

EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on Tuesday 10 August 2021.

PRESENT: A Preston (The Mayor) (Chair) and Councillors B Cooper, S Hill, E Polano and M Smiles

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: E Craigie (Teesside Live)

OFFICERS: G Field, R Horniman, A Hoy and S Reynolds

21/35 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from an Invited Member, Councillor M Saunders (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board).

21/36 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

21/37 **MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 13 JULY 2021**

The minutes of the Executive meeting, held on 13 July 2021, were submitted and approved as a correct record.

21/38 **ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2021-22**

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Culture and Communities and the Director of Legal and Governance Services submitted a report for the Executive's consideration. The purpose of the report was to seek approval of a proposed corporate Engagement Policy for 2021-22.

The proposed revised engagement policy (see Appendix 1 of the submitted report) provided a framework further developing the Council's approach, building on work undertaken with communities prior to and during the pandemic, including the locality working pilots. It supported the 'Quality of Service' strategic priority of the Council's Strategic Plan and was aligned with the corporate value of collaboration.

The principal aim of the policy was for the Council's service to take an 'asset-based' approach to engagement, working with Middlesbrough's people and its communities and the Council's partners to recognise strengths and from those increase independence and self-reliance over time.

The policy planned to seek improvements, which were outlined at paragraph 8 of the submitted report.

OPTIONS

Option 1: No policy - There was no legal requirement for a corporate policy on public engagement, however such a policy, its supporting procedures and guidance provided a clear framework under which the Council's officers could ensure that engagement was consistent, effective and complied with the law. As such, that option was not recommended.

Option 2: Status quo - The Council could have decided to retain the current policy and approach, which had been stated focused principally on formal consultations. That would have maintained the current robust approach to consultation, but would have seen more deliberative engagement activity evolve in an unplanned and unlinked manner, if at all. As such, that option was not recommended.

Option 3: Additional policy - The Council could have decided to retain the existing policy and develop an additional policy in respect of deliberative engagement approaches. That would have seen such approaches develop in a more planned manner, but would not have provided for a consistent or joined-up approach across engagement activity overall. As such, that option was not recommended.

ORDERED

That the proposed Engagement Policy for 2021-22 be approved.

REASON

To provide an enhanced framework for public engagement that was coherent and effective, built trust with communities, ensured that the voices of communities were heard in the Council's decision-making and that the Council complied with all legal duties relating to engagement and consultation.

That 'single policy' option provided the greatest level of assurance that the Council would continue to meet its statutory obligations, and achieve its own strategic ambitions in respect of public engagement, and was recommended on that basis.

21/39

NUNTHORPE GRANGE FARMHOUSE, YARD & BARN - PROPOSED FREEHOLD DISPOSAL

The Executive Member for Environment and Finance & Governance, the Executive Member for Regeneration, the Director of Finance and the Director of Regeneration and Culture submitted a report for the Executive's consideration. The purpose of the report was to consider the proposal to dispose of the Council's freehold interest in Nunthorpe Grange Farmhouse, Yard & Barns.

Shown edged on the plan attached at Appendix A of the submitted report, the subject property was situated on Church Lane and occupied a rectangular shaped site measuring @ 2.37 Acres [0.959 Ha].

The property comprised a relatively modern farmhouse, yard and barns that formed part of a much larger, now defunct, agricultural holding that had sat vacant since being surrendered by the Council's former farm tenant in 2018.

The Council proposed to market the property in local, national and digital media prior to offering it for open market sale at an auction event during the current financial year 2021/2022.

From a valuation perspective, the property was listed on the Council's asset register at a value of £460,000. That value was predicated on the imposition of a restrictive covenant that would limit use of the property to a single residential dwelling only. Future use of the barns for commercial, recreation or leisure purposes would not be restricted, with the Council being able to control any proposals to do so via the statutory planning process.

The Council's nominated auctioneer had valued the property at a figure of £470,000 and advised that it should be presented for sale at the subject auction event with a guide price of £415,000 and a reserve price of £460,000 plus fees.

An Asset Disposal Business Case confirming the status of the subject property as surplus to operational Council requirements was attached at Appendix B of the submitted report.

OPTIONS

Option 1: Re-use for operational purposes - No Council operational service requirement had been identified.

Option 2: Other uses - Although the property was capable of being used for other purposes, future use of the property as a single residential dwelling only was preferred.

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Option 3: Do nothing - The property would have remained in its present state. Whilst the subject property would have been retained for potential Council use in the future, the liability and responsibility for maintaining and holding the property would have remained with the Council in the interim.

ORDERED

That the proposal to dispose of the property via auction, if the price exceeded the reserve sum of £460,000 plus fees, be approved.

REASON

In order to meet the Council's requirements to generate capital receipts, increase annually recurring revenue streams and to bring the subject property into a far more beneficial use in the future.

The disposal of the subject parcel of land as proposed supported delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

The decision(s) will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.