



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE LEADER

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.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing has been consulted and concurs with the proposal.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer:

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Committee Administrator:

Frances Maloney, Tel: 01962 848 155, Email: fmaloney@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. This Decision Notice covers the first properties to be considered for sale in 2008/09.

22 Eastgate Street, a three bedroomed property in central Winchester, is currently vacant. It was previously occupied by Stonham Housing although they have now moved their supported housing project to the Hyde area of the City. The property is in reasonable condition but as with other properties in Eastgate Street sold last year, it is not considered ideal for use as affordable housing.

A further property that is vacant and in need of major repairs is 6 Botley Road, Curdridge. The property requires a new bathroom, significant general updating, cavity repairs and a replacement floor costing £8,600 in total.

In the current market conditions, it is recommended that the 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. It is also recommended that the Head of Estates, in consultation with the Head of Landlord Services and the Portfolio Holder for Housing, be authorised to accept the best offer for the properties, provided they are not lower than 10% below the guide price in the exempt appendix.

The property is 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.

DECISION

1. That the Head of Estates arrange for the sale of the 22 Eastgate Street, Winchester and 6 Botley Road, Curdrige by private treaty in line with the approved policy and that he be authorised, in consultation with the Head of Landlord Services and the Portfolio Holder for Housing to accept the best offer received, provided it is not lower than 10% below the guide price in the exempt appendix.
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 DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Alternatives to sale would have been considered in the decision making process leading to the authority to sell 10 properties per year.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

N/A

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

4 June 2008

Councillor George Beckett – The Leader