

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 8 July 2016.

PRESENT: Mr A J King, MBE (Chairman), Miss S J Carey, Mr D S Daley (Substitute for Mrs T Dean, MBE), Mr C P D Hoare, Mr L B Ridings, MBE and Mrs P A V Stockell

ALSO PRESENT: Mr G Cooke

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Ms E Luxton (Operational Portfolio Manager) and Miss T A Grayell (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

71. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A1)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs T Dean, MBE.

Mr D S Daley was present as a substitute for Mrs Dean.

72. Declarations of Interest by Members in Items on the Agenda

(Item A2)

There were no declarations of interest.

73. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2016

(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2016 are correctly recorded and they be signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

74. New Ways of Working Programme - Refurbishment of Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, and St Peter's House, Broadstairs (16/00044a.2 and 44b.2)

(Item B1)

1. Mrs Spore introduced the report and explained that, since last reporting the issue to the Sub-Committee at its 12 April meeting, a key decision had been taken to award two refurbishment contracts subject to finalising some detail. The final costs of the two projects were now known, and these were higher than anticipated. A new key decision was being sought to approve progression of the two projects, subject to the additional funding being available.

2. In response to a question, Mrs Spore confirmed that the savings planned when the New Ways of Working programme had been proposed had already been met and could not be endangered by the increase in costs for the final two projects.

3. The Cabinet Member, Mr Cooke, added that, although the project costs had proved higher than expected, he had been faced with a choice of proceeding at slightly greater cost or abandoning the final two projects and leaving the New Ways of Working programme incomplete. He stated his wish to continue with the projects on the basis set out in the report, subject to the additional funding being available.
4. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to award two building contracts to undertake the New Ways of Working Programme at the Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, and St Peter's House, Broadstairs, subject to the additional funding being available, and to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to finalise terms and enter into the necessary agreements, be endorsed.

75. Motion to Exclude the Press and Public for Exempt Business

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(OPEN ACCESS TO MINUTES)

76. Disposal of land at Melbourne Avenue, Ramsgate (16/00063)

(Item B2)

Mr K Pulsford, Asset Strategy and Disposals Manager, was in attendance for this item.

1. Mrs Spore introduced the report. The Cabinet Member, Mr Cooke, added that consultation had been undertaken with the local MP, local County Council Members and community groups about the copse part of the site, which was intended for community use, and confirmed that this use presented no obstacle to the County Council continuing with the planned disposal of the main part of the site.
2. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to sell the property and to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement and the Director of Finance and Procurement, to finalise the selected purchaser and terms of the proposed sale, be endorsed.

77. Disposal of Former South Deal Primary School remote playing field, Freemans Way, Deal (14/00068c)

(Item B3)

Mr S Dodd, Disposal, Acquisition and Development Surveyor, was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Dodd introduced the report and, in response to questions and comments from Members, clarified points of detail, including:
 - a) in response to a concern about the impact of the proposed disposal on the County's ability to accommodate future demand to increase school places, Mr Dodd confirmed that the site had been unused since 2006 and was confirmed as surplus to requirements in 2008, and that the Area Education Officer supported the proposed disposal; and
 - b) in response to a question about whether or not open space in the area complied with the National Playing Field Association's requirement for provision of playing field space per head of population, it was suggested that this be made a caveat when endorsing the proposed decision to sell the site, so that it would only go ahead once this point had been clarified.
2. RESOLVED that, subject to the caveat outlined in paragraph 1. b) above, the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to sell the property in line with the heads of terms agreed with a preferred bidder, and to authorise the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to finalise the terms of the sale and complete the transaction, be endorsed.

78. Disposal of parcels of land at Foxwood School, Hythe, Highview School, Folkestone, Chaucer School, Canterbury, Rowhill School, Wilmington and Astor Of Hever School, Maidstone (16/00065)
(Item B4)

Mr K Pulsford, Asset Strategy and Disposals Manager, was in attendance for this item.

1. Mrs Spore introduced the report and confirmed that it was proposed that the parcels of land listed be brought to the market to test their market value and the appetite for conditional or unconditional offers (ie with or without planning permission), in order to achieve best value for public money when disposing of them. Endorsement was thus being sought for the proposed sale of the properties, subject to the outcome of the market testing exercise.
2. Mrs Spore and Mr Cooke answered questions of detail from the Sub-Committee about the sites listed and the impact of their disposal upon the County's ability to accommodate future demand to increase school places, and it was suggested that, to reassure Members, a report setting out in detail the process around identifying school sites as surplus to requirements be made to this Sub-Committee and to the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee.
3. RESOLVED that:-
 - a) the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to sell the properties, subject to the outcome of the market testing exercise, and to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement

and the Director of Finance and Procurement, to finalise the selected purchaser and terms of the proposed sale, be endorsed; and

- b) a report setting out in detail the process around identifying school sites as surplus to requirements be made to this Sub-Committee and to the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee.

79. Disposal of former Spires Academy site, Bredlands Lane, Westbere, Canterbury, CT2 0HD (16/00061)

(Item B5)

Mr R Lemerle, Disposals Surveyor, was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Lemerle introduced the report and confirmed that the proposed disposal was not conditional upon planning permission, as this had already been granted 18 months ago under the former Kier Kent Initiative.
2. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to sell the property and to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to finalise the selected purchaser and terms of the proposed sale, be endorsed.

80. East Kent Property Portfolio (16/00066)

(Item B6)

Mr K Hollidge, Development Consultant, was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hollidge introduced the report, which updated the Sub-Committee on developments since last reporting the issue in December 2015.
2. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services, to authorise the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement and the Director of Finance and Procurement, to:
 - a) proceed with the proposed simultaneous purchase and sale of the site identified in the report, in accordance with the arrangements set out in the report;
 - b) finalise the terms of the proposed transaction; and
 - c) enter into any necessary documents to effect the proposed transaction, be endorsed.