

**A MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
WAS HELD ON 11 MARCH 2020**

Councillors Bateman, Beavis, Blackman, Mrs Cully, Mrs Furlong, Mrs Huggins, Hutchison, Johnston, Miss Kelly, Pepper, Philpott, Mrs Prickett and Raffaelli

**37. SALE OF FREEHOLD LAND AT ACORN CLOSE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Property Services Manager to consider the terms of the sale of the freehold of land at Acorn Close, Gosport to the 6<sup>th</sup> Gosport Scout Group.

Members debated the proposal. It was acknowledged that the land was currently protected for community and leisure use under policy LP32 of the local plan.

Whilst Members recognised that this was currently the case, assurance could not be given that this would be the same in 14 years when the current peppercorn lease expired.

Members recognised that the Scout Group had worked hard to raise funds to erect their new premises and that the proposal would offer them long term security. Members recognised that it was important to support youth groups and recognised that the Scouts did fantastic work.

Some Members expressed concern that selling the land would allow for a profit to be made in future and concern was expressed that consideration was not being given to the future value of the site.

Members felt that the Scout Group had made considerable effort to improve the site and that there was no reason to think there was any other motive to the purchase.

Members questioned whether there was a possibility of a covenant being placed on the sale to allow the Council a buyback option, should the Scouts choose to sell the land in future and that the provision of a profit share for any future sale to be included.

Members recognised that the land was public land at the building on site took up 25% of the space on the site. It was felt that a covenant on the land was appropriate but that it was important to remember why any such covenant was in place.

The Board acknowledged that the site did not currently produce an income for the Council and that the sale of the land would result in a capital receipt.

Members recognised that owning the land would allow for the group to be eligible for additional grants and funding in they owned the land. Members questioned whether this could be overcome with an extended lease and acknowledged that to date no community user had been removed from their land.

It was suggested that the sale be subject to a buy-back covenant for 99 years and this was proposed and seconded. The vote was lost.

The Board considered the substantive motion and requested that in order to get best value, a proportion of any onward sale be negotiated as part of the sale, post the existing covenant on the site.

It was requested that the Chairman report back on this to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the sale of land and authorises the Legal Services team in consultation with the Property Services Manager to enter into such documentation as is necessary to effect the decision to get the best value that is achievable through negotiation including a percentage of any onward sale of the land and to report back to the Board Members on the outcome of the negotiations.

### **38. LAND AT GRANGE FARM, ROWNER FOR GARDEN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT AND GATEWAY**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive advising the Board of the exercise of the Chief Executive's delegated power under Para 3.7, Part 3, Schedule 10 of the Council's Constitution to authorise Officers to place an order with Scottish & Southern Electricity Contractors (SSE) for the agreed new electricity supply at Grange Garden Centre. In accordance with the Constitution once this delegated power has been used it is to be reported to the next meeting of the appropriate Board.

By reason of special circumstances, the Chairman determined that the following item be considered at this meeting notwithstanding the fact that the item had not been available for public inspection in accordance with the provisions of Section 100B(4)(a) of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

RESOLVED: That the Economic Development Board notes that the Chief Executive has exercised his delegated authority pursuant to Paragraph 3.7, Part 3, Schedule 10 of the Council's Constitution and authorised Officers to place an order with Scottish & Southern Electricity Contractors (SSE) for the agreed new electricity supply for Grange Farm Garden Centre.

### **39. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Board was advised that following the publication of the agenda, information had been brought to the attention of the Council that resulted in there being a necessity for the Board to consider the item confidentially without the press and public present due to the sensitive nature of the financial information that would be disclosed.

RESOLVED: That in relation to the following item the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemptions outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**40. NEW LETTING OF 1 PHOENIX WAY, GOSPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Property Services Manager requesting that consideration be given to the terms of a new letting of the former children's nursery at 1 Phoenix Way to Marvels and Meltdowns Charity.

RESOLVED: That the item be deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

**41. ANY OTHER ITEMS**

There were none

**CHAIRMAN**

Concluded at 8.35 pm