

Please note that as the decision relating to Minute 8 was taken urgently and has been implemented, therefore there is no call-in period.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE URGENT MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20 JULY 2020

Present: Councillors Burton, M Burton, Chappell-Tay, Clark, Cox(Chairman), English, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Joy, McKay, Mortimer, Newton, Purle, Round and Springett

Also Present: Councillor Kimmance

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Blackmore, Harvey and Perry.

2. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that the following members were present as substitute members:

- Councillor D Burton for Councillor Perry
- Councillor Garten for Councillor Blackmore
- Councillor Joy for Councillor Harvey

3. **URGENT ITEMS**

The meeting had been called to consider item 8 – Property Acquisition – which need to be considered urgently in order to have an offer accepted on a property before it went to auction.

4. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Kimmance was present as a Visiting Member for Item 8 – Property Acquisition.

5. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

6. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

7. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

RESOLVED: That Item 8 – Property Acquisition be taken in private for the reasons specified.

8. PROPERTY ACQUISITION

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented the report to the Committee setting out the proposed purchase. The purchase would represent both a return on investment and be in accordance with the Council's strategic plan, specifically on supporting economic development within the Borough. The matter had been brought to Committee urgently as a purchase price had been agreed with the seller and it would be pulled from auction on 21 July 2020 if the Committee agreed the recommendations.

Questions were raised by the committee on the completeness of the business case presented, the required investment in the units, information about vacancies, the need to repair the roof and whether this type of investment was compatible with Government guidance on Council investments.

In response, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement provided detailed responses and outlined the work that had been undertaken to this point. Further clarification on the financial information and the opportunities provided to the Council from the proposal was given.

It was requested that a report setting out the investment plans for the units be presented to a future meeting of the Committee, to provide further reassurance.

It was noted that by going through auction there would be buyers' fees and no guarantee of a better price.

RESOLVED: That it be agreed that:

1. The long leasehold interest in the proposed site, as shown outlined in red on the plan attached to the report of the Director of Finance and Business Improvement be purchased for an agreed amount;
2. Delegated Authority be given to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement to conclude negotiations with the leaseholder;
3. The Head of Mid Kent Legal Services be authorised to complete the purchase on the terms as agreed by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement and to negotiate and to complete all necessary agreements and deeds arising from or ancillary to the purchase; and
4. That subject to the deal being completed a further report outlining a fresh business case for the investment in the Units be submitted to the Committee.

Note: Councillors D Burton and Garten requested that their dissent from the decision be recorded.

9. DURATION OF MEETING

10 a.m. to 11.38 a.m.