

Ref:

Called in

Yes/No

THE THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF CABINET

Cabinet Member

Councillor Jill Bayford

Relevant Portfolio:

Cabinet Member for Housing

Date of Decision:

17 June 2021

Subject:

Evaluation of Retention or Disposal Options for 18 Albert Street, Ramsgate, CT11 9HD

Key Decision

Yes

In Forward Plan

Yes

Brief summary of matter:

18 Albert Street is a grade 2 listed building. It was previously occupied as a shared ownership property, with the council owning a share. The previous occupants, who owned the remaining share were responsible, under the terms of the sharing arrangement for the maintenance of the building.

The property is in very poor condition, as detailed in the report, with high estimated costs of refurbishment.

The property is also poorly laid out, with accommodation over 3 floors, connected by a narrow and winding staircase. The kitchen and bathroom are extremely small and there is now outside amenity space. For these reasons it is not considered suitable for retention as part of the council's rented housing stock.

There is a specific requirement on the council to ensure that any disposals of vacant dwellings are at a market value. It is therefore recommended that the council test the market by disposing of the property at auction.

Decision made:

Cabinet agreed the following, that:

1. The Council owned property, 18 Albert Street is disposed of through auction;
2. The proceeds of sale are reinvested in the council's HRA capital programme.

Reasons for decision:

18 Albert Street is not suitable for the council to retain as an affordable rented dwelling. Apart from the cost of refurbishment, the dwelling is very small, split over 3 levels with steep and narrow stairs and poorly laid out internally. It has no outside amenity space and would not be suitable as a family home. The disposal receipt can be used to support the development of new affordable homes in a more cost effective way.

Alternatives considered and why rejected:

The first alternative option is to retain the property and refurbish. The refurbishment work include but are not limited to: site clearance, strip out, treatment of damp internal timbers, new ceilings, plaster to all walls, new windows, new central heating system, complete rewire, upgrading plumbing system, new kitchen, new sanitary fixings and a complete redecoration throughout including floor coverings.

The valuer estimated a figure of £52,800 plus VAT (this includes a 10% contingency) which should be allowed to bring the property up to standard. This cost would be in addition to the roofing costs previously mentioned. A budget of approximately £78,000 plus VAT would therefore need to be provided. However, this is considered to be a very low figure based on costs of previously completed similar renovation projects.

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any executive Member who has been consulted and of any dispensation granted by the Standards Committee:

None

Author of Officer report:

Bob Porter, Director of Housing and Planning

Background papers

18 Albert Street Draft Cabinet Report 300321 - Google Docs
Annex 1_ Location plan - Google Docs

Statement if decision is an urgent one and therefore not subject to call-in:

None

Last date for call in: 25 June 2021