



## CABINET – 20TH JANUARY 2016

**SUBJECT: FORMER BEDWELLY SCHOOL SITE**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

---

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to supersede a previous decision in respect of the disposal of land at the former Bedwellty School Site (as shown edged black on the plan at Appendix 1 - "the site").
- 1.2 To further seek approval to market the site for sale on the open market for housing.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 At its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008, Cabinet resolved to sell the Bedwellty School Site for housing on the open market by formal tender. As part of the process the bidders were required to demonstrate that they could achieve the Council's sustainability output targets and were also required to construct a new community centre on the site as an integral part of the development.
- 2.2 In the intervening period, Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 12 Design have been updated to set out the Welsh Government's land use planning policy in respect of promoting sustainability and sustainable buildings through good design. Further, Part L of the Building Regulations (relating to energy efficiency) has come into force and taken together these changes have codified much of the Council's previous aspirations.
- 2.3 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is driving a rationalisation programme in respect of community-focussed buildings and land assets.
- 2.4 The site should be sold on the open market, pursuant to the adopted Protocol on Disposal of Property.

### 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 borough"*.
- 3.2 The disposal of the site would contribute to one of the key objectives of the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021: *"Ensure that an adequate and appropriate range of housing sites are available across the County Borough in the most suitable locations to meet the housing requirements of all sections of the population."*
- 3.3 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.

- 3.4 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 At its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008, Cabinet resolved to sell the Bedwellty School Site for housing on the open market by formal tender. As part of the process the bidders were required to demonstrate that they could achieve the Council's sustainability output targets and were also required to construct a new community centre on the site as an integral part of the development.
- 4.2 As members will be aware, the banking crisis later that year (referred to in the report as *the recent "credit crunch"*) caused a near collapse in the property market and officers deemed it prudent to await a recovery before bringing the site back to the market.
- 4.3 In the intervening period, Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 12 Design have been updated to set out the Welsh Government's land use planning policy in respect of promoting sustainability and sustainable buildings through good design. Further, Part L of the Building Regulations (relating to energy efficiency) has come into force and taken together these changes have codified much of the Council's previous aspirations.
- 4.4 The MTFP is driving a rationalisation programme in respect of community-focussed buildings and land assets.
- 4.5 Accordingly, officers recommend that the earlier decision be overturned and that members endorse the principle of selling the site on the open market, in accordance with the adopted Protocol on Disposal of Property, but *without* the previous conditions relating to achieving sustainability output targets or constructing a new community centre.
- 4.6 Pursuant to clause 5.4 of the adopted Protocol, the Head of Performance and Property is of the opinion that a private treaty sale is most appropriate in this case and is likely to result in the achievement of the highest sale price for the Authority.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (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 EqIA has not been carried out.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The sale of the land will produce a capital receipt.

#### **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no Personnel Implications associated with this report.

#### **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no views expressed as a result of consultation that differ from the recommendation.

## **9. RECOMMENDATION**

- 9.1 That the earlier decision be superseded and that members endorse the principle of selling the site on the open market for housing, pursuant to the adopted Protocol on Disposal of Property, *without* the previous conditions relating to achieving sustainability output targets or constructing a new community centre.
- 9.2 Approval of the detailed terms of the disposal be delegated to the Head of Performance and Property Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 The land is no longer required operationally and is regarded as surplus.
- 10.2 The sale of the land will produce a capital receipt.
- 10.3 The sale of the land will facilitate the development of an allocated site in the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 for housing in line with the Council's planning policy for the site.
- 10.4 To ensure we carry out our services effectively and to ensure value for money in the service provision.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 Local Government Acts 1972 (as amended). This is a Cabinet Function.

Author: Colin Jones - Head of Performance and Property Services  
Consultees: Chris Burns - Interim Chief Executive  
Nicole Scammell - Acting Director of Corporate Services  
Pauline Elliott - Head of Regeneration & Planning  
Tim Stephens - Development Control Manager  
Clive Campbell - Transportation Engineering Manager  
Richard Crane - Senior Solicitor  
Cllr D Hardacre - Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management  
Cllr K Reynolds - Ward Member  
Cllr A Higgs - Ward Member  
Mrs Laura Tams - Town Clerk, Bargoed Town Council  
Email [bargoedtc@btinternet.com](mailto:bargoedtc@btinternet.com)

Background Papers:  
Report to Cabinet 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Plan showing the land