

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 19 October 2021

Report Title

Disposal of Surplus Property Asset – former Adult Learning Disability property, 58 Quarry Hill Road, Wath Upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7TD.

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Acting Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Martin Hopkinson, Strategic Asset Officer – martin.hopkinson@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Wath

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to dispose of the Council's freehold interest in 58 Quarry Hill Road, Wath Upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7TD.

Recommendations

1. That approval be given to the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in 58 Quarry Hill Road, Wath Upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7TD.
2. That approval be given to the Assistant Director (Planning, Regeneration and Transport) for the disposal of the asset by implementing the most appropriate method of disposal to help expedite the process, whilst ensuring that best consideration is achieved under Section 123 – Local Government Act 1972.
3. That the Assistant Director of Legal Services be instructed to negotiate and complete the necessary legal documentation once terms for the disposal have been agreed.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Initial Equalities Screening Form
- Appendix 2 Location Plan
- Appendix 3 Exempt Financial Addendum
- Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment Form

Background Papers

Cabinet and Commissioners Decision Making report, “The Transformation of Services and Support for People with a Learning Disability, 21 May 2018”.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None.

Council Approval Required

No.

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes – partially exempt.

An exemption is sought for Appendix 3 under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains sensitive commercial information that could impact on the negotiation strategy and disposal values.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because the Council’s commercial interest could be prejudice by the disclosure of this commercial information.

Disposal of Surplus Property Asset – Former Adult Learning Disability property at 58 Quarry Hill Road, Wath Upon Dearne, Rotherham, S63 7TD

1. Background

- 1.1 The property at Quarry Hill Road became vacant in March 2021 following the relocation of the learning disability residential respite services into the newly developed facilities at Conway Crescent, East Herringthorpe. This relocation was driven by the Cabinet and Commissioners Decision Making report, “The Transformation of Services and Support for People with a Learning Disability, 21 May 2018”, which seeks to transform the Learning Disability Services in Rotherham into a modern, efficient and flexible service.
- 1.2 The facilities at Quarry Hill Road are no longer considered sufficient for the Service to provide a truly modern and inclusive service. This contrasts with Conway Crescent which has been newly equipped specifically to meet a wide range of the Service needs. In addition, Quarry Hill Road is an older building and the Service was beginning to have issues with its condition, its ongoing repairs, and its upcoming maintenance obligations.
- 1.3 The property was subsequently declared surplus to the operational requirements of the Adult Care, Housing & Public Health Directorate in March 2021.
- 1.4 In May 2021, the Asset Management Board supported the view that the property would be suitable for disposal.
- 1.5 A location plan for Quarry Hill Road is attached in Appendix 2.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The property was declared surplus to the operational requirements of Adult Care, Housing & Public Health in March 2021. Consultations have since taken place with all relevant service areas via the Asset Management Board and no other alternative operational use has been identified for the property.
- 2.2 The property is currently vacant and therefore poses a risk to the Council in terms of ongoing security and holding costs.
- 2.3 The site is designated as Residential Area in the current Local Plan.
- 2.4 The Council regularly reviews its property portfolio to ensure it has a fit for purpose estate, reduce unnecessary holding costs and, where appropriate, generate capital receipts.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Option 1: The asset is retained by the Council.

Retaining a surplus property which does not have any identified alternative future operational requirements increases the risk faced by the Council through

additional and unbudgeted holding, maintenance, and security costs, leaving the property vulnerable to vandalism and antisocial behaviour.

This is not the recommended option.

3.2 Option 2: Disposal of the surplus asset.

The property is offered for freehold disposal on the open market with a view to legal completion at the earliest opportunity.

This is the recommended option.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 All local ward members have been consulted on the proposal to dispose of this property and no objections or representations have been received.

4.2 The proposal to dispose of this property has been the subject of detailed consultation through Asset Management Board. The Board are fully supportive of the proposal.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Should the proposal outlined in this report be approved then the Assistant Director (Planning, Regeneration and Transport), in consultation with Asset Management, will decide upon the most appropriate method of disposal to achieve best consideration under Sec.123 LGA 1972.

5.2 Should the property be approved for disposal then the Assistant Director (Planning, Regeneration and Transport), as advised by the Head of Asset Management, will instruct the Assistant Director (Legal Services) to prepare all the necessary transfer documentation once terms for disposal have been agreed.

5.3 Estates have advised that, given the nature of the property, the disposal would be best achieved via informal tender or auction sale. If Cabinet support the recommended Option, then the property can be marketed immediately.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

6.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

6.2 The estimated capital receipt from the sale of this property is identified in the exempt Appendix 3. It is unclear at this point what impact Covid-19 will have on the property market.

6.3 The Council will no longer incur revenue and holding costs on this property once it is disposed of and these are identified in the exempt Appendix 3.

- 6.4 Savings from the closure and disposal of Quarry Hill have been identified as part of the Council approved revenue property savings.
- 6.5 Corporate Procurement have confirmed that, as this is a sale of land, there are no procurement implications.
- 7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**
- 7.1 Other than as already identified and detailed in this report there are no direct legal implications arising from the subject matter of this report.
- 8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**
- 8.1 There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.
- 9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**
- 9.1 The Adult Care, Housing and Public Health Directorate have confirmed that the property is surplus to their service requirements.
- 10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**
- 10.1 There are no direct implications for equalities or human rights arising from this report.
- 11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change**
- 11.1 The sale of 58 Quarry Hill will eliminate the Council's responsibility for emissions relating to operating that site, however this will not impact the overall emissions relating to domestic buildings across the Borough. The site is likely to be used and/or redeveloped after this but the precise use, and impact on emissions, is currently unknown.
- 11.2 A Carbon Impact Assessment Form is attached in Appendix 4.
- 12. Implications for Partners**
- 12.1 None.
- 13. Risks and Mitigation**
- 13.1 If the property were to be retained without an identified use or future need then this would place a significant financial burden on current resources.
- 13.2 The main mitigation against the risk identified in this report is to approve the proposed disposal of the surplus property.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Simon Moss, Assistant Director – Planning, Regeneration & Transport

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

| | Named Officer | Date |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| Chief Executive | Sharon Kemp | 04/10/21 |
| Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer) | Judith Badger | 28/09/21 |
| Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | Stuart Fletcher | 30/09/21 |

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