
MANSTON AIRPORT

To: **Extraordinary Council – 21 May 2015**

By: **Monitoring Officer at the request of Cllr Wells (Leader of the UKIP group)**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All**

Summary: **For Council to recommend that Cabinet review its position on Manston Airport, taking into account any relevant changes in circumstances since 2014.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Manston Airport closed on 15th May 2014 following which the Council commissioned an independent report considering the viability of Manston Airport which was published in July. On 10th July, a petition was presented to Thanet District Council calling for it to compulsory purchase the privately-owned site. The council has been clear that a decision to compulsory purchase (CPO) the airport would depend on identifying a suitable indemnity partner and evidence of the economic viability of the airport.
- 1.2 On the 17th July an Extraordinary meeting of Cabinet took place. The meeting discussed the process and conditions for selecting a third party to underwrite the council should TDC apply for a CPO. Cabinet further resolved on 31st July 2014 to carry out a soft-market testing exercise to identify a suitable CPO indemnity partner.
- 1.3 The Council was informed in September 2014 that the Manston site had been bought by regeneration specialists **who are** part of the Discovery Park consortium responsible for developing the Pfizer site in Sandwich and the Wynyard Business Park in the North East England.
- 1.4 Following a progress report to Cabinet on 16th October 2014 a final outcome report on the soft market testing exercise was considered by Cabinet on 11th December 2014.
- 1.5 Cabinet decided:
 1. That no further action be taken at the present time on a CPO of Manston Airport, on the basis that the Council has not identified any suitable expressions of interest that fulfil the requirements of the Council for a CPO indemnity partner and that it does not have the financial resources to pursue a CPO in its own right;
 2. That subject to obtaining written consent from Party A; relevant information is sent to the Minister of State for Transport for consideration.

2.0 Current position

- 2.1 Following the election in May 2015, a new Council has been elected, and an extraordinary meeting of the Council has been called to recommend to the new Cabinet that it should

review the position concerning Manston Airport, taking account of all the options available.

3.0 Corporate Implications

3.1 Financial and VAT

- 3.1.1 Any decisions taken regarding Manston Airport by Members will need to take account of any financial implications for the Council.

3.2 Legal

- 3.2.1 Any discussions and proposals must not appear to fetter the Council's discretion or impartiality in considering any future planning application in relation to the site.

3.3 Corporate

- 3.3.1 The site at Manston Airport represents a significant land holding that will have an impact on future economic development in Thanet. Corporate plan priorities will be fully considered as part of this on-going process.

3.4 Equity and Equalities

- 3.4.1 There is no specific issue arising from this report and recommendations which adversely affects any specific category of Equality group.

4.0 Recommendation(s)

- 4.1 Council recommends to Cabinet that it reviews its position in relation to the Manston Airport site, taking account of all the surrounding circumstances relating to an indemnity partner for a possible Compulsory Purchase Order.

Future Meeting if applicable: N/A	Date: N/A
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Contact Officer:	Madeline Homer Acting Chief Executive.
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Annex List

None	N/A
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Nicola Walker – Head of Financial Services
Legal	Steven Boyle – Legal Services Manager & Monitoring Officer