

19 December 2016**Agenda Item: 5b****REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT &
PROPERTY****DISPOSAL OF EDWINSTOWE HALL, FORMER YOUTH CENTRE AND
COTTAGES****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to the disposal of Edwinstowe Hall, Former Youth Centre and cottages and to enter into a contract for the sale of these properties, on terms detailed in the exempt appendix.

Information and Advice

2. Some information relating to this report is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Having regard to the circumstances, on balance the public interest in disclosing the information does not outweigh the reason for exemption because divulging the information would significantly damage the Council's commercial position. The exempt information is set out in the exempt appendix.
3. Following the construction of the new Edwinstowe respite centre the former respite centre known as Edwinstowe Hall, became surplus to County Council requirements. The youth centre and cottages which adjoin Edwinstowe Hall were acquired from Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO) in January 2014 in order to facilitate the access to the new respite centre. The Youth Centre and cottages were temporarily occupied by the contractor whilst construction work was carried out. The new respite centre is now complete and the Youth Centre and cottages are all now surplus to County Council requirements.
4. The Edwinstowe Hall is Grade II Listed and has a floor area of approximately 8,877 sq ft (825 sq m), the Youth Centre is approximately 2,744 sq ft (255 sq m) and cottages 1,592 sq ft (148 sq m), the adjoining garden area is approximately 0.5 acres (0.2ha). The land and buildings being disposed of are outlined in black on the attached plan and garden area is hatched on the same plan.
5. Upon completion of the new respite centre, prior to marketing Edwinstowe Hall significant works were undertaken to the main structure and fabric (in particular the windows, chimney stacks, roof and rendering) of the hall in order to preserve its condition and ensure it did not become dilapidated.
6. Following the granting of planning consent for the new respite centre and having regard to the heritage status of the surplus buildings, there was some initial "soft marketing" that took place with local organisations approached such as Nottinghamshire Wildlife

Trust and Thoresby Estates together with the Buildings Preservation Trust. However, following this exercise none of these organisations were interested in acquiring the buildings. This initial approach was felt appropriate given the listed status of the buildings.

7. Following the “soft marketing” exercise the properties were advertised on the open market and it was felt that given the location and nature of the properties Savills were the most appropriate agent to market the properties for the County Council. Throughout the marketing process care and consideration was given to the sensitivities around the disposal both in terms of the adjoining respite centre and listed status of the buildings being disposed of. Taking this into account, marketing was initially by informal tender but unfortunately this only generated one initial offer and this was disregarded as it was from an individual who had not even inspected the properties.
8. In view of the initial limited interest in the sale of the properties, marketing continued but an application to Nottinghamshire Pre-Development Fund (NPDF) has also been submitted seeking funding to facilitate an options appraisal to investigate potential new viable uses. This would then assist in submitting further applications for grants to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to enable an option to proceed. A similar process was undertaken by Rushcliffe Borough Council for West Bridgford Hall.
9. In an attempt to generate more interest, marketing of the properties continued on a private treaty basis which did generate additional interest from several parties. All interested parties were then contacted and requested to submit their best and final sealed written offers to Savills by 4 November 2016. The parties were asked to set out the amount of their offer, proposed use, position in terms of financing, timescales and whether the offer was conditional upon planning. Best and final offers have been received from five parties, four being conditional and one on an unconditional basis. Each of the bids have been subject to scrutiny by Officers and by the Council’s selling agents. A summary of the offers received is contained in the exempt appendix.
10. Through the marketing process it was advertised that the ownership of the rear garden would be equally divided between the new respite centre and the prospective purchaser for Edwinstowe Hall. The sale to any purchaser would therefore be conditional upon them receiving the necessary consents to erect a boundary fence. It is also proposed that the garden land (shown hatched on the attached plan) should be restricted to that use and the prospective purchaser intends to continue to use the garden for that use (this is stated within the offer letting and supporting information contained within the exempt appendix).
11. When the Youth Centre and cottages were acquired, the acquisition was subject to an overage clause in favour of CISWO. Initial calculations are however that this is unlikely to be triggered but is something which will need to be discussed further with CISWO and will need to be formally documented through the normal legal process.
12. The unconditional highest offer received is reflective of the market value for the properties and is not conditional upon finance or planning and proceeding with a sale contract to this party should therefore be recommended. It is also felt that their use as specified within the supporting information contained in the exempt appendix is sympathetic to the character of the buildings.

Other Options Considered

13. Retention of the properties: the properties are not required for any operational purpose of the Council, and are surplus to requirements. They can therefore be sold to generate a capital receipt.
14. Proceed with the application for funding to look at undertaking option appraisals for the properties identifying viable uses taking account of the Listed Status and location of the properties being within close proximity to Sherwood Forest. This may then assist in applying for further applications for funding to be made in order to progress one of the options. If all funding was received it is likely the property would then be leased for that specific use but is not expected to yield higher figures than those currently identified.
15. Proceeding with either of these options would result in the County Council incurring holding costs as estimated below.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

16. To proceed with the disposal would generate a potential capital receipt to the Council from the sale of the surplus properties. If the funding option was pursued, due to the timescales for the application process this would increase holding costs for the County Council, potentially increase vandalism to the properties and the funding is not guaranteed. Retaining the buildings for considerable time would be a maintenance and repair liability and also result in ongoing management for listed buildings which are already at risk. Current security costs for the premises are approximately £1,900pcm and rates approximately £500pcm. If and when funding was received a capital receipt is unlikely as the properties would then be let as opposed to sold.

Statutory and Policy Implications

17. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That approval is given to the sale of Edwinstowe Hall, Former Youth Centre and cottages as outlined in black and hatched on the attached plan and to enter into a contract for these properties to the bidder No.5 as outlined in the exempt appendix.

Jas Hundal

Service Director – Environment, Transport & Property

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Luke Smith 0115 9772082

Constitutional Comments (EP 01/12/2016)

18. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Finance and Property Committee's terms of reference and any contract should be in a form approved by the Group Manager for Legal and Democratic Services.

Financial Comments (GB 02.12.2016)

19. The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

20. None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

21. Ward(s): Rufford
Member(s): Councillor John Peck

File ref.: /LS/SB/

SP: 3159

Properties affected: 06007 - Edwinstowe Hall, 03379 - Edwinstowe Youth Centre and Cottage