

WIRRAL COUNCIL

DELEGATED DECISION

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| SUBJECT: | LAND EXCHANGE AT CIVIC WAY, BEBINGTON |
| WARDS AFFECTED: | BEBINGTON & CLATTERBRIDGE |
| REPORT OF: | ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE |
| RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER: | COUNCILLOR GEORGE DAVIES |
| KEY DECISION? | NO |

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the exchange of Council owned land located at Civic Way, Bebington for adjoining Police owned land in order to create a more marketable redevelopment site.
- 1.2 As part of the Council's five year plan the proposals in the report support the following pledge contained in the plan:
- Council making better use of its assets.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Council building formerly known as Bebington Town Hall together with the Annexe building are soon to be demolished. The cleared sites of both buildings together with associated car parks and adjoining land offer potential for redevelopment but have yet to be considered by the Assets and Capital Group.
- 2.2 The attached Plan 1 denotes for illustrative purposes edged red the extent of the Council's land that could be made available for development.
- 2.3 The Merseyside Police Authority (MPA) owns land which adjoins and 'projects' into the Council's ownership as shown shaded on Plan 1. This accommodates a redundant Police Station that is to be refurbished and brought back into its former use. In addition, MPA wish to develop a block of interview suites within its site curtilage. A sketch MPA plan showing both proposals is attached.
- 2.4 The potential development site in Council ownership is irregular in shape with a section located in isolation from the main part, and presents challenges to a comprehensive redevelopment. In order to create a more regular site boundary therefore and also to enable MPA to undertake its proposals, it is proposed that a land exchange be entered into. The Council's sites shown shaded green on Plan 2 would be exchanged for the MPA land shaded blue. The resultant respective ownerships are shown on Plan 3 with the Council's edged red and the MPA's edged blue.
- 2.5 The present value of the MPA site is in excess of the present value of the Council sites as the MPA land is built out whereas the Council sites comprise grassed areas which effectively form part of the grounds to the Police station. Should the sites be brought forward for redevelopment, however, the level of value per square metre would be the same if demolition costs are ignored. In this case the Council's site would be worth more simply because of its

larger site area. The value of the MPA land would be further depressed if demolition costs are taken into account.

2.6 In the spirit of partnership, it is proposed that the land exchange takes place at nil consideration. However, in order to protect the Council's interest in the future and comply with the statutory obligation to transfer land at the best consideration reasonably obtainable, an agreement will be entered into between the parties to ensure that overage is paid to the Council should the composite site left in MPA ownership be sold on for redevelopment should the refurbishment and continued use for police purposes not proceed. The overage payment will be expressed as a proportion of any sale price relative to the proportion of site area that the land which is now being transferred is to the whole MPA site, after selling costs and planning fees have been deducted.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 The exchange is to take place at nil consideration even though the value of the MPA land being exchanged in its present use is in excess of the value of the Council's in its present use. Should the resultant MPA site (after exchange) be brought forward for development rather than refurbishment, the Council site exchanged will exceed the value of the MPA site to be acquired. In this unlikely event, the proposed overage agreement will protect the Council's interest.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The sale of the combined interests was considered until MPA decided on the retention and refurbishment of its building.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The public will be consulted as part of the planning process.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 There are no implications for voluntary, community and faith groups.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 The land exchange will take place at nil consideration.

7.2 Should the MPA site be brought forward for development rather than refurbishment, the Council site exchanged will exceed the value of the MPA site to be acquired. In this unlikely event, the proposed overage agreement will protect the Council's interest.

7.3 There are no IT or staffing implications.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The transaction will require the preparation of appropriate legal documentation.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

Yes, an impact review can be viewed by following the link –

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-15/chief>

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no carbon reduction implications for the Council arising directly from this report.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The site is designated as a Primarily Commercial Area in the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP), it also partially adjacent to Lower Bebington Conservation Area.

11.2 While no provision is specifically made for Police Stations, the criteria in UDP Policy SH6 'Development Within Primarily Commercial Areas' which provides for the protection of the amenity of neighbouring uses would be relevant to any future planning application. The impact of any development on the character and setting of the Conservation would also be assessed under UDP Policy CH2 'Development Affecting Conservation Areas'.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 That the Council's interest as described be exchanged for the MPA interest described at nil consideration, subject to an appropriate overage agreement being entered into.

12.2 That it be noted that, as part of the Council's five year plan, the proposal in this report supports the pledges to ensure the Council makes better use of its assets.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 To enable land exchange to proceed.

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APPENDICES

Location plan

REFERENCE MATERIAL

No reference material has been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|-----------------|------|
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