

**Land and Asset Management
Committee**

1st October, 2015 at 5.15 pm
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Gavan (Chair);
Councillors Costigan, Edis, P Hughes and Taylor.

Apologies: Councillors Crompton and Moore.

5/15 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July, 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

6/15 **Exclusion of the Public**

Resolved that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the proceedings to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Key Decisions

7/15 **Disposal of Land at Forge Farm, Forge Lane, West Bromwich**
(Key Decision Ref. No. LAM006)

Consideration was given to the disposal of an additional 0.29 acres of land forming the site of the former Forge Farm, West Bromwich, for residential purposes and to grant a lease of the remaining site for agricultural purposes.

Land and Asset Management Committee – 1st October, 2015

At its meeting on 29th October 2014, the former Asset Management and Land Disposal Committee authorised disposal of the freehold interest in approximately 1.18 acres of land and buildings known as Forge Farm, off Forge Lane, West Bromwich, on the open market for residential purposes.

In accordance with that approval an agent was procured to undertake marketing of the premises. The agent noted that some of the buildings originally utilised as part of the farm had been excluded from the proposed sale and suggested that the land and buildings should be marketed along with the remaining land to be sold. To exclude the additional buildings from the sale could potentially be detrimental to any subsequent purchaser's redevelopment proposals for the farm on the basis that dilapidated buildings would be abutting newly refurbished premises.

The farm was marketed and sealed offers, subject to contract, were invited. Following an assessment of all sealed offer bids a preferred purchaser had been selected in line with the required criteria. It was understood that the preferred purchaser would convert the buildings for residential development in line with the marketing criteria, however, the statutory planning process would ensure that the green belt status of the land was appropriately considered.

The remaining part of the farm was agricultural land and had been identified as suitable for continued agricultural use. As it also formed part of the green belt any development of this land would be precluded in planning terms. There was no current directive to amend the allocation with regard to the green belt status, however, it was recommended that the Council, as land owner, protect itself from any future change of policy. If the site were to be available for comprehensive residential development, it would likely attract a significant capital receipt, due to its attractive location and setting and would command upper level residential land values for West Bromwich.

The land could be retained and potentially leased on a long term agricultural tenancy. However, members considered the alternative option of a short term agreement which would provide the Council with flexibility should it seek to benefit from any future removal of the site's green belt status. The short term agreement would likely command a lower rent to reflect the flexibility provided to the Council, as landlord.

Resolved to recommend to Cabinet:-

- (1) that the Director – Governance disposes of the additional 0.29 acres of land and buildings at Forge Farm, Forge Lane, West Bromwich, as shown hatched (together with the land shown edged black) on the attached plan to the highest offeror or, in the event of the highest offeror failing to proceed, to any offeror whose offer is deemed appropriate and otherwise on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Economy;
- (2) that the Director - Governance grants a short term lease only of the land at Forge Farm, Forge Lane, West Bromwich, as shown shaded grey on the attached plan, for agricultural purposes on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Economy;
- (3) that the Director - Governance enters into or executes under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the disposal of the land referred to in (1) above, on terms to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Economy.

8/15

Disposal of Council Owned Public Pay and Display Car Park, Crocketts Lane, Smethwick (Key Decision Ref. No. LAM008)

As a result of a recent review, a number of public car parks had been identified which were underutilised. Consideration was now given to declare the pay and display car park at Crocketts Lane, Smethwick, surplus to Council requirements and to dispose of the freehold interest in the land.

The Council had no strategic interest in the Council owned car park, although the land might be of interest to the private sector. The freehold disposal would generate a capital receipt and a net revenue saving.

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In response to a question from members, the Director – Regeneration and Economy confirmed that consideration had been given as to whether the land was suitable for social housing purposes prior to recommending disposal of the area. The Director – Regeneration and Economy advised the Committee that a separate programme was in place with identified sites suitable for social housing purposes.

Resolved to recommend to Cabinet:-

- (1) that the Council owned land of the public car park at Crocketts Lane, Smethwick, as shown on Drawing No. SAM/13240/013, be declared surplus to the Council's requirements and the Director - Governance be authorised to dispose of the freehold interest on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director-Regeneration and the Economy;
- (2) that the Director - Governance enters into or executes under seal, where necessary, any other legal documentation in connection with the disposal of the land referred in (1) above on terms to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and the Economy.





(Meeting ended at 5.32 pm)

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IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY
STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT

LEGEND

KEY

-  Site with authority for disposal
-  Additional land for disposal
-  Right of Way
-  Land to be leased

DESCRIPTION

FORGE FARM
FORGE LANE
WEST BROMWICH

AREA

PLAN NUMBER

DRAFT

SANDWELL SP0292NW	TERRIER 145
SCALE 1:2500	CENTROID 402472/292897
DRAWN DM	DATE 08-SEP-2015

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