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## **Motion on prospective sale of County Council-owned land at Withy Patch**

- 1** The Chairman of the County Council referred a notice of motion on the prospective sale of County Council-owned land at Withy Patch, submitted to the County Council on 19 July 2019, to the Cabinet Members for Finance and for Fire & Rescue and Communities, for consideration.
- 2** The motion called on the Cabinet Member for Finance to 'either take action now to reassure the community that the Council will not proceed with selling or transferring this land to developers or to confirm he will not accept any arrangement which attempts to get the Council to agree to waive, or write off, any of the section 106 developers' contributions from the New Monks Farm developers that will be required to provide sufficient education provision to meet the needs of the resulting community'.
- 3** The motion also called on the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities, to 'undertake a meaningful consultation with those residents as the person accountable for their welfare on the Council's land and to object to the sale of the land should the residents ask for that'.
- 4** Mr Hunt and Mrs Russell (the then Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities) met Mr Jones on 4 October 2019 to discuss the motion. At that meeting Mr Hunt explained that negotiations were currently ongoing and no further information was available. Mr Jones agreed to defer the meeting to a later date.
- 5** Mr Hunt and Mr Crow (the current Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities) met Mr Jones on 21 November 2019. At that meeting Mr Hunt explained that unfortunately negotiations had still not concluded, were confidential and no further information could be made available at this stage.
- 6** The meeting discussed various outcomes that could arise depending on the outcome of negotiations. While Mr Hunt and Mr Crow noted Mr Jones' concerns Mr Hunt cautioned that nothing could be formally determined until the way forward was established. Mr Crow explained that once negotiations were concluded, should that affect the residents of the Withy Patch, the usual consultation process would be undertaken.
- 7** It was noted that:
  - (a) In respect of the call on the Cabinet Member for Finance: no answer could be given at this point as the development at Monk's Farm was still the subject of negotiations between the parties involved; and
  - (b) In respect of the call on the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities: once negotiations were concluded, should that affect the residents of the Withy Patch, the usual consultation process would be undertaken.
- 8** The Cabinet Members are unable to support the motion and propose to recommend at the County Council meeting on 17 December 2019 that members do not support the motion. The Cabinet Members' decision on this matter was published via the Executive Decision Database 4 December 2019.

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**Jeremy Hunt**

Cabinet Member for Finance

**Duncan Crow**

Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities

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**Background papers**

None