

**Appendix B is NOT FOR PUBLICATION**  
**By virtue of paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A**  
**of the Local Government Act 1972**

<b>Mr Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources</b>	<b>Ref No:</b> <b>FR17(18/19)</b>
<b>January 2019</b>	<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes
<b>Disposal of the land known as the Wallis Centre, De La Warr Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3BS</b>	<b>Part I: Report</b> <b>Part II: Appendix B for Members Only</b>
<b>Report by Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment</b>	<b>Electoral Division:</b> East Grinstead South and Ashurst Wood
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>To accord with County Council Standing Orders, this report advises on the outcome of the marketing of the vacant land known as The Wallis Centre, De La Warr Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3BS and seeks the approval of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources to dispose of the County Council’s freehold interest. Eight offers have been received and approval is sought to sell to the preferred and highest bidder.</p>	
<p><b>West Sussex Plan: Policy Impact and Context</b></p> <p>The County Council’s Future West Sussex Plan sets out its ambition to minimise the burden of local taxation, delivering the best outcomes for residents with the money it spends, whilst living within its means. In 2018 the County Council agreed to adopt an <a href="#">Asset Management Policy and Strategy FR06(18/19)</a>. An objective of the strategy is to acquire, manage, maintain and dispose of property effectively, efficiently and sustainably, together with optimising financial return and commercial opportunities. In line with this strategy the County Council now proposes to dispose of the freehold land at The Wallis Centre, De La Warr Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3BS.</p>	
<p><b>Financial Impact</b></p> <p>The County Council will receive a capital receipt for the land. The capital receipt will be used to fund the County Councils Capital Programme. Selling Agents fees will be deducted from the sale proceeds.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations: That the Cabinet Member endorses:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The disposal of the freehold estate of the land known as The Wallis Centre, De La Warr Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3BS as set out in site plan at Appendix A; and that</li> <li>2) authority is delegated to the Executive Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Environment, in conjunction with the Director of Law and Assurance, to conclude the terms with buyer.</li> </ol>	

## **PROPOSAL**

### **1. Background and Context**

- 1.1 The Wallis Centre, a former youth centre, on the site in De La Warr Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex was vacated in March 2015 when it was decided to redevelop the site. Following a fire in December 2015 the buildings on the site were demolished.
- 1.2 The property had been declared surplus to operational use in May 2014.
- 1.3 Following vacation of the property WSCC sought planning consent for a residential development on the site for nine dwellings. Following discussion with Mid Sussex District Council, in February 2017 planning approval was granted for seven residential dwellings on the site.
- 1.4 In autumn 2018 Jackson Stopps, were procured to market the property for sale with the benefit of planning consent.
- 1.5 In response to the marketing which commenced in October 2018, eight offers have been received and these are detailed in Appendix B Part II (for Members only).
- 1.6 All offers received have been investigated by the appointed selling agents and they recommend acceptance of the highest unconditional bid.

### **2. Proposal Details**

- 2.1 The proposal is to sell the property to the preferred bidder as outlined in Appendix B Part II (for Members only).
- 2.2 Should the offer be withdrawn the proposal is to sell to the next highest bidder or to another party at an agreed minimum value. Subject to the period of time that may have elapsed, it is possible that the property may have to be remarketed.
- 2.3 The proposal remains subject to:
  - i) Contract and legal due diligence
- 2.4 It is proposed that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources agrees to this transaction being concluded by delegated authority to the Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment in conjunction with the Director of Law and Assurance.

## **FACTORS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT**

### **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 The Member for Southwater (acting as advisor to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) and the local Member for East Grinstead South and Ashurst Wood have been consulted.

#### **4. Financial (revenue and capital) and Resource Implications**

4.1 The buyer will pay the agreed price for the property, selling agents fees will be deducted from the capital receipt.

#### **4.2 Revenue consequences of proposal**

Savings in security and other ongoing holding costs associated with vacant property will be achieved.

#### **4.3 Capital consequences of proposal**

A capital receipt will be received.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 WSCC will dispose of the freehold estate in the property.

#### **6. Risk Assessment Implications and Mitigations**

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating Action</b>
1	The sale does not proceed for whatever reason and the property needs to be re-marketed resulting in a decrease in offers and a reduced capital receipt.	A deadline of the 1st April 2019 to conclude the sale will be given to the purchaser. Should the sale to the preferred bidder not proceed, WSCC will offer the property to the next preferred bidder and so on. If none of the original bidders are able to proceed for a sum in excess of the agreed minimum, a decision will be made as to when best to remarket the property given the current market uncertainty related to Brexit.
2	There is a continued financial risk in holding onto under-utilised assets, which can delay capital receipts or income, or where there is a no or limited service benefit.	The decision to dispose of the property within an agreed timeframe.

#### **7. Other Options Considered (and Reasons for not proposing)**

7.1 Other options considered included WSCC progressing to bring the site forward for development. This option was discounted due to the anticipated low margins of profit of development and the need to achieve capital receipts to fund the County Councils capital programme.

#### **8. Equality and Human Rights Assessment**

8.1 The Equality Assessment does not need to be addressed as this is a report dealing with an internal procedural matter only.

## **9. Social Value and Sustainability Assessment**

9.1 The proposal will bring social, environmental and economic benefits by recycling vacant and surplus sites for new developments and uses.

## **10. Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment**

10.1 Not applicable

### **Contact Officers:**

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**Appendix A** – Site Plan of the land at the Wallis Centre

**Appendix B** – Marketing offers received (Part II for Members only).