed via a freehold agreement. The Club was aware that a freehold disposal would be contrary to the Council's policy.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement stated that adding conditions into a freehold agreement would cause unnecessary complications. It was also noted that a freehold disposal would leave the Council with no ability to influence any future development on the site.

The Committee acknowledged that the Club was a huge asset to the town and wanted to support the Club as much as possible.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the open space adjacent to Gallagher Stadium, as outlined in red on the attached plan in Appendix I, be declared as surplus to operational requirements.

Voting: For – 9      Against – 0      Abstentions – 0

2. That the placing of a public notice pursuant of Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 advertising the proposed disposal of land be agreed.

Voting: For – 9      Against – 0      Abstentions – 0

3. That the land should be disposed on a leasehold basis to the Football Club for a term of 99 years at a peppercorn rent.

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Voting: For – 7 Against – 0 Abstentions – 2

4. That the Director of Finance and Business Improvement uses delegated powers to conclude the lease negotiations.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0