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CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2010 at 2.00 pm in Council Chamber, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Robert W Bayford (Chairman); Councillors Wise, Wells, Moores and Latchford

In Attendance: Councillors D Green, Ms Green, C Hart, J D Kirby and R Nicholson

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Donna Reed, Director for Business Transformation & Customer Services.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. POTENTIAL ASSET DISPOSALS FOR 2010/11

The report by Brian White, Director for Regeneration highlighted a number of potential sites for disposals for 2010/11. The Officer speaking on the item, Justin Thomson, Asset Manager, said that these sites were going to be disposed of in accordance with the Council's asset disposal policy.

The Chairman then invited members of the public, Members speaking under 24.1 and Members of Cabinet to speak on the different sites for disposal.

4. SPEAKERS AND SITES

Site 1 – Land Adjacent to 39 Nelson Place, Broadstairs

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That the site be agreed as surplus and progressed through the adopted disposal frameworks, for public consultation”.

Mr Spooner addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- The conservation area needs to be protected
- The proposed building would obscure the conservation area
- There are problems that come with new residential developments

Site 2 – Land and Buildings to the South of Hartsdown Sports Centre, Hartsdown Road (excluding Leisure Centre)

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That Cabinet support the disposal of the asset as being surplus, allowing it to be progressed through the disposal framework, to public consultation”.

Mr Edward Foster, the solicitor for Mr Sheerin and Mr Hunt addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- There are existing rights of way for both his clients and Thanet District Council would have to compulsorily purchase them

- They have rights to the parking facility
- The parking facility serves about 200 cars daily
- Mr Sheerin has a successful nursery school, that has won an Ofsted's Award
- The nursery has 287 children and employs 47 teachers
- The nursery school has applied for a forestry school status
- There are substantial costs for the Council to the rights (about £1M)
- Employees might be made redundant as the businesses would have to be relocated
- Substantial capital have been invested
- The nursery was providing a community service.

Mr Eliff addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- The Site serves as a scouting area for children who are Scouts
- This helps keep children off the streets and saves Council money
- The Site is a safe place for children to engage in outdoor activities
- Scouting helps children develop into responsible adults.

Mr Bullen addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- He became a Scout at the age of six
- He is now a young leader
- Currently there are over 200 children
- The activity has boosted his confidence
- The Site is used for camping, district events, youth parties, campfire activities and training and is easily accessible to children
- It would be sad to take this away from the children

Site 3 Front Strip of Land to Palm Bay Recreation Ground, Palm Bay, Margate

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

"Following the receipt of a significant number of objections to development proposals for this site, it has been decided not to proceed with a disposal at this time. Cabinet is asked to note the withdrawal of this site from the 2010-2011 disposal programme."

As a result of the Officer recommendation there was no discussion regarding the site.

Site 4 Former Lodge, St John's Cemetery, Manston Road, Margate

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

"That Cabinet supports a disposal through the Asset Management Strategy".

There were no members of the public to speak on the item.

Site 5 Former Promenade Toilets, Land Adjacent to Seaview Terrace, Margate

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

"That Cabinet supports a disposal, so that it can proceed through the disposal process".

There were no members of the public to speak on the item.

Site 6 Land opposite the Tudor House, King Street

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That Cabinet support disposal via the approved process”.

There were no members of the public to speak on the item.

Site 7 Staffordshire Street Car Park, Ramsgate (public parking retained)

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That Cabinet support the asset as being available for redevelopment and allow it to be progressed through the disposal framework”.

Mr Read, representing the Ramsgate Society, addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- Council did consult the public regarding disposals but they should listen to the feedback they get from the public
- Housing development is inappropriate
- Commercial development on Site 7 with retention of parking would be commendable as it would counter-balance Westwood Cross.

Site 8 Land on Western Undercliff, West of Tunnel Access, including Chine Access from Royal Esplanade, Ramsgate

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That Cabinet support a disposal via the agreed strategy”.

Mr Holden addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- Asset disposal is costing Council money
- The Site is within the protected area
- The site is in or adjacent to no less than five conservation designated areas
- The Society will continue to call for the preservation of the site
- The Ramsgate Society has drafted some proposals for the conservation of the site.

Mrs Randall representing the Conservation and Environmental Association addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- The Association has a membership of 300
- Loss of this feature will be a loss to our attraction as a tourist destination
- The value of the site is in its undisturbed wild land which is a value to wildlife such as the migrating butterflies.

Speaking Under 24.1, Councillor John Kirby addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- The Chine and the Undercliff are well used
- It would be a bad decision to dispose of the site
- The site is well used by fisherman
- The Chine is still in reasonable condition and the area is popular for its natural attributes.

Speaking Under 24.1, Councillor David Green addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- Ramsgate Town Council stands ready to help with the maintenance of this site

Speaking Under 24.1, Councillor Elizabeth Green addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- Very concerned about the disposal
- The Council has neglected the site and should take corrective action and not dispose of the site
- Residents are willing to work with the Council to restore the site
- Both cliffs need rehabilitation
- There is a need to protect the natural look of the local coastline.

Site 9 Car Park (Site of former swimming pool), Marina Road, Eastern Undercliff

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That Cabinet supports disposal of the site via the approved Asset Management Strategy”.

Speaking Under 24.1, Councillor David Green addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- Council should come up with a comprehensive plan for the Ramsgate coastal area before the disposal process is undertaken
- There should be a Masterplan for the Ramsgate seaport and harbour.

Site 10 Open Space Land adjoining 33 and 35 Beech Grove, Cliffsend

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That Cabinet support a disposal via the agreed strategy”.

There were no members of the public to speak on the item.

Site 11 Former Railway Line Land behind 2 – 48 Highfield Road, Ramsgate

The Officer recommendation to Cabinet at its meeting to be held later this year would be;

“That Cabinet support a disposal via the agreed disposal process”.

Mr Southworth addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- The site is a valuable asset for the community as it is used as a play ground
- Bring back into use proper parking space on Highfield Road

Speaking Under 24.1, Councillor David Green addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- Ramsgate Town Council would be able to help with the maintenance of the site if it not disposed of

Speaking Under 24.1, Councillor Elizabeth Green addressed Cabinet with the following comments;

- Residents are against the disposal
- There have been several complaints about parking, particularly during weekends when football matches are held there
- Emergency services can easily access the area
- The site should be used as a recreation area
- The site is used by dog walkers

- It appears as if Council is already preparing a road leading up to the proposed development site to which Councillor Latchford said that there was no decision yet on the matter.

Cabinet **Agreed** to the following recommendation:

That Members receive representations and petitions raised by Members of the Public and consider these views further at the decision making meeting later in the year.

And

That Cabinet provides any feedback on matters raised at this meeting in the report to Cabinet later this year.

5. CONCLUSION

The Chairman thanked the members of the public for their contribution to the consultative meeting and advised that the matter would be presented to Cabinet at a later date this year for decision.

The Chairman then announced that there would be a ten minute recess before Cabinet convened for its ordinary meeting.

Meeting concluded : 2.49 pm

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