

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 4th October, 2016 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Tuesday, 11th October, 2016

The end of the call in period is 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 20th October, 2016 and therefore, the decisions can be implemented on Friday, 21st October, 2016.

Present:

Chair - Mayor Ros Jones (Mayor of Doncaster with responsibility for Budget and Policy Framework)

Vice-Chair - Councillor Glyn Jones (Deputy Mayor and Portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Equalities)

Cabinet Member for:

Councillor Joe Blackham	Regeneration and Transportation
Councillor Tony Corden	Customer, Corporate and Trading Services
Councillor Nuala Fennelly	Children, Young People and Schools
Councillor Pat Knight	Public Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Chris McGuinness	Communities, the Voluntary Sector and Environment
Councillor Bill Mordue	Business, Skills, Tourism and Culture
Councillor Jane Nightingale	Housing

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

Councillor Jane Cox asked the Mayor, Ros Jones, the following question:-

“I think we need a clear comparison of land value between the sites in Cantley compared to Rossington. The figures in items 19 and 21 are unclear and it would seem that we are handing over an asset worth £100,000 more to a private company. Can you provide a clear comparison of the site values? Why is Doncaster Council handing over a valuable asset when there are other options?”

The Mayor gave the following response:-

“Thank you for your question Cllr Cox.

As the Cabinet report states, the land at Plantation View and Gattison House is currently valued at £870,000.

Under this proposal, Runwood Homes will return that land - worth £870,000 - to the Council, in exchange for a new lease on a site of a similar size at Goodison Boulevard, which is valued at £692,000.

This will enable the company to develop a new residential care home that meets modern standards, without residents having to move until the new home has been built. In addition, a further 0.6 acres of public open space at Goodison Boulevard - worth £208,000 - will remain in the Council ownership as public open space. It will be enhanced using £30,000 of Section 106 money, which is specifically for use on the site at Goodison Boulevard.

Finally, the site to the rear of Gattison House is valued at just over £2.5m. However, there are currently limited opportunities to realise this value and develop it for housing, mainly due to a lack of road frontage and limited existing access.

The valuation figures for each of the assets have been independently scrutinised by the District Valuer. The District Valuer has confirmed that these assessments are appropriate and reflect current values.

I believe this clearly demonstrates that the Council is not 'handing over' a valuable asset. Rather, it is swapping one asset for another, to enable the development of a new modern care home for elderly residents in Doncaster and help to meet future housing needs in Rossington."

Councillor Jane Cox asked the following supplementary question:-

"Nobody has a problem with a care home being built. It is the right thing for us to do. Simply, how can land in Cantley be valued as the same as land in Rossington?"

The Mayor, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

"I will reiterate, the land has been valued not only by our valuers, but it has been checked independently by the District Valuer, who are an independent organisation. Thank you for your question Councillor Cox. "

Councillor Nick Allen asked the Mayor, Ros Jones, the following question:-

"What costs have been incurred by St Leger Homes regarding the maintenance of the site at Goodison Boulevard? Why isn't this site included on the Council's asset register (paragraph 32) and what impact does this have on the Council's relationship with Runwood Homes?"

The Mayor gave the following response:-

"Thank you for your question. St Leger Homes advise that the current maintenance costs associated with Goodison Boulevard are £452 per annum.

The Assets and Property department are undertaking an ongoing project to convert paper records of the Council's land and building ownership into a digital format Asset Register. This is a large task and the land in question does not yet appear on the digital register. However, this has no bearing on the Runwood Homes proposal or the Council's relationship with Runwood Homes. The actual current maintenance costs associated with Goodison Boulevard are £452 per annum."

Councillor Nick Allen asked the following supplementary question:-

“How much time will it take to complete?”

The Mayor, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“I will refer this question to Dave Stimpson to provide a response. I believe that there is still a number of years until all differing strips of land have been transferred onto the database“.

Dave Stimpson provided the following response. “The position at the moment is approximately 2 years. We are trying to reduce this as much as we can by prioritising assets based on their scale over the next 2 years.”

Councillor Steve Cox asked the Mayor, Ros Jones, the following question:-

“We are not opposed to the provision for quality elderly care in our wards. The confusion we all have is how we have ended up in a position where we are handing over valuable land to a private company. We have a care provider in Woodlands that bought Redhouse Garage and developed their own care home. Why are other providers treated differently and why are we handing over public money to Runwood homes?”

The Mayor gave the following response:-

“Thank you for your question. As you are aware, a thorough competitive procurement process was undertaken, which resulted in seven former Council care homes being transferred to Runwood Homes.

To be clear, the Council is not proposing handing over public money to Runwood Homes. It is proposed that the Council leases land worth £692,000 to Runwood Homes, in exchange for the return of land worth £870,000.

Not only would this facilitate a new, modern care home in Cantley, but it would also help to enable the future development of mixed tenure housing in Rossington”.

Councillor Steve Cox asked the following supplementary question:-

“Within your Unitary Development Plan and Core Strategy for elderly residential homes, it states that only 42% of the land mass should be used for residential homes. Within that land mass, there is obviously over 42% going to be used for the new care home. Can you explain why it's ignoring your own Strategy and Unitary Development Plan?”

The Mayor, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“As you are aware, the Unitary Development Plan is being revised, as we all know with the local plan. Further than that I have not got that specific information to hand, but I can provide you with a full response from Planning, and will ensure that this information is made available to the other Members who have asked questions on this issue. Can I ask Officers to ensure that this is done? Thank you”.

Councillor Richard Alan Jones asked the Mayor, Ros Jones, the following question:-

“On the information given within the report that Gattison has a strategic significance due to its future potential, why are values considered to be neutral? The report does not provide

alternative options of potential to assess whether the decision would be Value for money, why not? Using 106 monies, forgoing repayment of transitional funds is not cost neutral £600K and a loss £900K on capital receipts, this again does not appear cost neutral? Why should this community's monies be used to benefit the developers? I am sure the local Community centre would put this to good use rather than enhance the developer prospect. Again officers not consulting with ward members."

The Mayor gave the following response:-

"Thank you for your question. I believe much of this information has been covered in my previous answers.

The valuation figures for each of the assets have been independently scrutinised by the District Valuer, who confirmed that the assessments are appropriate and reflect current values.

Based on these values, the Council would be releasing land valued at £692,000, but would be acquiring land valued at £870,000, which would be a net increase of £178,000.

As the Cabinet report notes, there is currently an uncommitted s106 balance of £30,000, specifically for enhancing public open space on the site in question. That land will remain as public open space and investment in it will be for the benefit of the local community, not the developer. To be clear, Section 106 money cannot simply be given to the local Community Centre to spend as it sees fit. It is quite specific in the 106 agreement."

Councillor Richard Alan Jones asked the following supplementary question:-

"First of all, you have not answered my question whether it's value for money within the report, that's quite clear. In your response to Councillor Cox, you indicated that there was limited access and in the report there is limited access. This photograph shows that there is no limited access to that site at Gattison. This evolved around officers who have presented us with information, which is totally untrue, and that's why we are sat here today because we have been mis-led. You talk about openness and accountability within the Council, but it's just not there."

The Mayor, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

"Councillor Jones you are always given the opportunity to come along and ask questions. We all see the same information and the information that we have been given. The access to the site, to make it a good proposal, is to take a road down the middle, with a further asset. If you look at the figures, value for money is demonstrated in the amounts of monies that the land is valued at, the land that is coming back, to the value of the land that is going, and, therefore, that's where you determine what value for money is. The development will be done by others, not the authority. It is up to Runwood Homes to put forward their proposals to Planning, who will make the relevant decision, and we can show an independent valuation has been done by a District Valuer, that the figures there are correct. Thank you for your question."

Councillor Clive Stone asked the Mayor, Ros Jones, the following question:-

"Data Quality Statement states:-

'To receive good quality data that is essential to ensure that the Council can maximise capacity, intelligence, and performance, supporting services and the people it serves. The impact of future delivery of services is based on information from many different sources and good quality intelligence to inform decision making.' E.g. value for money, land values per acre of each site, and a proper and transparent consultation process. To what extent has the data in the Runwood report been tested / validated or examined, before being used in the decision making process? We feel that this requires further scrutiny before we make such an important decision.'

The Mayor gave the following response:-

"Thank you for your question. I am reporting what I have said previously.

The valuation of the land was carried out by a qualified valuer. Additionally, the valuation figures for each of the assets have been independently scrutinised by the District Valuer, who confirmed that the assessments are appropriate and reflect current values.

In February 2016, following initial discussions with the Council regarding their proposal, Runwood conducted consultation at both homes. They provided some background to their plans, financial position and options for delivering a solution. The feedback reported to the Council was overwhelming support for the proposals and to help understand the impact on those residents living at each home, pre and post September 2015 (the date of handover), Runwood provided a summary of the individual comments made.

In preparing their planning application, Runwood have subsequently undertaken a wider public consultation on the proposed use of the new site with local residents in Cantley, with the majority of residents who responded being in favour of the proposal. The outcome of this consultation will be considered as part of the planning process.

Officers have also confirmed that no care home resident, or member of the public, has contacted the Council to raise any concerns about either the proposal, or the consultation. Thank you for your question."

Councillor Clive Stone asked the following supplementary question:-

"In the spirit of the consultation, 12 months ago, Councillor Cooke and myself were consulted on the development of the land to the rear of Gattison. 12 months hence from there and the proposals we have now got differ to the proposals that we were originally consulted on. It begs the question with regard to Runwood Homes whether it is a case of the 'tail wagging the dog'. Do we have to accept just one valuation, and is one valuation enough. Can you not accept more than one valuation?"

The Mayor, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

"The person that did the valuation is a qualified Valuer, and there was a second valuation by the District Valuer. You would certainly not go around the houses if a District Valuer verifies those figures. You can be assured that that's what they would advise us on the market value, so we have got 2 valuations there. As far as the proposals are concerned, it's about releasing the whole of the Gattison site, which will make it a better proposal for people living in a mixed use development."

Simon Wiles, Director of Finance and Corporate Services who was present at the meeting gave an opinion from a financial perspective, in terms of the benefits to the Council and communities. He explained that currently the Council owned the site at Goodison Boulevard, but didn't own the other two sites, Gattison House and Plantation View, because they had been included as part of the sale to Runwood Homes, when the homes were sold on. The Council are giving away the land to a value of £692k and were acquiring the other two pieces of land to build on. The benefits would be that the residents were getting a better quality care home from the current ones, and the Council would get two sites for development. One site would be enhanced because they were near to other Council and education sites, which would provide the opportunity to do something better, gives better access, therefore, felt that this was a good solution all round, which Officers believed was the right option for the Council.

Councillor John Cooke asked the Mayor, Ros Jones, the following question:-

“Several years ago, I was in conversation with a sitting DMBC Councillor, who stated categorically that Gattison House would be demolished and the area developed for new housing. This was even before the council had decided to award Runwood the contract. This begs the question, how long ago was this plan formulated and was it offered as a sweetener to interested companies in pre-contractual communication? Also, Gattison was never really considered as an option for the new residential home, although a better site, instead new private housing is encouraged, impacting 300+ more vehicles onto this lane. No traffic Impact assessment. Why?”

The Mayor gave the following response:-

“Thank you for your question. Neither I, nor officers, are aware of the alleged previous proposal in relation to Gattison House to which you refer.

To be clear, the current proposal came as a result of an approach by Runwood Homes to the Council. The land did not form any part of any discussion prior to this, and I am not sure why Cllr Cooke has chosen this forum to put forward such rumours. There appears to be no evidence to back up his inference, other than an unsubstantiated conversation he allegedly had with an unnamed Councillor some years ago.

The potential to use land to the rear of Gattison House, as a location for a replacement residential care home, has been considered. There would, however, have been up-front costs associated with construction of the road and, more importantly, it is likely that development of the wider site would take approximately 5 years to complete. Runwood Homes stated that to have residents in a new home, effectively on a building site for 5 years, would not work commercially, and it would certainly not be ideal for care home residents. I certainly would not want members of my family on a building site for 5 years.

In terms of the future development of the site, as you know, this would require planning permission. A traffic impact assessment, along with other assessments, would be undertaken and considered as part of the planning process, which is also open to contributions from local residents and Councillors.”

Councillor John Cooke asked the following supplementary question:-

“I don't like the idea that it was alleged, because it is factual. It was a member from your party, who is not here today to take part in that conversation, and has taken that approach.

You questioned the people in Cantley regarding the care home, but you did not question the people in Rossington around Gattison Lane, which is a very busy road, especially at school times, what the impact this will have on their lives, and with the added number of vehicles using this area, which is a very narrow road. I believe it is unsuitable and unacceptable.”

The Mayor, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“Thank you for your statement Councillor Cooke, but I will reiterate, if you have someone who will substantiate what you are saying, please make officers aware. This is a planning application, and once the planning application is received, there is always consultation around that. As you know, I have nothing to do with planning matters, and would reiterate that all impact assessments are done once planning has been submitted, but thank you for your question Councillor Cooke.”

The Decision Records dated 20th September, 2016 (previously circulated), were noted.

DECISION 1

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. Disposal of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Land at Goodison Boulevard, Cantley, and the Acquisition of Gattison House and Plantation View.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) approved the disposal by long lease of land at Goodison Boulevard to Runwood Homes as detailed in the body of this report;
- (2) approved the acquisition of Gattison House and Plantation View;
- (3) approved the granting of a development licence to Runwood Homes to enable them to progress the new development on land at Goodison Boulevard;
- (4) approved the related surrender of the leases to the sites of Plantation View and Gattison House once the existing buildings have been demolished;
- (5) approved to forego the final year of transitional payments for Gattison and Plantation; and
- (6) approved the allocation of £30,000 Section 106 funding for the enhancement of the remaining 0.6 acres of public open space at Goodison Boulevard, and inclusion of the project into the Housing Capital Programme.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report presented by Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Housing.

In January 2016, Runwood Homes approached the Council proposing to invest approximately £5m in the construction of a new, modern care home in Doncaster. The new home would provide modern, purpose built accommodation, with en-suite facilities, enabling care in an attractive environment, meeting the current and future needs and aspirations of residents and their families.

It was proposed that the new care home would replace two existing homes; Gattison House in Rossington, and Plantation View in Cantley, where the take up of beds had been lower than expected, and thereby had placed Runwood Homes in a challenging financial position.

A Council owned site was identified at Goodison Boulevard, Cantley as being suitable for the development of the purpose built new home. Residents of Gattison House and Plantation View, and their relatives, were consulted, who expressed their strong support to the proposals, and would be supported to move once the new home was completed.

Community consultation in Cantley had been carried out as part of the planning process, and had indicated approximately two thirds of those who responded were in favour of the Runwood Homes proposal. The proposal presented no capital cost to the Council.

Future residents would have better, modern, en-suite accommodation than the outdated accommodation currently provided. The new development would provide c70 units of accommodation, designed specifically to meet the needs of older people, including those with dementia.

Land at Gattison House and Plantation View would be returned to the Council as cleared sites. The intended proposal for the larger Rossington site was for a mixed tenure development of flexible older person's housing, together with general needs accommodation, and discussion would also take place with the adjacent school regarding land and access.

It was proposed that the site at Plantation View was to be developed for new housing.

The Mayor and Cabinet supported the proposals, which would facilitate the provision of a more cost effective, modern residential care facility, and would provide suitable accommodation with appropriate support and care for elderly people currently living in Cantley, Bessacarr and Rossington, as well as the wider areas of Doncaster. The proposals would provide good quality, modern accommodation, designed to meet the needs and aspirations of people, which was one of the Mayor's priorities, which she was pleased to bring forward.

Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools welcomed the proposals, which she felt would help safeguard children at the infant school, as currently children had to gain access to the playground via the main entrance to the school.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 2 – Develop the Site via the Housing Delivery Model.

Utilising this process would more than likely result in the land at Goodison Boulevard being sold to a private housing developer. The disposal of the site via long lease would result in the loss of a £900k capital receipt, which could be utilised to fund the construction of nine new council house dwellings.

Option 3 – Do Nothing.

Not supporting this project would result in the Council providing out of date, poor quality residential care accommodation, which would fail in meeting the future needs of older people.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Peter Dale, Director of Regeneration and Environment.

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker

Mayor Jones email response to a supplementary question to Councillor Steve Cox

Date: 19th October, 2016

Dear Steve

Further to your supplementary question at Cabinet on 4th October 2016 regarding the UDP, I am now in a position to respond to you.

The policy you referred to was Policy Reference PH14 within the UDP, which related to Residential and Nursing Homes. I can confirm that this Policy is no longer saved. When the Core Strategy was formally adopted in May 2012, UDP Policy PH14 was replaced by Core Strategy Policy 12: Housing Mix and Affordable Housing.

Policy 12 Section C states:

Proposals for sheltered accommodation and other specialist need accommodation will be supported where they are:

1. Consistent and commensurate with identified need;
2. On sites suitable for other housing; and
3. Have good access to local services by means other than the car.

I trust you find this information helpful, and can see that the proposal for a new residential care home on the land at Goodison Boulevard is in line with current Policy.

Kind Regards