

Chichester District Council

CABINET

8 September 2015

Disposal of Land for New RNLI Station, Selsey

1. Contacts

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2. Executive Summary

This report proposes that the Council disposes of a small parcel of land at Kingsway, Selsey, to the RNLI for the purpose of constructing a new lifeboat station, to include toilet facilities for its visitors. It further proposes that Cabinet consider, in the light of the terms of that disposal whether to close the existing public conveniences.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the disposal of the land at Kingsway, Selsey, (shown edged red on Drawing no. 4970) be approved on the terms as set out in the paragraphs 6.1 to 6.3 and the exempt Appendix 2.
- 3.2. In the event that any detailed terms require further negotiation, that authority is delegated to the Head of Commercial Services to agree the final terms of sale.
- 3.3. That Cabinet, having regard to the facilities now proposed by the RNLI, indicate whether the closure of the existing public conveniences should be pursued.

4. Background

- 4.1. The Council has leased to the RNLI a parcel of land at Kingsway, Selsey, (shown edged red on Appendix 1) since August 2011 for boat storage at the rent indicated in the exempt Appendix 2. The site, which measures approximately 630 sq m, consists of scrub land and is surrounded by a chain link fence. The land was previously let to a boat club for use as a boat compound.

- 4.2. The RNLI wish to acquire the freehold title of the land for use with adjoining land, already in RNLI ownership, to construct a new lifeboat station. The station would include two boat stores, a small retail outlet (approximately 30 sq m), changing facilities for RNLI crew, a crew room, office space, engagement space and toilet facilities which would be available to all visitors to the lifeboat station.
- 4.3. At its meeting held in February 2013, Cabinet resolved that officers continue negotiations with the RNLI for an alternative public convenience facility to be provided as part of the new Lifeboat Station enabling the Council facility to close.
- 4.4. A further report to Cabinet in September 2013 advised Cabinet that the RNLI did not wish to make their facilities available for public use and suggested that with RNLI visitors catered for, Cabinet may, at a later date, consider the closure of the Lifeboat Station public conveniences, as the East Beach facility is only a short distance away.
- 4.5. At its meeting on 7 July 2015 Cabinet resolved to sell the land to the RNLI for the sum set out in the exempt Appendix 2. The disposal was on condition that the RNLI provides wc facilities to members of the public with a separate independent access and to be opened in accordance with the opening times of the existing public conveniences at Kingsway, Selsey.
- 4.6. Subsequent discussions with the RNLI have now confirmed that it is only able to offer WC facilities to visitors of the lifeboat station. Some of the users of the adjacent public conveniences may be visitors to the lifeboat station and through the provision of wc facilities in the new lifeboat station, albeit for their own visitors, there should still be reduced demand on the Council's facilities. Also alternative public conveniences are located at East Beach some 650 metres away.
- 4.7. The public convenience adjacent to the Lifeboat Station is not one of the Council's busiest sites, but it is estimated that approximately 50 people visit it each day. This can rise to over 100 in peak summer season and the proposal to pursue closure of these conveniences was supported by Cabinet in February 2013 with the expectation of an alternative facility being made available by the RNLI for public use (see 4.3 above).

5. Outcomes to be achieved

- 5.1. A sale of the land to the RNLI would realise a capital receipt from the site.
- 5.2. The sale will facilitate a new RNLI facility with associated public benefit.
- 5.3. Satisfactory arrangements for wc facilities to serve the locality
- 5.4. Were the adjacent public conveniences to be closed this site could be marketed for an alternative use. The premises could be of interest to local divers or fishermen seeking accommodation and shower facilities.

6. Proposal

- 6.1. It is proposed that the Council disposes of this parcel of land at Kingsway, Selsey, (shown edged red on Drawing no. 4970 – see Appendix 1) to the RNLI for the sum set out in the exempt Appendix 2. An increased sum for the sale of the land has been negotiated to reflect the fact that public wc facilities will not be provided as part of the RNLI development.
- 6.2. The RNLI will provide toilet facilities to those members of the public visiting the lifeboat station.
- 6.3. The RNLI would be responsible for negotiating the release of the restrictive covenants affecting the site and for taking out any necessary indemnity insurance in this regard.
- 6.4. Cabinet are asked to consider whether they support the closure of the Lifeboat Public Conveniences having regard to the information in this report and the position of the RNLI that they will provide toilet facilities for the use of visitors to their premises but not as a complete replacement of the existing public conveniences.

7. Alternatives that have been considered

- 7.1. Do nothing – in this situation the Council would be likely to continue to receive the income from the boat storage compound from either the RNLI or other local people but would continue to bear the cost of providing a public convenience in this area, unless it were to be closed.
- 7.2. Offer the site to the open market - alternative uses are limited given the location of this site. Also an alternative use may be less satisfactory to the covenant beneficiary.
- 7.3. The alternative options would prevent the RNLI from achieving its new lifeboat station in the form currently proposed with the associated public benefits from such a facility.

8. Resource and legal implications

- 8.1. The RNLI currently occupies this site under a lease dated 6 February 2015, which is due to expire on 31 December 2016. This lease would fall away on a sale of the site to the RNLI. Conveyancing work would need to be undertaken but this could be dealt with by the Council's Legal Service.
- 8.2. The Council's title to the land is subject to a covenant restricting use to amenity purposes. The beneficiaries of the covenant have confirmed that the land may be used for a lifeboat station and the parties are in the process of arranging for this to be sufficiently documented.
- 8.3. With a combination of other site closures, partnership arrangements with other organisations and a new cleaning contract, the overall savings

target on the public conveniences service was achieved. Further savings would, however, be beneficial.

9. Consultation

- 9.1. Internal consultations have taken place and the proposed disposal has the support of officers.
- 9.2. The Council's Contracts Manager has undertaken a survey into the usage of the adjacent public conveniences the results of which are included in para 4.6 above.

10. Community impact and corporate risks

- 10.1 The new lifeboat station would provide an improved facility for the RNLI and those it serves.
- 10.2 If the Council were to close the adjacent public conveniences, there would be a loss of this facility to some members of the public although those people visiting the lifeboat station would be able to use its facilities and alternative facilities are available 650m away.

11. Other Implications

Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Climate Change:	No
Human Rights and Equality Impact:	No
Safeguarding:	No

12. Appendix

- 12.1 Appendix 1 – Drawing no. 4970 Site Location Plan
- 12.2 Appendix 2 – Additional Financial Information to Accompany Part 1 Report (Part 2 – Not for Publication)

13. Background Papers

- 13.1. None