

## **CABINET**

**17 APRIL 2012**

### **GREEN STREET ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE, 46 GREEN STREET & GARAGES AT DAWES STREET, GILLINGHAM**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Alan Jarrett, Finance

Report from: Nick Anthony, Head of Property and Assets

Author: Phil Vipond, Senior Valuation Surveyor

#### **Summary**

This report requests that Cabinet:

Declares the Green Street site surplus and delegates authority to the Assistant Director, Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to dispose of it.

Delegates authority to the Assistant Director, Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to take a lease or leases of premises to use for the delivery of the Adult Education Service so that the service can be relocated from Green Street.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 As the disposal value of the property is over £100,000 but below £1,000,000 the delegation of authority to dispose of it is a matter for Cabinet.
- 1.2 As the rent payable for the property or properties to be leased will be above £10,000 per annum per property the delegation of authority to take a lease or leases is a matter for Cabinet.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Council owns in excess of 1,000 property assets and, next to staff, property is the Council's largest single cost. Effective management is therefore essential if the Council is to fulfill its core objectives and provide good quality, value for money services.

- 2.2 To ensure that the Council's property assets contribute to its priorities, outcomes, objectives and key actions, as set out within the Council Plan, all properties are considered in the context of rationalisation.
- 2.3 This report brings forward proposals for the disposal of a property considered to be surplus to requirements.

### **3.1 The Green Street Site**

- 3.1.1 The Council owns the freehold of the above property as shown edged black on the plan at appendix 1 to the report. The property has an area of 0.387 Hectares (0.956 Acres) and includes the Adult Education Centre site at Green Street, 46 Green Street, and five garages in Dawes Street.
- 3.1.2 The property has been used as an Adult Education Centre for many years. 46 Green Street originally formed part of the centre and a number of the buildings' services continue to be shared between the buildings.
- 3.1.3 The Adult Education Centre is no longer considered fit for purpose due to its age, layout, and general lack of facilities appropriate for current and anticipated learning provision.
- 3.1.4 In order to meet the need for high quality learning, delivered where it is useful for the Community and to ensure that premises and equipment are modern and fit for purpose the Service has been moving classes out of Green Street over time. For example, family learning is now fully embedded within Children's Centres, primary and secondary schools; and sports-related qualifications are now being delivered at Medway Park and other gym-equipped venues.
- 3.1.5 Classes which run from the Adult Education Centre are to be relocated from September 2012 to the other Adult Education site in Rochester, to local schools, and to alternative (leasehold) premises in Gillingham. The Service will continue to provide daytime classes near the Gillingham town centre which will meet the needs of the area. Arrangements will all be in place in time for the new academic year from September 2012.
- 3.1.6 Service provision will continue to meet the volumes and specifications set out by the Skills Funding Agency.

## **4. Advice and analysis**

- 4.1 As the Green Street property is not fit for purpose and there is no identified resourced need for it, it is proposed that the premises are declared surplus.

## 5. Risk Management

| Risk  | Description   | Action to avoid or mitigate risk             |
|---|---|--|
| Empty properties are expensive and difficult to manage pending disposal | Empty properties become a target of antisocial behaviour /vandalism / squatters pending disposal. | Dispose of the property as soon as possible. |

## 6. Consultation

6.1 Consultation has taken place with the service directorates and no objections to these proposals have been received.

## 7. Financial and legal implications

7.1 The Council has a duty under s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain best consideration when it leases or disposes of interests in property, unless the letting is for less than 7 years or consent is obtained from the Secretary of State, or one of the general consents applies.

7.2 A formal report on title has been prepared and there are no significant impediments affecting the disposal of the site or its value.

7.3 Limited parts of the premises are let and it is proposed that any disposal will be subject to the terms/conditions of these leases.

7.4 The costs of moving the service and leasing alternative premises can be met within existing budgets.

## 8. Recommendations

8.1 That Cabinet:

8.1.1 Declares the Green Street site surplus and delegates authority to the Assistant Director, Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance to dispose of 46 Green Street, Gillingham, including five garages in Dawes Street, as shown edged black on the plan at appendix 1 to the report

8.1.2 Delegates authority to the Assistant Director, Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to take a lease or leases of premises to use for the delivery of the Adult Education Service on the best terms reasonably obtainable.

## 9. Suggested reasons for decision(s)

9.1 In order to reduce revenue costs, improve service delivery, realise capital receipts and gain investment in the Medway area.

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**Background Papers:**

Corporate Property Strategy, approved by Cabinet on 4 April 2006.



**Land at Green Street  
Gillingham**

**GILLINGHAM**



Scale: NTS 21/03/12