

# Chichester District Council

**CABINET**

**8 September 2015**

## **Scout Premises, Sherborne Road, Chichester**

### **1. Contacts**

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### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1. To approve the freehold sale of the site of the Scout premises to the Scout Association on the principal terms set out in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of this report.**

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The 12th Chichester Scout Group have for many years occupied Council land in Sherborne Road, Chichester as shown edged red on the plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report and comprising 0.147 ha (0.36 acre). The Council also owns the land edged blue. The Scouts have the benefit of paying a concessionary rent as indicated in Appendix 2.
- 3.2. The Scout Group had been in discussion with officers regarding the possibility of being granted a longer lease to give greater security to them in undertaking improvements to their premises. This, however, developed into a suggestion by the Scouts that they would be interested in acquiring the site that they occupy.
- 3.3. The Scout group were advised that a sale could only be recommended at a price approaching the value of the land for residential development. The Scouts have advised that they have the backing of a trust that will provide the funds for the purchase of the site by the Scouts at this level of price and this led to the proposal for sale detailed in this report.
- 3.4. The Scout building is well used by Scouts, Cubs, Beavers and Guides.

### **4. Outcomes to be achieved**

- 4.1. The proposed sale gives the Council the opportunity to achieve a capital receipt whilst supporting the Scout Association in achieving occupational security for the future. This will also provide a basis that will assist the Scouts in accessing funding and carrying out improvements to the premises.

## **5. Proposal**

- 5.1. It is recommended that the Council disposes to the Scout Association the freehold interest in the site at Sherborne Road, Chichester, edged red on the plan at Appendix 1, at the consideration set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.2. The use of the land will be restricted to Scouting purposes subject to there being provision allowing the premises to be let for other community purpose.

## **6. Alternatives that have been considered in connection with this disposal**

- 6.1. The Council could retain the land and continue to provide for use by the scouts via a leasehold arrangement. This would give the Council greater control of its larger land holding which also includes part of the adjoining playing fields occupied under lease by the Bishop Luffa Academy (shown edged blue on the site plan at Appendix1) but the Council's main reason for doing this would be to provide for sale proceeds in the longer term and sale proceeds (of part) will be achieved more speedily by way of the current proposal. The adjoining Council owned land comprises 1.41 ha (3.58 acres) and has a considerable frontage to Flaxman Avenue. Officers do not consider that the development potential of that land is impaired to any degree by the proposed sale to the Scouts.

## **7. Resource and legal implications**

- 7.1. The sale will provide a capital receipt with loss of only a very small rental income.
- 7.2. The Scouts have indicated that the purpose of their acquisition is to secure the premises for their long term use and they are willing to take the land on a basis that would prevent them from selling on for residential development or using the land for non-scouting use other than for fund raising or other community purposes. Consideration will be given to the matter of whether this can be covered by restrictive covenants or whether additional overage type provisions are also required.

## **8. Consultation**

- 8.1. Internally the proposed sale has been considered by the Commercial Programme Board which supports the recommended sale.
- 8.2. This is a private transaction between the Council and the Scout Association and has not been the subject of external consultation.

## **9. Community impact and corporate risks**

- 9.1. There will be community benefit from this site being secured for long term use by the scouts.
- 9.2. The risk to the Council relates to any effect that the prior sale of the Scout site may have on the potential to sell the adjoin playing field area which is currently let to the Bishop Luffa Academy.

There are presently however uncertainties about taking the adjoining land forward for sale for residential development and the timing of that and it is considered that this land could be offered for sale separately from the Scouts site. The proposed sale of the Scouts site, therefore, provides an opportunity for the Council to obtain an immediate capital receipt in respect of part of its land holding.

## 10. Other Implications

<b>Crime &amp; Disorder:</b> Engaging young people in Scout and Guide activities (both of which take place at this site) reduces the risk of those young people being involved in anti-social behaviour	Yes
<b>Climate Change:</b>	None
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact:</b>	None
<b>Safeguarding:</b>	None

## 11. Background Papers

11.1. None

## 12. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Site Plan

Appendix 2 - Financial Terms (Not for Publication)