

REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR

TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE: 25th JUNE 2015

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THE FLEECE PUBLIC CONVENIENCES, BARROWFORD

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To advise on offers received and a request from Barrowford Parish Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the highest offer be accepted.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To achieve a significant capital receipt.

ISSUE

1. In December 2013 the Executive considered a report on the strategic review of public conveniences. The review was undertaken with a view to achieve savings in the region of £100,000 and was a requirement of the Government's Efficiency Support Grant to the Council.
2. All town and parish councils were consulted as part of the review and in particular were asked to indicate whether they wished to have the conveniences in their area transferred to them so that they could take on their future management.
3. In the case of the Fleece conveniences, Barrowford Parish Council indicated that it was not in a position financially to do this.
4. As a result the conveniences were formally closed on 31st March 2014 (they had already been closed for several months for repairs). Along with other conveniences where the parish or town council was not able to take them over the premises were subsequently advertised for sale.
5. At the Executive meeting on 22nd January 2015 it was reported that the highest offer received

in time was £40,150 but that a significantly higher late offer had also been made. The Executive therefore resolved that the premises be re-advertised.

6. That exercise ended on 2nd June and the highest offer received is £78,750.
7. However there has now been a significant further development in that the Parish Council has written to me on 18th June formally requesting that the Council now transfer the premises to them to operate as public conveniences.
8. The choice therefore for Members is:
 - (a) To accept the highest tender and with it the capital receipt of £78,750 ;or
 - (b) To accede to the Parish Council's request and to transfer the premises to it on the same basis as the other transfers of conveniences, namely, for a nominal sum of £1 and subject to a covenant not to dispose of the premises for a non-community use for a period of 10 years.
9. Where parish and town councils have taken on conveniences they have been given transitional assistance for two years by way of the Council paying the business rates.
10. The officer view is that as the conveniences have now been closed for over 18 months, there have been two public tendering exercises and the size of the capital receipt, the Council should proceed with the disposal to the highest tenderer.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The Council's policy arising from the strategic review was to transfer conveniences to parish and town councils where they wished this to happen. In this case there has been a change of mind on the part of the parish council after the Council has moved on to look to dispose of the premises.

Financial: As explained above a capital receipt of £78,750 would be obtained by accepting the highest offer.

Legal: There is no requirement on the Council to accept any offer arising out of a tendering exercise. If the premises were to be transferred to the parish council they would not be able to transfer them for a non- community use for 10 years.

Risk Management: None arising from the report.

Health and Safety: None arising from the report.

Sustainability: None arising from the report.

Community Safety: None arising from the report.

Equality and Diversity: None arising from the report.

