

REPORT FROM: CORPORATE DIRECTOR

TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE: 16th MARCH, 2017

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LAND AT CARR ROAD NELSON

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Executive with an update since its last consideration of this matter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the land be declared surplus to requirements in order that it can be sold for an alternative use.
- (2) That the Strategic Director be authorized to apply for planning permission for commercial use of the land and if this is granted the land be marketed for sale.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To achieve a capital receipt and reduce all liabilities.
- (2). To promote economic development in the Borough.

ISSUE

1. The attached report was considered by the Executive on 8th December, 2016 and the recommendations were approved.
2. The item was then called in on the grounds "that the land should be retained for the enjoyment and use of the residents of Barrowford and Nelson."
3. A call in meeting was held on 20th January, 2017 and the notes of that meeting are attached.

4. The item was also the subject of a notice of motion at the Council meeting on 15th December, 2016 where the Council resolved:
 - “(1) Council notes that the funfair will take place on the usual Carr Road site in 2017; requests that no disposal of the Carr Road land will take place until a suitable alternative site has been identified and agreed with the organisers of the funfair in the future; and calls on the Executive to negotiate with the organisers of the funfair with a view to increasing the number of funfairs in Nelson each year.
 - (2) Requests the Executive to call a meeting with representatives of Barrowford Parish Council and Nelson Town Council to consider the future use of the land at Carr Road and to consider a report on the outcome of that meeting and any proposals made at the February Executive alongside the “call-in” discussion.”
5. The meeting with representatives of Barrowford Parish Council and Nelson Town Council was held on 10th February, 2017 and was attended by the Leader of the Council, the Strategic Director and the Corporate Director.
6. Councillor Iqbal explained the reasons for the intended disposal of the land was namely to promote economic development in the area and to make full use of what is in effect a piece of seriously underused land. A number of enquiries had been received about acquiring it for commercial use. It might be possible to develop the land to accommodate a number of businesses. It was stressed that it was all dependent on planning permission being granted and that if marketing went ahead there would be an open tendering exercise with the decision on the bids received made in public by the Executive.
7. In the ensuing discussion it was acknowledged that the land was underused and covered in chippings and that it was stretching things to say it was “green” land or part of the adjoining park. Some concern was expressed about increased traffic, road safety and the Carr Road bridge weight limit. It was acknowledged that these issues would have to be addressed when the planning application came forward.
8. Councillor Iqbal confirmed that the Council was actively seeking an alternative site for the funfair and that it would certainly be allowed to take place on the site in 2017.

IMPLICATIONS

- Policy:** The Council identifies surplus land and property for inclusion in its Disposal Programme to support its Capital Programme. It is proposed that the land be sold on the open market.
- Financial:** If agreed, the sale of the land would generate either a capital receipt assuming a freehold disposal on the open market or alternatively a revenue rental stream if disposed via a lease arrangement. Either arrangement would end the Council’s maintenance obligations and other liabilities for the site.
- The cost of obtaining planning consent, including any necessary surveys in support of a planning application, is estimated at £7,000. Subject to Executive approval it is intended to fund this from the Growth Sites Development Reserve.
- Legal:** No legal implications are considered to arise directly from the report.

Risk Management: On disposal of the land the risks and liabilities for the Council will cease.

Health and Safety: No implications are considered to arise directly from this report.

Sustainability: No implications are considered to arise directly from this report.

Community Safety: See risk management.

Equality and Diversity: No implications are considered to arise directly from this report.

APPENDICES

Executive report considered on 8th December, 2017

Notes of the call in meeting held on 20th January, 2017

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS