

Subject:	Portslade Town Hall Site, Victoria Road		
Date of Meeting:	17 March 2011		
Report of:	Strategic Director Resources		
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: CAB21349	
Wards Affected:	South Portslade		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to market the site adjacent to Portslade Town Hall for redevelopment, use of the land to generate funding for investment into Portslade Town Hall for community services and the relocation of the Housing office.
- 1.2 As part of the Council's Corporate Property Strategy and Asset Management process the site adjacent to Portslade Town Hall (the existing facilities that include the Housing office, the adjacent bowling practice area, the bowls pavilion, the public toilets and part of the car park) has been identified as an underused site. The asset management condition survey for the buildings on the site particularly with regard to Portslade Town Hall highlight that they are mainly in a poor condition and require substantial investment. This report is complemented by a report in part 2 of the Agenda.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves and authorises:
- (a) Appointment of an agent to undertake the open marketing of the site adjacent to Portslade Town Hall.
 - (b) Disposal of the site on a long leasehold basis of 125 years at a premium and no rental payment.
 - (c) The use of the net proceeds to provide for reinvestment in Portslade Town Hall for community use and other corporate accommodation projects.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The site to be sold does not include Portslade Town Hall nor the main bowling green. The total site comprises Portslade Town Hall, Victoria Road Housing Office, car parking, public toilets, bowling pavilion, practice area and a bowling

green. It is located on Victoria Road adjacent to Council Housing to the west and a private commercial trading estate to the east which is a potential development site. For clarification the site to be disposed of includes the Victoria Road Housing office, part of the car park and an area of grass to the west currently used as an informal practice green all as shown edged red on the attached plan, Appendix 1.

- 3.2 Portslade Town Hall a 1920s building is expensive to maintain and would require substantial investment to improve and prolong its life. It is proposed that in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy Portslade Town Hall is refurbished and extended as a neighbourhood and community hub providing local services and community facilities. This will include the council's housing office service and other relevant services that will be re-located to a refurbished and extended Portslade Town Hall providing a customer service contact point and supporting offices.
- 3.3 It is proposed that the capital receipt from the disposal will be reinvested in the Portslade Town Hall building and the balance retained for use on other corporate accommodation projects. This is also in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy.
- 3.4 It is proposed to refurbish and extend a wing of Portslade Town Hall to create new office accommodation to support the new customer service contact and access point. The refurbishment will ensure that all existing features of the building are retained and enhanced especially the existing historical artefacts and Compton Organ. Currently the proposal will replace the existing bowling pavilion with a new bowling pavilion next to the bowling green as part of the redevelopment of the site. The continuity of the bowling pavilion provision will be secured and these requirements will form part of the disposal negotiations with the potential developer. It is anticipated that Portslade Town Hall will be used for wider community use and the proposed community facilities will build upon the existing community uses such as tea dancing, ballroom and organ concerts. It may be at some point in the future a community group may wish to take responsibility for some of the building.
- 3.5 Preliminary discussions with the Planners have indicated informally that they would support development of the site for residential use (a mix of social and private). The council test the property market in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 by exploring other alternative uses for the site and will put the site on the open market to achieve the best consideration reasonably obtainable.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultations have been held with planning and relevant officers within the Council. Ward Councillors have been consulted in accordance with the property consultation protocol and their views will be taken into consideration in a separate item under the Agenda.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Disposal on a long lease will generate a capital receipt less any associated disposal costs. Part of the net capital receipt will be used for investment into

Portslade Town Hall and the balance retained for use on other corporate accommodation projects. There will be on going savings on the running and maintenance costs for the Victoria Road Housing Office and Portslade Town Hall.

- 5.2 These proposals support the Corporate Property Strategy and Asset Management process. The building is currently under utilised and requires substantial investment for future maintenance

Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen

Date: 08/02/11

Legal Implications:

- 5.3 A long lease disposal entails a straight forward property transaction to proceed in the usual way, as set out in recommendation 2b. Provided that the marketing results in competitive bids, there would be a presumption that section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 which relates to the council achieving best consideration reasonably obtainable would thereby be complied with. It is not considered that any individual Human Rights Act rights will be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Anna Mackenzie

Date: 08/02/11

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 Improvement of the Town Hall will offer better facilities for the community.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 Redevelopment of a brown field site for housing would ease pressure on other parts of the city,

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 Improvement of Portslade Town Hall will help to deter vandalism and deterioration of the environment in this prominent location.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 The poor economic climate and funding shortages may deter developers from coming forward. The receipt may not be sufficient to carry out all of the repairs and refurbishment required at Portslade Town Hall.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 Redevelopment will provide either more housing or employment opportunities depending on the scheme proposed by the successful bidder.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The offices could not be let on a commercial basis without substantial investment. There would also be no capital receipt available to reinvest in Portslade Town Hall.

6.2 The offices could be sold as an investment to an investor or owner/ occupier. This would release a much reduced capital payment reflecting the condition of the building and would sterilise the rest of the site.

6.3 The offices and car park could be retained for council use but the site requires substantial investment . There would also be no capital receipt available to reinvest in Portslade Town Hall.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The disposal on a long lease would produce a capital receipt and enable investment in Portslade Town Hall to be addressed at the earliest opportunity, avoid the need for the council to spend any further money on maintenance and provide a net capital receipt for part use on other corporate accommodation projects.

7.2 There will be ongoing savings on the running and maintenance costs for Victoria Road Housing office and Portslade Town Hall.

7.3 The redevelopment of the site would provide additional housing and/or new employment opportunities.

7.4 A refurbished Portslade Town Hall plus a neighbourhood hub for community services would offer some office accommodation together with a service contact point for local and community services. Portslade Town Hall could then be used and/or managed by the local community as a facility for the local residents.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- 1. Plan

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None