



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

PROPOSED INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING

TOPIC – SALE OF VACANT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT DWELLINGS

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

If you wish to make representation on this proposed Decision please contact the relevant Portfolio Holder and the following Committee Administrator by 5.00pm on 7 August 2009

Contact Officers:

Case Officer:

Richard Botham, Tel: 01962 848 421, Email: rbotham@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator:

Eleanor Hogston, Tel: 01962 848 155, Email: ehogston@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

The Council has authority (CAB1336 refers) to offer for sale up to a maximum of ten vacant properties a year. In 2007/08, 8 Council dwellings were disposed of generating £2.2 million for reinvestment in affordable housing. None were sold through this policy in 2008/09. In the current year, 3 sales have been completed and the sale of a further property is currently subject to contract. This Decision Notice covers two further properties to be considered for sale.

122 Alresford Road, Winchester – This property is a 3 bed end of terrace house. Void works to bring the property up to the minimum letting standard have been costed at £12,000 and include a new kitchen, various external safety works to the garden, replacing all doors and other miscellaneous repairs.

23 Jesty Road, New Alresford – This is a 3 bed semi detached property on a corner plot and would require a minimum of £25,000 to bring it up to the Decent Homes

standard. It is in a poor state of repair and requires complete refurbishment due to the previous tenant refusing access for improvement works. The property has been vacant for some months and has been considered in detail for two cases where specific tenants required major adaptations in order to allow them to remain in general needs accommodation. However, on both occasions, despite the property offering many benefits due to its design, the costs proved prohibitive due to the additional repair works required just to achieve the Decent Homes standard. Rather than offer it immediately for sale, the property has been retained whilst every effort was made to secure sufficient resources to keep it in the social housing stock, particularly as one three bed property was already being offered for sale in the area. However, this has not been possible and pressures on the 2009/10 Repairs Programme means that even if we could identify some additional resource, other pressures would need to take priority over this property.

In the current market conditions, it is recommended that both properties be sold by private treaty and marketed on the basis of the valuations being the "guide price". They will be marketed for a minimum period of four weeks before the successful bidder is accepted.

The properties are held in the HRA. The General Consents 2005 (Consent A) issued under the Housing Act 1985 Section 32 permit the disposal of the property at a price equal to its market value:

- a) to any individual who intends to use it as his only or principal home or
- b) to a builder/developer on their covenanting to carry out any substantial works of repair improvement or conversion required prior for onward sale into owner-occupation by an individual who intends to use it as his only or principal home.
- c) There is also provision under this Consent for the sale of a vacant dwelling to any person regardless of the use to which the purchaser intends to put it. (Paragraph A5.1.1). No more than one dwelling may be acquired by a Purchaser (alone or with others) from an authority under the consent in this paragraph in any financial year.

PROPOSED DECISION

1. That the Head of Estates arrange for the sale of 122 Alresford Road, Winchester and 23 Jesty Road, New Alresford by private treaty in line with the approved policy.
2. That details of the consideration obtained on sales be included in the monitoring reports submitted to Cabinet when the capital programme is reviewed.

REASON FOR THE PROPOSED DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Alternatives to sale considered are detailed above.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

None

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision

Appendix One: The valuation prices

This is NOT FOR PUBLICATION – by virtue of Paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.