

**REPORT FROM: HOUSING, HEALTH AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
MANAGER**

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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LAND AT RAVENSCROFT WAY, BARNOLDSWICK

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To request Members to consider a reduced offer for the land shown edged black on the plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this Committee considers the reduced offer which has been submitted by the purchaser.

If the reduced offer is accepted it is proposed that rather than the freehold of the land being sold that it be disposed of on a 125 year lease with a covenant that the land can only be used for the proposed use.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The reduced offer is substantially lower than the amount which has already been accepted, but above what has been submitted previously by two other parties.

If the land is disposed of on a 125 year lease the Council would be able to control the future uses of the land.

BACKGROUND

1. Further to the land being declared surplus in June 2016 and it being advertised four offers were submitted, and the Executive agreed at its meeting on 15th March 2018 to accept the highest offer of £100,000. This was subject to the offeror obtaining planning permission for the proposed use of a commercial unit within 6 months. Detailed site investigations were carried out by the successful offeror due to the presence of a watercourse, drain and well on the land, and there were also encroachments to be dealt with before the planning application could be submitted.
2. The purchaser reduced his offer to £5,000 and said this was due to the proposed Unit altering the flow of the watercourse which was not acceptable to Lancashire County Council as this would increase flood risk. Due to the substantial reduction in the offer interest was invited from

the original offerors and two of them who had submitted offers at £16,000 and £34,000 were still interested, but the offeror at the lowest amount reduced their offer to £8,000.

3.The offer of £34,000 was to purchase the land as additional customer and staff parking for the business which operates from the adjoining Unit 1 Ravenscroft Way. At its meeting on 16th December 2021 the Policy and Resources Committee accepted the offer of £34,000, subject to the purchaser obtaining planning permission for the proposed use within 6 months.

4.Due to the purchasers' business undergoing a re-structure at the start of 2022 he was unable to confirm until the end of March 2022 that they could proceed with the purchase of the land, but the offer of £34,000 which had been submitted was reduced to £18,000. He says that the offer has been reduced as they would not be able to use the whole of the site due to the associated issues with drainage and potential flooding. The purchaser has not carried out any site investigations or made any pre-application enquiries with the Councils Planning Department.

ISSUES

5.The offer which was accepted has been substantially reduced and is not considered to reflect the freehold value, but it is higher than the other offers which have been submitted. If the land was disposed of on a 125 year lease with a restrictive covenant the Council would have control over its future use.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The Council seeks to identify surplus property for inclusion in its disposal programme in order to achieve capital receipts.

Financial: If the reduced offer is accepted capital receipt for the Council and no further liabilities.

Legal: If the reduced offer is accepted it is proposed that the land be sold on a 125 year lease with a restrictive covenant limiting its use to car parking.

Risk Management: On disposal of the property all risks and liabilities will cease for the Council

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

Climate Change: 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

Location plan

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None