

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 10 October 2017

By: Chief Operating Officer

Title: Forest Row Recreation Ground and Pavillion

Purpose: To seek Cabinet approval to dispose of Property by way of long lease to Forest Row Parish Council

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

1) agree to enter into a long lease of 21 years for the Forest Row Recreation Ground with Forest Row Parish Council at a peppercorn rent as Trustee to the Ashdown Forest Trust; and

2) delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to negotiate and agree the terms of the lease

1 Background

1.1 East Sussex County Council act as Trustee to the Ashdown Forest Trust and manage the transactions for the Properties within it.

1.2 The Property had previously been licenced to Forest Row Parish Council by the Ashdown Forest Conservators which was subsequently 'sub-licenced' to the Sports Ground Association – an arrangement that should not be permitted to continue due to its tenuous legal nature.

1.3 Forest Row Parish Council have approached ESCC looking to extend the period of occupation in order for the Sports Ground Association to secure grant funding.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The site is shown edged red on the attached Plan (Appendix 1) and comprises approximately 6.16 acres.

2.2 We have consulted with the Conservators of the Ashdown Forest and notified the Local Member of our recommendations and no objections have been raised.

2.3 The granting of a long lease will be compliant with the Declaration of Trust 1988.

2.4 It is our intention to grant a full repairing and insuring lease of 21 years at a peppercorn as per the previous agreement. The terms negotiated to date are attached in Appendix 2 but are subject to alteration as a result of any negotiation.

2.5 Forest Row Parish Council have requested that the Property is leased to them and are permitted to sublet to the Sports Ground Association, allowing another layer of control over its use.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The nature of the current arrangements for the occupation at this property cannot be permitted to continue.

3.2 Cabinet is recommended to agree that the County Council grants a long lease of 21 years as Trustee to the Ashdown Forest Trust and authority is delegated to the Chief Operating Officer to negotiate and agree terms for this Property.

KEVIN FOSTER Chief Operating Officer

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Francis Whetstone

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1 – Location Plan

Appendix 2 – Proposed Heads of Terms