

REPORT FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLACE

TO: EXECUTIVE

DATE: 16TH NOVEMBER 2023

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CEMETERY LODGE, KEIGHLEY ROAD, COLNE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To request that the Executive agree with the recommendations of Colne and District Committee in relation to the property shown edged black on the plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive agrees with the following recommendations of Colne and District Committee:-

- (1) To accept the offer of £197,000 for the property, and to agree to declare additional areas of the Council's adjoining land shown cross hatched and hatched on the plan attached to the report surplus to requirements in order for them to be included as part of the sale for vehicle access and parking/garden use.
- (2) Note that the existing cemetery gates are to be altered to electric opening and that the works are to be carried out by the Council as soon as is practicably possible, but this should not affect the sale of the property. To agree that the opening and closing arrangements for the gates should allow for controlled vehicular and pedestrian access and 24-hour pedestrian exit, and that there be no breaches to any walls

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To achieve a capital receipt and end all liabilities and bring a vacant property back into productive use.
- (2) The sale includes a small area of land and a right of vehicle access shown hatched on the plan, and it adjoins an area of unused Council owned land shown cross hatched. Since the property was advertised interested parties have said they would only look at submitting offers if the additional land and access area were included in the sale. Three offers have recently been submitted for the property which includes the additional land and access area.
- (3) Alteration of the cemetery gates will limit the potential for anti-social behaviour.

BACKGROUND

1. The Cemetery Lodge was occupied by employees of the Council for a number of years until it was vacated in August 2021, and there were works required to make the property suitable for re-letting. It was declared surplus by Policy and Resources Committee on 16th December 2021.
2. Liberata Property Services have been advertising the property for sale since September 2022 at offers in the region of £210,000. An offer of £180,000 including the additional land and access area was reported to a previous Area Committee on 11th May 2023, but was refused due to it being for a commercial purpose. It was also resolved that the property be marketed with an online Agent and that an independent valuation be obtained.
3. Since 25th July 2023 the property has also been marketed with Petty Real at a reduced asking price of offers in the region of £200,000. Liberata have carried out 14 viewings since it was first advertised and Petty Real have undertaken 15 viewings.
4. An offer of £197,000 has been submitted which includes the additional areas shown cross hatched and hatched on the plan. This was reported to Colne and District Committee on 5th October 2023.

ISSUES

5. All interest in the property has been to purchase it with the additional land and three offers have been received. If the additional land is not included it is likely to result in the property which is in a prominent location remaining unoccupied and deteriorating making it more susceptible to vandalism and break-in's.
6. It is proposed that the access area and additional land be included as part of the sale, but with a restrictive covenant that the land only be used as access, parking and garden for the property.

IMPLICATIONS

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

Financial: A capital receipt and no further liabilities for the Council.

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

Risk Management: On disposal of the property and additional land 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