

ITEM NO: 16

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| DECISION-MAKER: | CABINET COUNCIL |
| SUBJECT: | FUTURE USE OF CITY COUNCIL OWNED LAND AT STONEHAM |
| DATE OF DECISION: | 30 TH JUNE 2008 16 TH JULY 2008 |

REPORT OF: CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT

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| AUTHOR: | Name: Geoff Cornford | Tel: 023 8083 2079 |
| | E-mail: geoff.cornford@southampton.gov.uk | |

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

N/A

SUMMARY

This report sets out the issues involved in deciding whether a long lease should be offered to the BTC Sports Club for the use of a site at Stoneham that is identified in the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 as a Park and Ride site.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Having complied with the requirements of Paragraph 15 (General Exception) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, it is recommended:

CABINET

- (i) To determine in principle whether or not to grant a long lease to the BTC Sports Club for the use of a site currently identified in the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 as a Park and Ride site.
- (ii) If it is agreed that a lease is to be granted, this would be contrary to the Policy Framework, and therefore Cabinet recommends to Full Council that the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 should be altered by **either**:
 - (a) deleting all references to the possible use of the site at Stoneham (identified as Site 18b in Section 8.2 of Annex B) as a potential Park and Ride site; **or**
 - (b) retaining the reference to Park and Ride within the LTP but adding additional wording to make the provision of a Park and Ride site subject to any long term leases on the site granted by the Council.

COUNCIL

- (i) To amend the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 by **either**:
 - (a) deleting all references to the possible use of the site at Stoneham (identified as Site 18b in Section 8.2 of Annex B) as a potential Park and Ride site; **or**

- (b) retaining the reference to Park and Ride within the LTP but adding additional wording to make the provision of a Park and Ride site subject to any long term leases on the site granted by the Council.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To enable a decision to be taken about whether a lease should be granted to the BTC Sports Club for the use of the site at Stoneham currently identified in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) as a potential site for a Park and Ride operation and, if so, what the appropriate length of lease should be.
2. This report is submitted for consideration as a General Exception under paragraph 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the City Council's Constitution, notice having been given to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Public. The matter requires a decision in view of the new administration's commitment to the BTC Sports Club and cannot be deferred for inclusion in the next Forward Plan.

CONSULTATION

3. There has been no formal consultation on this issue to date, but this report makes reference to correspondence between the University of Southampton and The Leader of the Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

4. This report puts forward for consideration all of the options for the use of the land. These options are:
 - Offer a 25 year lease but leave the Policy Framework unchanged: rejected because the offer of a lease of this length requires the Policy framework to be changed;
 - Offer a lease for a period of significantly less than 25 years, for a period that is more likely to match the expected timescale for the introduction of Park and Ride: rejected because the funding bodies require a lease of this length to be in place before they will make funding offers; or
 - Investigate the possibilities for offering the Sports Club a lease on a different site in the vicinity: this site is the preferred site.
5. These options are all based upon the presumption that the Council would wish to respond positively to the approach from the club.

DETAIL

6. The area of land that is situated between Stoneham Way and Stoneham Lane, immediately to the south of the City boundary, is in City Council ownership. Its current use is predominantly that of playing fields, with the area immediately to the west of Stoneham Way being undeveloped. The playing fields are currently occupied by the BTC Sports and Social Club.

7. The Council acquired the site in 1997 subject to occupation by the Sports Club. The Club have never had the benefit of a lease, which has made it difficult for them to attract funding for development. They have now approached the Council and asked for a long-term (25 year) lease to enable them to approach the various funding bodies with a degree of certainty about their tenure.
8. This land is identified in the Council's current Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (LTP2) and the Solent Transport Strategy of Transport for South Hampshire (TfSH) as the preferred location for a Park and Ride site to serve traffic from the north of the City. The precise timescale for the development of the site for Park and Ride is uncertain at present, but it would certainly be well within the timeframe covered by a 25 year lease, most likely within the next 5-10 years. Park and Ride at this site forms a key part of the strategy to accommodate growth in the sub-region around the north and east of the City.
9. The LTP forms part of the Council's Policy Framework. If the Executive were minded to grant a lease, Park and Ride could not be achieved on the site in the expected timescales. This would be in conflict with the Policy Framework, thus requiring a decision by Council to amend the Policy Framework accordingly.
10. The University of Southampton have recently approached the Council with a preliminary proposal concerning the development of an employer-based, weekday Park and Ride from this site to serve their main campus and also the forthcoming development of the Boldrewood site. This could have significant potential for additionality, because increasingly, there is evidence of a congestion problem becoming apparent in the City Centre on Saturdays and, whilst a weekday Park and Ride service to the City Centre is unlikely to become viable in the near future, a Saturday (and possibly Sunday) operation probably would be, and having a site already in existence from which to operate would minimise overall costs.
11. The executive intend to consider in detail the issues surrounding park and ride. In looking at this, they will wish to take all considerations into account, including (but not limited to) the strategic and regional transportation and economic considerations, the aspirations of the University of Southampton, the views and opinions of all relevant bodies including adjoining local authorities, the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and Transport for South Hampshire (TfSH), the development of the South Hampshire Strategic Employment Zone (SHSEZ) and the options around the redevelopment of Southampton (Airport) Parkway Railway Station and Junction 5 of the M27.
12. The Council's current transport policy is set out in the LTP. Officers believe this remains valid, especially in the light of the sub-regional development proposals. Studies by external consultants have concluded that a three-site strategy (one each to the east, north and west of the City) is the preferred approach for Park and Ride for the City and that the Stoneham site is the optimum location for the northern one. None of these studies identified particular difficulties with regard to access to the site. In addition, a recently completed strategic study of access to Southampton and south-west Hampshire, undertaken for TfSH to support the Partnership for Urban South

Hampshire (PUSH) growth agenda, confirmed these conclusions, noting that once SHSEZ is developed, this could then provide the catalyst for an extension of the service to serve an additional site north of the M27.

13. The Sports Club find themselves in a position where they are unable to attract investment from the major sports funding bodies because they are unable to provide guarantee of tenure on their site. The Council has other land holdings in the area and there is an option of looking at whether the Club's requirements could be met on a similar site in the vicinity of their current one. There is also the option of granting a lease on the land they currently occupy, but for a lesser period of time, albeit one that would not preclude the development of Park and Ride, although that would fail to meet the funding criteria of the funding bodies.
14. The other option considered and rejected was that of offering a 25 year lease without amending the Policy Framework, but this is not possible as a lease of this length would be in conflict with the Policy Framework.
15. If it is agreed that a lease should be offered to the Club, a separate report will be brought forward for approval by Cabinet seeking agreement to the proposed terms.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital

16. This report does not, of itself, have any capital implications, although the development of a Park and Ride site at some point in the future would require a significant level of capital expenditure.

Revenue

17. Similarly, there are no immediate revenue implications associated with this report.

Property

18. The Council is the owner of the land in question, so the grant of a long lease will mean that it is no longer readily available for alternative uses.

Other

19. There are no other implications.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

20. As the owner of the land involved, the Council is able to offer a lease to any person or group that it considers to be suitable, subject to the provisions of s.123 Local Government Act 1972 which require disposals to be for Best Consideration or in accordance with a General Consent issued by the Secretary of State.
21. The requirement to publish a Local Transport Plan which includes a long-term transport strategy is contained in the Transport Act 2000.

Other Legal Implications:

- 22. The Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 is a Policy Framework Plan, and the site in question is identified in that plan as a potential Park and Ride site. As such, a decision contrary to this policy requires a variation of the Policy Framework plan in question, and that decision must legally and Constitutionally be determined by Full Council.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 23. The Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 is a Policy Framework Plan, and the site in question is identified in that plan as a potential Park and Ride site.
- 24. Delivery of the LTP2 objectives also forms part of the Medium Term Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

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| 1. | None. |
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Documents In Members' Rooms

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| 1. | None |
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Background Documents

| Title of Background Paper(s) | Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable) |
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| 1. | None | |
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Background documents available for inspection at:

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| FORWARD PLAN No: | N/A | KEY DECISION? | YES |
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| WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: | |
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