

Report to Cabinet



Date of Meeting	30 th July 2019
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Planning, Development & Housing
Report Author	Janet Butterworth
Public/Private Document	Public

Disposal of Land at Starkey Street / Langton Street Heywood

Executive Summary

1. The sites at Starkey Street and Langton Street in Heywood are recommended for disposal. The sites are considered to be surplus to the Council's operational requirements. The sale of the sites would generate a capital receipt for the Council and reduce its maintenance liabilities.

Consultation has been carried out with the North Heywood ward councillors and the Chair of Heywood Township. Objections have been raised to the sale of Langton Street car park – plot 3 on the plan below.

In view of the objections raised at Township Cabinet is requested to consider the future of this site by using its powers to release these sites for disposal.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that:
 - i. The sites at Starkey Street and Langton Street are declared surplus to requirements and released for disposal on the open market.
 - ii. The Head of Legal Service be authorised to prepare the appropriate legal documents and execute such documents on behalf of the Council.
 - iii. The purchaser pays the Council's legal and surveyor's costs.

Reason for Recommendation

3. The Director of Economy is charged with the continual review of the Council's land and property holdings to identify those that are surplus to requirements and could be sold. The Director of Economy is aiming to expose 25 sites to the market during 2019/20.

Plots 1 and 2 on the plan below are areas of open space that have low amenity value. Plot 3 is a community car park that is used mainly by local businesses. Together the sites form a valuable development plot that would support a small residential development.

Key Points for Consideration

4. The 3 sites together form an area of around 0.14 ha and make an attractive and viable development opportunity.

Recent sales demonstrate a strong demand in the area for housing sites.

4.1 **Alternatives Considered**

The site could be retained in its current use. Retention of this site will not secure capital receipts or beneficial development, nor reduce the Council's financial and/or environmental liabilities. Retaining this site in its current use carries the risk of liabilities such as fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour and regular or ad hoc maintenance obligations

Plot 3 could be retained as a car park and only plots 1 and 2 released for development.

Costs and Budget Summary

5. The disposal of the sites would generate a capital receipt for the council.

The retention of Plot 3 as a car park places an ongoing maintenance liability on the township for which there is currently no budget.

Risk and Policy Implications

6. The disposal will meet the objectives of the Council's Asset Strategy by reducing the number of Council owned assets and financial liabilities. Disposal of the site will facilitate the development of additional housing in this popular area of Heywood.

The Council is committed to release surplus assets and to continually review its need to hold land and property assets. Disposal of surplus assets assists the Council in its provision of services by producing capital receipts, reducing borrowing, reducing grant reliance and assists in achieving the efficiency targets. The disposal of surplus assets reduces the Council's liabilities and the release of development opportunities encourages economic activity in the Borough.

It is government policy that local authorities should dispose of surplus land where possible. Local authorities have various statutory powers to dispose of property. The only constraint is that, except with the consent of the Secretary of State, the disposal must be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable and terms should be negotiated accordingly.

Consultation

7. Consultation has taken place with colleagues in Legal Services, Planning, Highways and Environmental Management

Consultation was undertaken with the North Heywood Ward councillors and

the chair of Heywood Township in November 2018. Ward councillors oppose the disposal of the car park (plot 3). Whilst no reason was given for this position it is assumed that the car park is considered to have amenity value in the community.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
8. None	

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