

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES
REPORT OF HEAD OF BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

Report prepared by: Christopher Finch
Date Issued: 11 June 2009

1. Former Parkwood Bowls Site, Longshaw Road.

1.1 Issue for Decision

- 1.1.1 To consider an offer from Maidstone Housing Trust to purchase the site of the former Parkwood Bowls Club, as shown on the attached Site Plan (Appendix A), to develop the land for social housing to provide accommodation for over 55's.

1.2 Recommendation of The Head of Business Improvement

- 1.2.1 To agree to accept the proposed offer from Maidstone Housing Trust, as set out in the exempt appendix, to purchase the former bowling green for development as social housing accommodation for over 55's, and;
- 1.2.2 That delegated authority be given to the Head of Corporate Law and Legal Services to enter into sales contracts for the disposal of the site on terms agreed by the Corporate Property Manager

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 On 13th October 2006 the Leader of the Council decided and declared the Parkwood Bowling Green land non-operational and surplus to requirements.
- 1.3.2 On 10th January 2007 a decision by Cabinet authorized the placing of a Public Notice in accordance with the statutory requirements for the disposal of open space, and that a final decision by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services be made after considering any comments made following publication of the Public Notice.
- 1.3.3 The Assistant Director of Customer Services placed an advertisement in the local paper, pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, notifying the proposed disposal of open space and inviting responses by 23rd February 2007.

1.3.4 No objections to the advertisement were received.

1.3.5 The proposed development will provide 16 single storey social housing dwellings suitable for occupation by residents aged 55 and over, only.

1.3.6 The Council's Housing Section has identified a lack of provision of this type of property within the Borough and this development will contribute to rectifying the shortfall.

1.3.7 The method of valuation of the site was as previously agreed by the Council and Maidstone Housing Trust.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Cabinet Member could reject the proposal from Maidstone Housing Trust, but this would result in much needed social housing for over 55's not being provided.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The proposed disposal of land for social housing supports the Council's social housing requirements and provides a sustainable location by its proximity to a neighbourhood centre and bus route.

1.5.2 The proposed social housing development is designed to achieve Sustainable Homes Level 3, and the accommodation proposed will achieve 'Lifetime Homes' standards; this makes it easier for people with restricted mobility to live in the properties. The development assists the Council in achieving the Corporate Priorities of; 'a place that has strong, healthy and safe communities' and 'a place to live and enjoy'

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 The main risk associated with the sale is that the offer from Maidstone Housing Trust is conditional upon receipt of planning permission and a grant from the Homes & Communities Agency. Planning Committee has resolved to grant permission subject to completion of a legal agreement confirming the provision of 100% affordable housing and restricting occupation to over 55s, and we have been advised that the grant will be provided.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1. Financial

2. Staffing

X

3. Legal
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development
6. Community Safety
7. Human Rights Act
8. Procurement
9. Asset Management

X
X

1.7.2 The sale of the site will provide the Council with a capital receipt. The offer and supporting independent valuation assessment are set out in the exempt appendix.

1.7.3 The proposed properties are to be designed to achieve a minimum of Sustainable Homes Level 3.

1.7.4 Disposal of the site reduces the amount of surplus non-operational land held by the Council

1.8 Background Documents

1.8.1 Decision of the Leader of the Council 13th October 2006
Decision of Cabinet 10th January 2007
Site Plan

NO REPORT WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT THIS BOX BEING COMPLETED

Is this a Key Decision? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, when did it appear in the Forward Plan? - May 2009

Is this an Urgent Key Decision? Yes ☐ No ☒

How to Comment

Should you have any comments on the issue that is being considered please contact either the relevant Officer or the Member of the Executive who will be taking the decision.

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