



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 10TH NOVEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF MOTION – LAND ADJACENT TO CEFN FFOREST LEISURE CENTRE

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To respond to a Notice of Motion asking that land adjacent to Cefn Fforest Leisure Centre be withdrawn from sale with immediate effect.
- 1.2 The report is seeking the views of members prior to its presentation to Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 A number of Members have joined to submit a Notice of Motion asking that a previous decision of Cabinet to dispose of land that once formed a part of Cefn Fforest Leisure Centre be withdrawn from sale with immediate effect on the basis that such a sale “will put this piece of land at a disadvantage” under a forthcoming Strategic Review of Leisure Centres.
- 2.2 This report goes on to explain why the land in question no longer forms a part of the Leisure Centre and its sale will not compromise any on-site improvement that may or may not be identified as part of the Strategic Review of Leisure Centres.
- 2.3 Consequently the report recommends that the Notice of Motion be referred by Scrutiny to Cabinet.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The disposal of this site would contribute to the following strategic objective:
Priority P2 of the Single Integrated Plan: *“Improve standards of housing and communities giving appropriate access to services across the county borough”*
- 3.2 Under its approved Asset Management Objectives, the Authority aims to manage its land and buildings effectively, efficiently, economically, and provide a safe, sustainable and accessible living and working environment for all users.
- 3.3 The Authority has a medium term financial plan (MTFP), which includes cost saving targets resulting from the disposal of assets.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 A Notice of Motion signed by Councillors Jan Jones, Chris Hawker, Nigel Dix, Pat Cook, Alan Rees, Colin Durham, Roy Saralis and Jean Summers has been submitted for the following reason;

“In the Strategic Review of Leisure Centres it is said that Leisure Centres are constrained by surrounding neighbours so the potential for on-site improvement is limited. Cabinet’s decision on the 27th November 2013 to put up for sale a piece of land adjoining Cefn Fforest Leisure Centre will put this piece of land at a disadvantage under the review.

We believe therefore that it is only right and fair that the sale of land which is part of the Cefn Fforest Leisure Centre’s original site is withdrawn from sale and we request that this is done with immediate effect.”

- 4.2 The attached plan (Appendix A) identifies the boundary of the area of land that forms the subject of this report. The land is situated between a residential property (formerly the swimming bath’s Manager’s house) and the rear boundary of residential properties in Davies Street, Cefn Fforest.
- 4.3 There can be little doubt, and as stated in the Strategic Review of Leisure Centres, that on site improvement is often constrained by surrounding neighbours. At Cefn Fforest the Leisure Centre is within an area of open space within the village and if there were ever plans to develop the centre there is some space to do so, subject to Planning requirements and approval.
- 4.4 Originally the plot of land that is currently for sale formed part of the Leisure Centre’s grounds and acted as a buffer between the residents of Davies Street and the Leisure Centre. The land is fenced and is not accessible to the public.
- 4.5 Whilst the plot of land does technically form part of the Leisure Centre its importance to any future strategy for the Centre has been diminished by a decision of a former authority to sell privately the former baths Manager’s house, which originally was an integral part of the site. That sale rendered the plot of land now in question sandwiched between a private residence (the former bath’s Manager’s house) and residential properties in Davies Street.
- 4.6 Accordingly development of this land for on site Leisure Centre improvement cannot be foreseen as it would have a distinct negative impact on residents.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An EQIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council’s Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EIQA has not been carried out.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The sale of the land will produce a capital receipt. A formal offer at market value has been received for the purchase of the land.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are none.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Local members have not been consulted on this response to the Notice of Motion. However their original opposition to the proposal to sell this plot of land was included in the report to Cabinet dated 27th November 2013.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Notice of Motion be duly considered by Scrutiny and referred to Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Constitution for a decision.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To be in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972, Section 123.

Author: Colin Jones. Head of Performance and Property Services
Consultees: Corporate Management Team
Mark S.Williams. Head of Community & Leisure
Gail Wiliams. Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Cllr D.Hardacre. Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management
Cllr N. George. Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure

Background Papers:
Cabinet Report 27th November 2013 "Land Adjoining Cefn Fforest Sports Centre"

Appendices:
Appendix 1 of 1 Site Plan