

**Subject:** Request to Purchase a Piece of Housing Revenue Account Land on Mile Oak Road, Portslade

**Date of Meeting:** 29 March 2018

**Report of:** Executive Director Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing

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**Wards Affected:** Portslade North

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

***Action Required of the Committee:***

To receive the item referred from the Housing & New Homes Committee for approval:

**Recommendation:** That the following be referred to the Committee for consideration:

- 2.1 That the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee approves the disposal of the freehold of the land adjacent to 336 Mile Oak Road, as indicated in the attached plan, for £27,000.
- 2.2 That the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee agree that the capital receipt arising from the sale of the freehold of the land adjacent to 336 Mile Oak Road be used to support the HRA Capital Programme.

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL****HOUSING & NEW HOMES COMMITTEE****14 MARCH 2018****COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**Present:** Councillor Meadows (Chair) Councillor Hill (Deputy Chair), Councillor Mears (Opposition Spokesperson), Councillor Gibson (Group Spokesperson), Councillors Atkinson, Bell, Druitt, Lewry, Moonan and Wares.

**DRAFT MINUTE****PART ONE****79 REQUEST TO PURCHASE A PIECE OF HRA LAND ON MILE OAK ROAD**

- 79.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing concerning a request to purchase a piece of Housing Revenue Account land, adjacent to 336 Mile Oak Road, Portslade, for the sum of £27,000 with an additional offer of £500 towards legal costs. The HRA site was currently a small hardstanding and garage. Prior to 2015 the land was used for informal off-street parking by local residents which had prompted local residents to formally ask if they could purchase the plot for off-street parking. The proposal provided the council with an opportunity to release an unviable asset and invest the capital receipt to meet key strategic priorities as outlined in the HRA Asset Management Strategy. The report was presented by the Housing Stock Review Manager.
- 79.2 Councillor Mears asked when the policy not to sell HRA housing land was rescinded. It was explained that the general presumption was not the disposal of HRA sites per se, but cases had been brought to the committee before where small parcels of land could be disposed of with committee agreement. These were small sites which were not of use to the HRA or were not considered valuable for the New Homes for Neighbourhood Programme. Councillor Mears stated that it would be helpful for the wording of the policy to be reviewed to provide clarity.
- 79.3 Councillor Moonan asked officers to confirm that the land did not provide enough space to build a house; that there was a covenant on the land so that it could only be used for parking in the future; and that any application to build was unlikely to be granted planning approval. Officers confirmed that there were restrictive covenants that blocked the purchaser from developing the land. It could only be used for storage or car parking.
- 79.4 Councillor Bell asked how much the Clutton's report had cost to produce and which budget had been used to pay the fee. The Head of Housing Strategy, Property and Investment informed members that the Clutton's valuation costs would be sent to all

members. The use of the receipt would go back into the HRA Capital Programme for investment. The evaluation costs came out of the Property & Investment budget.

- 79.5 Councillor Gibson referred to paragraph 3.3 on page 28 which stated that in 2015 offers had been invited from the open market. However the council could not proceed with the final bidder. Councillor Gibson asked what happened with the final bidder. He further asked if anyone had talked to the Community Land Trust to see if the land was suitable for a less conventional approach. The Head of Housing Strategy, Property and Investment explained that officers would confirm to members why the previous bidder did not proceed. This might be confidential information. A report on Community Land Trusts would be discussed later on the agenda, however he confirmed that this site was not suitable for residential development.
- 79.6 The Chair asked for clarification that the purchaser had to pay costs of all the works that had been carried out. It was explained that the purchaser had to pay £500 legal costs.
- 79.7 Councillor Gibson suggested that that it was good practice to talk to the CLT and others who may be able to develop difficult sites. The Head of Housing Strategy, Property & Investment explained that this was the pathway outlined in the Community Led Housing report.
- 79.8 The Chair noted that the site was next to an electricity sub-station which would be another reason to deter people from developing this land.
- 79.9 **RESOLVED:-**
- (1) That Housing and New Homes Committee recommend to Policy, Resources and Growth Committee that the council sell the freehold interest of the subject land adjacent to 336 Mile Oak Road as detailed in the attached plan.
  - (2) That the Housing and New Homes Committee recommend to Policy, Resources and Growth Committee that the capital receipt is used to support the HRA Capital Programme.

