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Agenda Item: 104 Land North of Sunrising House
Date: 18.3.2024

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

January 2023

Cornwall Council's Property Services team contacted Looe Town about a public open space in Looe described as Land North of Sunrising House, and their intention to dispose of the property asset. Please refer to their briefing document which includes a plan of the area concerned, at Appendix 1.

February 2023

Following discussion at a meeting of Services & Asset Management Committee on 16th January 2023, Looe Town Council responded to CC on 23rd Feb expressing an interest in principle to have the land devolved from Cornwall, and requesting more information in the form of:

- Land Condition Survey/Land stability Report ;
- Disclosure of any legal disputes appertaining to the land;
- Tree Surveys;
- Time scales moving forward if LTC proceeds with having the land transferred ;
- Further details of what the new public open space being created is.

In this response we stated that Looe Town Council's intention, should we proceed, would be to retain the area as a protected green space as designated within the adopted Looe Neighbourhood Development Plan under Policy PGS1 - 'Local Green Spaces'. The area is known historically as allotments and Looe Town Council, subject to members approval, would like to restore the area for similar use which would be to the benefit of the physical and mental well-being of our community.

March 2023

Cornwall Council welcomed Looe Town Council's interest in the plot of land to the east of the site (original proposal above) and requested that the wider area of this public open space be discussed as a whole. CC provided documents relating to the site as follows:

- Public Open Space Briefing Note (APPENDIX 2);
- Woodland Management Plan (with associated maps) (APPENDIX 3);
- Slope Stability Assessment of January 2020 (APPENDIX 4);
- Tree Inspection Report (APPENDIX 5)

CC confirmed that there was no ongoing legal action in relation to the site but that there had been years of informal correspondence with the owner of Sunrising House in relation to the retaining wall which protects their property. They also advised us that there had been reports that neighbours had to work on allotments, in the north east corner of the site.

In terms of transferring the site, Cornwall confirmed that if the Town Council wished to take freehold transfer of this site for the expected price of £1 (subject to contract and without prejudice), then the best way to start the governance procedure at CC is to email estatesdelivery@cornwall.gov.uk so the work can be allocated to a Valuer.

April 2023

DC reported to Services & Asset Management Committee meeting that:

At last SAM, LTC expressed an interest in taking this site over from CC who have responded with a request that we consider the whole site rather than just the smaller portion originally being consulted on. Please see correspondence and reports supplied appended to this report.

PLEASE WOULD COUNCILLORS CONSIDER HOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO PROGRESS THIS?

At the meeting, it was **resolved** that a letter would be sent to CC expressing interest in principle in acquiring the site subject to approval of Full Council and LTC's own reports on viability and costs.

There is no record of this letter having been sent which may be due to subsequent employee absences and changes in staff.

July 2023

It was noted to SAM Committee that DC and TC would be discussing this site, along with others leased from CC and/or for potential devolution, with Cornwall Link Officer. Discussions have taken place about this issue along with several other sites but no significant progress has been made to date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the time elapsed since previous resolution on this matter and consideration of the public open space known as Land North of Sunrising House, please would Councillors review the request and reports received from Cornwall Council and consider whether they

- a) Have sufficient information to a make a decision or
- b) What additional information they require before a decision can be made.

Officers' analysis of likely costs and potential benefits is attached at APPENDIX 6 for information.