



MINUTES OF A CABINET MEETING
Council Chamber - Town Hall
Wednesday, 7 November 2012
(7.30pm-8.30pm)

Present:

Councillor Michael White (Leader of the Council), Chairman

Councillor Steven Kelly (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Michael Armstrong
Councillor Robert Benham
Councillor Andrew Curtin
Councillor Roger Ramsey
Councillor Paul Rochford
Councillor Geoffrey Starns
Councillor Lesley Kelly

Cabinet Member responsibility:

(Deputy Leader) Individuals
Transformation
Community Empowerment
Culture, Towns & Communities
Value
Children & Learning
Community Safety
Housing & Public Protection

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Barry Tebbutt.

Councillors Clarence Barrett, Keith Darvill, Michael Deon Burton, Paul McGeary, Garry Pain and Jeffrey Tucker were present for the meeting.

24 DISUSED LAND ADJACENT TO MELVILLE ROAD ALLOTMENTS, RAINHAM

Councillor Roger Ramsey, Cabinet Member for Value, introduced the report.

It was reported that at various occasions over the last few years Cabinet approval had been given to the disposal of a number of Council owned sites that had been identified as surplus, either as a result of specific projects or more general property reviews carried out by Strategic Property Services.

As the Council pursued a policy of selling surplus sites for many years it had become more difficult to identify new sites for disposal that did not pose challenges, either technically or in terms of planning, and especially in respect of objections to disposal that arise in many cases. Nonetheless, constant and ongoing appraisal of property assets to identify disposal opportunities was a requirement on all local authorities and at Havering was essential in providing capital receipts to fund spending to support and enhance Council services.

The report identified a site comprising of 2.13 acres of land adjoining Melville Road allotments that had remained unused for 24 years. It was recommended that the

site could be re-used in part to extend the adjoining allotment site with the remainder being sold for residential development.

A full title search had been conducted on the land and legal advice sought on the detail of the existing covenants which did not restrict the land being used for potential planning developments.

Members were assured that the waiting list for allotments had reduced in number and that priority was given to Havering residents when sites became available.

Reasons for the decision:

In order to improve the efficiency of the Council's portfolio of land and property assets and to generate further capital receipts it was important to ensure that surplus assets continue to be identified for disposal. It was also good practice to appropriate to formally acknowledge a proposed change of use for the site.

Other options considered:

1. If the site was not sold, the most likely alternative was that it would remain in its current use or remain vacant.
2. If the site was not sold, it was likely that the capital programme would have to be reduced or funded from borrowing which would incur additional revenue costs.

Cabinet **AGREED:**

1. **That the disused land adjacent to Melville Road Allotments be declared surplus and authorisation be given for a disposal of about 1.53 acres and for the creation of additional allotment plots in respect of about 0.6 acres of land in accordance with the allotment waiting list requirements for the site. The disposal would be subject to obtaining any necessary planning permissions and other consents as appropriate. The Property Strategy Manager in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) to be authorised to deal with all matters arising and thereafter to complete the disposal of the site identified. The disposal would be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.**
2. **To approve the principle that the land should be appropriated for planning purposes subject to the relevant statutory processes and that the Property Strategy Manager, in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal & Democratic Services) be authorised to undertake these processes and for the Lead Member for Value to consider any objections received and whether to confirm the appropriation.**