
REPORT BACK TO COUNCIL – PLEASURAMA SITE, RAMSGATE

To: **Council – 24 April 2014**

By:

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Eastcliff**

Summary: **To report back to Council on two petitions received by Council relating to the Pleasurama Site, Ramsgate**

For Information

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Council will recall receiving two petitions relating to the Pleasurama Site at Ramsgate:

1.2 The first petition, containing 1,072 signatures, was received on 18 April 2013:

Wording of petition no. 1

“We the undersigned believe the proposed sale of the Pleasurama freehold to the current developer is an unacceptable solution, since this developer has lost public trust and confidence and this proposal will not achieve the stated aim, of regenerating the Ramsgate Seafront. We now call on Thanet District Council to dismiss this developer and this proposal on the following grounds:”

1.3 The second petition, containing 1,056 signatures, was received on 11 July 2013:

Wording of petition no. 2

“We wish TDC to explicitly reassure Friends of Ramsgate Seafront that under no circumstances will a discretionary extension of the practical completion date be given to SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd or any developer of Royal Sands before or after 22nd May 2013. Should SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd fail to meet this deadline, TDC must act immediately and restore the site to the People of Ramsgate to implement their own Vision for the Future.

“We, the undersigned, believe extensions to deadlines for the uncompleted work on the Pleasurama site will only compound the problems and leave the people of Ramsgate with a useless eyesore for many years to come.”

1.4 Council resolved to refer the first petition to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel, and a report was brought back to Council on 11 July 2013, informing it that the Panel had decided to set up a Pleasurama Site Development Task & Finish Group.

1.5 The terms of reference of that Task and Finish Group were later formalised as follows:

1. To review due diligence undertaken by the Council on the current developer;
2. To consider the options available to the Council with regard to the future of the development agreement with SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd;
3. To assess the commercial and legal implications of these options using external professional advice if necessary;
4. To consider future options for the Pleasurama site in general and make recommendations to Cabinet;
5. To produce a final report with recommendations for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and then to Cabinet.

1.6 After meeting on several occasions, the Task & Finish Group made recommendations to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel, who, in turn, made recommendations to Cabinet.

1.7 On 20 February, Cabinet considered the recommendations of the Panel, and RESOLVED the following:

Cabinet decision – 20 February 2014

1. That the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel be received and adopted.
These were:-:
 - a. The current development agreement and leases be terminated;
 - b. There be no re-negotiation of the current development agreement;
 - c. The previous advice from Eversheds Solicitors be reviewed to determine why the development agreement did not contain a longstop date entitling the Council to terminate the agreement if the development was not completed by that date;
 - d. As part of the preparatory steps to terminate the development agreement, a rigorous development programme be established in consultation with a construction expert to include clear milestones for all phases of the construction work necessary to complete the development;
 - e. The construction expert appointed by the Council to advise on the development programme be retained to support the officers in monitoring of the development programme;
 - f. The quality of the existing construction work (including the foundation structure) be checked to confirm that it remains fit for purpose as a basis for further planned construction;
2. That the request of the Developer for an extension of time be refused;
3. That the power to implement the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Financial Services and such power to be enacted by a published decision notice following consultation with the Chief Executive.

1.8 All reports and cabinet decision notices associated with this issue, can be viewed on the Council's website, www.thanet.gov.uk.

2.0 Corporate Implications

2.1 Financial and VAT

3.1.1 As stated in the report to Cabinet on 20 February 2014

3.2 Legal

3.2.1 As stated in the report to Cabinet on 20 February 2014

3.3 Corporate

3.3.1 As stated the report to Cabinet on 20 February 2014

3.4 Equity and Equalities

3.4.1 As stated the report to Cabinet on 20 February 2014

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 This report is for Council to note.

5.0 Decision Making Process

5.1 Cabinet's decision is being reported to Council for information purposes.

Contact Officer:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager, ext 7005
Reporting to:	Dr Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive, ext 7002

Annex List

None	N/A
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
Petition – presented to Council on 18 April 2013 Petition – presented to Council on 11 July 2013	Democratic Services

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	n/a
Legal	n/a