

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance and Resources	DATE 28/01/10
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh	
TITLE OF REPORT	Status of Surplus Education and other Properties	
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/10/017	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks to update the Committee on the status of a number of recently declared surplus former Education, Culture and Sport properties together with other surplus properties.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- a) note the position with regard to the former Victoria Road Primary School, the former Weaver's Shed, the former Hazlehead Gate Lodge, the former Broadhill Depot, the former Skyline Restaurant, the former Aberdon and Croft Care Homes, and the former Victoria House;
- b) authorise the Head of Resources Development and Delivery to market the former St Peter's Nursery, the former public toilets in High Street, Old Aberdeen, and the former Depot at Ruthrieston Road, and to submit a further report to the appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in due course detailing the results of the marketing; and
- c) authorise the Head of Resources Development and Delivery to enter into negotiations with the landlord of the site of the former Woodlands Special School, with a view to agreeing an appropriate exit strategy for the Council, and to report back to the Finance and Resources Committee in due course on the outcome.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The future sale of any of the appropriate properties will generate a capital receipt for the Council during the appropriate financial year.

All future sales are proposed at Market Value. On this assumption there will be no state aid or other implications.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

A sale of any appropriate property meets the single outcome agreement in relation to the efficient running of the Council and its property portfolio.

The sale of any appropriate property in assisting the redevelopment of vacant buildings will have wider economic development benefits.

All of the subjects have been declared surplus, and, as such, there are no Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment factors.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant other implications in relation to the proposals, although legal and property resources will be required in the future to conclude any proposed sales.

6. REPORT

Former Education, Culture and Sport Properties

The Education, Culture and Sport Committee meeting on 08 October 2009 (Article 21) declared a number of vacant properties surplus to its Service requirements, including those properties listed below. The Finance & Resources Committee of 12 November 2009 (Article 29) subsequently resolved that the properties be disposed.

In line with circulation procedures, the availability of each property was circulated to all Council Services and Partners with a deadline date of 18 December 2009.

Accordingly, the current status of each of the properties is as follows:-

a) Former Victoria Road Primary School

The property comprises a substantial granite detached former School building with playgrounds and associated landscaping, with the site extending from Victoria Road through to Abbey Road within the Torry area of the city. The Head of Service, Housing Asset Management, on behalf of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), has expressed an interest in the possibility of acquiring the site. Accordingly, the possible future use of the property for HRA purposes is currently being investigated, and, as such, a further report shall be submitted to an appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources and Housing and Environment Committees in due course detailing the outcome of matters.

- b) Former St Peter's Nursery, Spital
The property comprises a single storey detached former Nursery School building with limited playground area on the west side of the Spital. No interest has been expressed from other services at the present time. Accordingly it is recommended that the Head of Resources Development and Delivery be authorised to advertise the property for sale on the open market and that a further report is submitted to the appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in due course detailing the outcome of matters.
- c) Former Weaver's Shed, Mackie Place, off Skene Street
The property comprises a small detached single storey former cottage building located adjacent to the Den Burn at the bottom of a slope from Skene Street within close proximity of Gilcomstoun School to the east. No interest has been expressed, and at the present date there is still no interest. Notwithstanding this, there are substantial investigations required, including legal, infrastructure (i.e. water, electricity, etc), and access. Accordingly, the Head of Resources Development and Delivery be authorised to submit a further report to the appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in due course detailing the outcome of matters.
- d) Former Hazlehead Gate Lodge, Hazlehead Park
The property comprises a single storey detached stone built former Gate Lodge that has recently been used as a Store with accommodation currently comprising a central area and two store rooms plus toilet area. No interest has been expressed, and at the present date there is still no interest. However, due to its location, more detailed work is being undertaken concerning a number of issues. Accordingly, the Head of Resources Development and Delivery be authorised to submit a further report to the appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in due course detailing the outcome of matters.
- e) Former Broadhill Depot, behind the Linx Ice Arena
The property comprises a single storey detached concrete block building together with a number of storage containers, sheds, etc., all in poor condition, within a small yard area located opposite the rear of the newly re-opened Linx Ice Arena and at the bottom of the eastern side of the Broadhill. Interest has been expressed by another Service in the possibility of utilising the property, and, as such, this is now currently being investigated. Accordingly, the Head of Resources Development and Delivery be authorised to submit a further report to the appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in due course detailing the outcome of matters.
- f) Former Skyline Restaurant, Bon Accord Centre
The property comprises a former restaurant located within the leisure area at the north-west corner of the Bon Accord Centre accessed from Loch Street and adjoining the bowling rink currently leased to the Bon Accord Bowling Club.

A separate paper is being presented by Corporate Governance with regard to the occupation of the facility by Shopmobility and Aberdeen Action on Disability.

g) Former Woodlands Special School

The former Woodlands Special School lies on Craighton Road in the Mannofield area of the city. The subjects are held on a ground lease which includes various conditions with regard to assignation, repairing liability and the user clause. It is recommended that the Head of Resources Development and Delivery is authorised to enter into negotiations with the Landlord to discuss the renunciation of the lease on terms acceptable to the Council.

Former Neighbourhood Services Central Property

Former Public Toilet High Street, Old Aberdeen City Council

The former public toilets located in High Street, Old Aberdeen, were declared surplus to Service requirements at the meeting of the Area Committee Central on 19 November 2008 (Article 14.). As such, the availability of the property was also circulated in line with circulation procedures to all Council Services and Partners. By the deadline date of 18 December 2009, no interest had been expressed.

Accordingly it is recommended that the Head of Resources Development and Delivery be authorised to advertise the property for sale on the open market and that a further report is submitted to the appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in due course detailing the outcome of matters.

Update on Surplus Properties Previously Reported

The Finance and Resources Committee meeting of 17 September 2009 (Articles 30 and 31) approved the recommendation that the Head of Resources Development and Delivery be authorised to pursue in greater detail the possible transfer of the surplus properties comprising the former Aberdon and Croft Care Homes to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). In addition, a detailed feasibility study is also being undertaken on the former Victoria House, West North Street. The property was to be taken to the market following the decision of the former Resources Management Committee meeting of 5 May 2009 (Article 47), although this was delayed following an interest from the HRA after this date. The Head of Service, Housing Asset Management, advises that work on the option appraisal in consultation with other Services is currently ongoing for all three properties with it being anticipated at this time that proposals can be put to the Housing and Environment Committee in February and this Committee thereafter.


Former Depot, Ruthrieston Road


The former Depot at Ruthrieston Road had been previously considered by HRA, as agreed at the Finance and Resources Committee meeting of 17 September 2009 (Article 28). Officers have now advised that they do not intend pursuing

their interest and accordingly it is recommended that the Head of Resources Development and Delivery be authorised to advertise the property for sale on the open market and that a further report is submitted to the appropriate meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in due course detailing the outcome of matters.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None