

**Report to:** Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change

**Date of meeting:** 11 October 2022

**By:** Chief Operating Officer

**Title:** Beacongate and The Gables, Crowborough

**Purpose:** To declare surplus to requirements and to approve the disposal of Beacongate and The Gable, Crowborough

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change is recommended to:

- 1) declare surplus to requirements two properties known as Beacongate and The Gables (the properties);**
  - 2) approve the disposal of the Properties; and**
  - 3) delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with NHS England to (a) review the bids for the Property following the marketing exercise, and (b) to make an analysis of the bids and select a preferred purchaser to support best value in accordance with s123 of the Local Government Act 1972.**
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## **1 Background**

- 1.1 Beacongate, Beacon Road, Crowborough, and The Gables, Beacon Close, Crowborough (the Properties) are surplus to East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) operational requirements. The location of Beacongate can be seen as the hatched area on Appendix 1 and The Gables, as the hatched area on Appendix 2. The Properties are on adjoining sites and were previously used as residential settings for delivery of Adult Social Care (ASC) services. These services for Adult Social Care were relocated to Hookstead following a decision by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health on 9 June 2016 to refurbish Hookstead as a replacement property to deliver this service.
- 1.2 The Properties are held freehold by ESCC and are subject to a Grant agreement dated 15 March 2011 and a Deed of Charge also dated 15 March 2011. The East Sussex Weald and Primary Care Trust (the Trust) as part of the NHS provided capital funding to provide the accommodation at the Properties. The Trust is no longer in existence due to changes within the NHS. The NHS interest is now represented by NHS England (NHSE). When the Properties are sold, the capital receipt minus any ESCC costs, will be payable to NHS England.
- 1.3 Receipts from sales of assets with NHSE legal charge go back to the National Learning Disability and Autism Capital Programme budget for reinvestment, aligned to national and regional priorities. ESCC ASC are currently reviewing their service needs and it is likely an application for new capital to invest from NHSE will be considered and if so an application would go to NHSE England.
- 1.4 NHS England have been consulted and have asked that in accordance with the Capital Grant Agreement the Properties be placed on the open market.

## **2 Supporting information**

- 2.1 Subject to Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change approval, the site will be advertised on the open market via an external agent in November 2022 with a decision

made by the Chief Operating Officer under delegated powers and in consultation with NHS England in early 2023.

2.2 The disposal of these assets will reduce revenue liabilities relating to the management and maintenance of the properties.

2.3 It will be made clear to the preferred bidder that:

2.3.1 if an offer is accepted it will be subject to contract and approval of title;

2.3.2 if a higher offer is received prior to exchange of contracts, ESCC shall consider the higher bid; and

2.3.3 if the proposed buyer attempts to reduce the price, or an issue arises that prevents the disposal from proceeding during the legal process, or if the bidder is not completing the transaction in a timely manner, then ESCC will revert to the bidder that is next in line in the score rating and that is in a position to proceed.

### **3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 The property is no longer required for ESCC operational purposes. ESCC proposes to market and dispose of the property to meet the requirements of the Capital Grant Agreement and provide capital receipt for NHS projects, whilst minimising any ongoing maintenance and revenue implications connected with the Properties.

3.2 The Lead Member Resources and Climate Change is recommended to:

3.2.1 Declare Beacongate and The Gable surplus to requirements.

3.2.2 Approve the disposal of The Properties.

3.2.3 Delegate to the Chief Operating Officer to review offers received following the marketing of The Properties in consultation with the NHS and approve a preferred purchaser to secure best value in accordance with s123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**ROS PARKER**  
**Chief Operating Officer**

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### **LOCAL MEMBERS**

Councillor Howell