

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2022

POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF LAND – BOWBRIDGE ROAD, NEWARK

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update Members following the 28 November 2019 and 2 April 2020 Committee meetings of the opportunity to purchase land adjacent to Newark Hospital, on land off Bowbridge Road. This report is to be read in conjunction with the Exempt Report included on this agenda.

2.0 Update

2.1 Members will recall authorising delegated authority for the Director – Planning & Growth to make a bid for the freehold purchase (capped at a maximum level) of two parcels of land (see **Appendix**, Parcels 1 and 2) for a site adjacent to Newark Hospital for the purposes of the Council then leasing the land to Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Trust). The Trust have advised that whilst the feedback from patients in terms of care and services at the hospital is often positive, the lack of car parking is consistently raised as a criticism. A lack of car parking is also a key restriction to being able to increase the range of clinical services which can take place from the site.

2.2 Following a lengthy period of negotiation with the sole land agent representing the owners of both land parcels the Council presented the 'Maximum Offer' permitted by Members in an attempt to secure the freehold purchase of the sites. That offer was initially declined with the land agent representing the landowners asking the Council to consider a lease arrangement for the land, with a sub-lease being offered to the Trust in return. This option is not one officers would advocate, with the freehold purchase being preferred.

2.3 Having declined the lease option the Council made clear its position that the Maximum Offer was the full and final position from this Council to purchase of the two freehold interests in both land parcels, subject also to a lease agreement with the Trust. This offer was accepted.

2.4 On the basis that the offer was subject to agreement from the Trust negotiations have continued to agree suitable terms. The Trust and Council have now concluded agreed terms which would require the Council to construct and manage the car park alongside the Trusts lease.

2.5 Additionally the Council has completed due diligence work, including site investigations. It is the opinion of the Business Manager - Corporate Property, that the agreed Maximum Offer remains appropriate. Given the need to construct the car park, it is necessary for an amendment to the Council's Capital program to also include implementation works, as detailed in the exempt report. Such works, subject to the agreement with the Trust, are still appropriate provided that the land parcels are purchases for the Maximum Offer or below.

3.0 The Proposal

3.1 Officers remain of the option that the Maximum Offer made for both land Parcels is reasonable. On this basis it is recommended that the Council re-affirms its Maximum Offer for the freehold purchase of both land parcels, subject also to terms being executed with the Trust). It is additionally recommended that the Council's capital program be amended by the amount detailed in the Exempt Report in order to allow the Council as free-holder to implement the car park for the Trust to lease.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 The purchase of the land at Bowbridge Road would provide the opportunity to provide more car parking (including disabled) for the hospital, increasing its reputation and future ability to increase its range of clinical services.

5.0 Financial Implications (FIN21/22 – 486)

5.1 The financial implications of the proposal are set out in the exempt report for Member's consideration.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Director – Planning & Growth, in consultation with the Business Manager – Corporate Property be given delegated authority to:

- (a) confirm to the land agent representing both landowners that the Maximum Offer is the full and final offer from this Council to purchase the two freehold interests detailed at Appendix A, subject also to the agreement of the Trust to lease the land;**
- (b) subject to the Maximum Offer being accepted as detailed at a) above to enter into a Lease Agreement with the Sherwood Forest Hospital Trust on the terms set out in the Exempt Report; and**
- (c) amend the Council Council's Capital Program to reflect a purchase in accordance with the Maximum Offer and capital costs of implementing a car park for the Trust, as detailed in the exempt report.**

Reason for Recommendations

To secure additional car parking in order to support the function and reputation of Newark Hospital.

Background Papers - Nil

For further information please contact Matt Lamb on Ext. 5842

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APPENDIX

