



**Forward Plan Select Committee
Tuesday 11th September 2007**

**Open Briefing Report from the Director of
Finance and Corporate Resources**

For Information/Action

Wards Affected:
KENTON

**Report Title: Open Briefing Report for the Proposed Disposal of
Clock Cottage, together with surrounding land and
premises, Kenton Road, Kenton.**

MAIN REPORT BELOW THE LINE – CONFIDENTIAL

The main report is not for publication as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Para 3, Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 namely : *“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)”*.

This Open Brief summarises the key points of the report.

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 A confidential report on this matter was considered by the Executive on 11th September 2007. A non confidential briefing was also provided for the press and public, the content of which was broadly the same as this briefing note, prepared specifically for the Forward Plan Select Committee. The main report sought ‘in principle’ approval from members to dispose of the site. The report also highlighted the long standing interest from St. Luke’s in the rear part of the site, the previous decision of the Executive to include the front part of the site (occupied by the Scouts) as a potential site for the housing Private Finance Initiative scheme, together with the more recent interest of St. Luke’s in the front part of the site.

2.0 The Executive Decision

- 2.1 That the current offer from St. Luke’s for the “Clock Cottage” site shown hatched red on the attached plan and the Council’s freehold interest in the electricity substation site shown hatched blue on the plan) not be accepted but the Head of Property and Asset Management be instructed to continue to negotiate with St Luke’s in an attempt to obtain improved terms.
- 2.2 That the Head of Property and Asset Management report further to the Executive following such negotiations.

- 2.3 That the current offer from St. Luke's for the Scout site shown hatched green on the attached plan not be accepted and instead the Head of P&AM be instructed to enter into informal discussion with the appropriate Scout Troop, St. Luke's and Brent Co-Efficient as to their interest in this site and to report back the outcome of these discussions to Members.
- 2.4 That the Borough Solicitor provide members with confidential advice pertaining to the ownership and interests in this site.

3.0 Details

3.1 The site comprises three distinct areas:

1. Clock Cottage and Stable block - This site, which is at the rear of the Council owned land, is currently vacant save for a licence for porta-cabins and a local informal storage arrangement with St Luke's Hospice. An offer has been received from St. Luke's for this part of the site. The offer does not however reflect the value of the site. St. Luke's remain strongly interested in acquiring this particular part of the site and, subject to Member views, it is proposed to continue discussing a potential disposal of this site to St. Luke's on suitable terms and to report back to Members in due course.
2. Scout Hut land - This site, which fronts Kenton Road, is currently occupied by The 8th Kenton & Kingsbury Scout Troop although it is understood that that the original occupation by way of informal permission was by the Stanmore & District Scout Troop as Headquarters premises. There is also a daytime nursery group operating from the site through an arrangement with the Scouts.

St. Luke's has also bid for this part of the site but again their offer does not reflect the value of the site. Additionally Members have already approved this site as a potential site to include within the Council's proposed Private Finance Initiative (PFI) housing scheme. The confidential report recommended that the bid from St. Luke's be rejected and that officers be instructed to seek further offers from St. Luke's and Brent Co-Efficient (BCE), which is the preferred bidder for the Housing PFI. It is likely that this site could also be of interest to the market. However, it was agreed by the Executive at its meeting on 11th September that given the history of the site and its occupation for many years by the scouts, and in order to avoid a prolonged dispute with numerous interested parties, the occupation of the site by the scouts and others be fully investigated and reported back to members before a decision is taken on its future use and occupation.

3. Electricity Sub Station land-This is subject to a long lease to EDF (an Electricity Supply Company). Currently there appears to be limited scope for developing this part of the site which occupies the majority of the centre of the Council's land. St. Luke's has expressed an interest in including it within their bid for area 1. above (Clock Cottage and the

Stable Block) but consideration is also being given to the Council retaining this site for future requirements. This will be addressed in any future report to Members in regard to St. Luke's interest.

- 3.2 In addition, abutting the site and Kenton Grange is a Council park. Very recently an initial proposal has been put forward to include a small area of the park to "square off" any disposal site to St. Luke's. This would assist St. Luke's in the design of any extension. Clearly this is merely a tentative proposal at this stage as it requires consultation with the parks service and the general public. However it is understood that this particular area of the park has, in the past, caused some park management issues and this may be seen as a positive proposal by the parks service and park users. The report draws Member attention to this idea. Any proposal to include this small area within any disposal of the site to St. Luke's will be reported in more detail when negotiations are concluded.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 The financial implications for the Council are detailed in the confidential report for Members.
- 4.2 Officers will be required to report back to the Executive on the eventual disposal terms.

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 The legal implications in the confidential report for Members set out the legal powers under which the Council can dispose of the land. There is a complex history to the occupation of this site and further work is required to determine the exact status and rights of the current occupiers and, consequently, the obligations of the Council, if any, to relocate any of them. Another complex issue relates to the potential requirement to re-provide any community facilities that are lost as a result of redevelopment of the site and how far that requirement could be met by the uses currently being proposed.

6.0 Diversity implications

- 6.1 None specific.

7.0 Staffing/accommodation implications

- 7.1 There are no specific staffing implications.

8.0 Background papers

Property files of the Head of Property and Asset Management.

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