

COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 11TH APRIL 2017, 6.30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, CHORLEY

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the above meeting of the Council, the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published.

Agenda No Item

9 TOWN CENTRE UPDATE

(Pages 74 - 77)

To consider a report of the Director of Business, Development and Growth (attached).

13 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 8

13.1 Question from Councillor John Walker

What action is the Council/Lancashire County Council taking to alleviate car parking problems around The Hub, Primary School, Buckshaw Health Centre and the Original Community Centre in Buckshaw Village.

13.2 Question from Councillor Martin Boardman

The background to the question is as follows:

As part of the ongoing cuts to services by Lancashire County Council the "Supporting People" subsidy offered to local housing associations and care providers has been removed. The organisations in questions were notified in 2015 that these cuts would be coming, we believe exact timing of the removal of funding comes around September 2017. The residents of the Adactus run Sheltered Housing schemes in the villages of Eccleston and Mawdesley received a letter from Adactus in November 2016. In this letter Adactus stated "The council was facing huge financial challenge in having to make savings of £262m, by 2020/2021". The letter went on to state "Up to April 2017, the sheltered schemes and warden call properties have been subsidised by LCC Supporting People's Funding but this funding is no longer available to us from April 2017". That being said Adactus are proposing to change the 15 hours per week support provided by the scheme coordinator to 9 hours per week provide by a "Floating Scheme Coordinator". Not only will the roles hours be reduced but the responsibilities of that individual will now include managing maintenance, repairs and the safety of the buildings. I ask this council to consider out of that 9 hours how much of them will be with vulnerable residents providing support? I would say, none.

Adactus held a "drop in session", with all residents where the representative of Adactus stated quite clearly that this reduction was in direct response to a removal of a £67k annual grant from the LCC Supporting People fund, and if they had not removed this grant then there would be no need to change the staffing hours.

We believe this subsidy was also removed from the Chorley Council Run Cotswold House, however this council has taken the decision to fund the deficit to Cotswold house from the Council budget.

The questions therefore are:

- Could I please ask the council to confirm if Adactus housing has reviewed all of the warden call services across all schemes and has cut hours equally across all schemes?
- Could I also ask this council to write to LCC to ask that, in light of the recent 2% increase in Council Tax to be spent directly on social care would LCC be reinstating the subsidy to vulnerable elderly residents as was with the Supporting People Scheme?
- Lastly could I ask this council to consider providing the shortfall in subsidy to our housing partner Adactus, who have stated that they would reinstate these essential services if the funding was available?

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Business, Development and Growth	Council	11 April 2017

TOWN CENTRE UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To inform members of the purchase of the Oak House and surrounding land and confirm the next steps proposed to be taken to support the Town Centre Masterplan and Market Walk Redevelopment.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- To note the content of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The Council have adopted a Town Centre Masterplan which incorporates the development of the Market Walk Extension on the Flat Iron Car Park. The Masterplan also includes a proposal for the delivery of a Civic Square on the site of the current Gala Bingo / Oak House buildings. The proposal for the Civic Square is that it will be a multifunction space that will provide parking and an event space.
- To facilitate the progression of the Civic Square proposal the Council have approved the purchase of the Oak House site. This purchase (along with Victory Park) was completed on Friday 31 March last.
- This report is to inform members of the next steps proposed to be taken to support the Town Centre Masterplan.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	X
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

- One of the commitments given as part of the Market Walk Extension scheme is to ensure that sufficient car parking is provided to support not only the new build but also existing businesses.
- This issue was specifically considered when the Council prepared an updated Town Centre Masterplan. One of the proposals was the creation of a multifunction Civic Square on the site currently occupied by Gala Bingo and Oak House. This area would provide car parking

on a day to day basis but also provide a multifunction event space of a type not currently available in the town centre.

9. In order to facilitate the delivery of this priority the Council have purchased the Oak House site, completing the purchase of the lease on Friday 31 March last. The leasehold title merges with the Council’s freehold and the Council now own an unencumbered site.

CIVIC SQUARE PROPOSAL

10. The delivery of the Civic Square is very much a council priority. It is recognised however that Gala Bingo hold a long lease for their building and they have indicated a desire to remain. Gala are a valuable town centre stakeholder, and particularly support the night time economy which the Council are looking to develop. The Council therefore do not want to lose this valued asset. The Council will be looking to work with Gala Bingo to retain their presence in the Town whilst working to deliver the Civic Square.
11. There is still an opportunity to develop out improved parking on the Oak House site only. This will enhance and extend the existing free shoppers car park. The Oak House building has been surveyed and is a separate build to the Gala Bingo building, it abuts up to but does not share a structure. The Oak House building can therefore be demolished without affecting the structural integrity of the Gala Bingo Building.
12. When the decision was first taken concerning the proposed land swap between the Council land at Southport Road and the Oak House site the decision confirmed that any surplus from the sale and the reverse premium received for the Royal Oak public house would be used to facilitate the delivery of parking in that location. This would include the demolition and car park works. A budget has therefore been provided.
13. It is proposed to bring the detailed scheme of works to the Executive Member for Resources. They will be asked to make a decision on the following issues
 - a. Demolition of the Oak House building.
 - b. Authorisation of submission of planning application (demolition/ change of use / car park layout)
 - c. Award of contract for the works under the LRPP Framework.
14. A further update report will be brought to Executive Cabinet in June.

OTHER MATTERS

15. The leased area purchased by the Council also incorporates the offices leased by the Estate Agents Miller Metcalfe and Entwistle Green. These tenants have been advised of the change in landlord and there continued occupation will provide an income of £28,000 per annum.
16. Oak House has one current tenant. Notice has been given terminating their lease. The tenant has indicated a willingness to vacate the premises, in a timeframe that fits with the Council’s timetable. This would be subject to identifying suitable replacement accommodation. The Council are working with the tenant to facilitate this move and will provide support for them an early surrender of the lease would lead to a compensatory payment to the tenant although it is difficult to assess what this would be at this time it would be relatively low value due to the short term remaining on the lease (10months) and the low rental value.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

17. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors’ comments are included:

Finance	X	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	

Legal	X	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

- 18. A budget of £2.2m was included in the Market Walk Extension report agreed at Full Council in September 2016 for the development of the Civic Square. Any potential costs of facilitating the move of the remaining tenant will be met from existing revenue budgets in 2017/18.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 19. Demolition works and the change of use to create a car park in this location will require planning consent. The principle of this has been established with the adoption of the Town Centre Masterplan, but this option has (albeit on the whole site) has been presented to members and approved as part of the Market Walk redevelopment scheme previously.
- 20. The budget has also been provided as the proceeds of sale from the land at Southport Road, along with the reverse premium from received on assignment of the lease for the Royal Oak public house have been ring fenced to these works.
- 21. The decision to proceed with the car park solution is an executive one. The usual practice for a key decision (of which this is one) would be to take this to Executive Cabinet. However there would be an unacceptable delay as the next cabinet meeting is not until June. Part of the reasoning for the use of a Cabinet report would be to increase transparency with reports being made public prior to their consideration. The use of an Executive Member Decision to authorise the matters mentioned in this report is allowed by the Constitution. By raising at an early stage in this report that these matters are to be considered this in some way addresses the reduction in transparency of the process.

Mark Lester
 Director of Business, Development and Growth

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Chris Moister	5160	3 April 2017	

OR

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
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