

**SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 9 JUNE 2010**

**MEASHAM YOUTH CLUB**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Scrutiny Commission of the current position regarding the acquisition by the County Council of the site currently occupied by the Measham Youth Club and their search for replacement premises in Measham.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. On 23rd October 2007 the Cabinet agreed the arrangements for land acquisition for the Ashby Canal and for the earmarking of future receipts from developers. At this meeting the Cabinet resolved:
  - (a) That the acquisition of land for the restoration of the Ashby Canal from Snarestone to Measham as illustrated on the plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
  - (b) That the conditions laid down by Emda and the National Forest Company relating to grant funding as outlined in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the report be accepted;
  - (c) That it be agreed that any capital receipts arising from an increase in value of the acquired land, resulting from the development, be earmarked for the purpose of matching external funding bids to meet the construction costs involved.
3. The Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 21 April 2010 asked that a further report be brought to them on progress with the acquisition of the Youth Club premises, following the submission of formal questions by Dr Martin Vaughan, Secretary of the Measham Youth Club.

## **Background**

4. As part of the current Ashby Canal Regeneration project which covers land stretching north of Snarestone to Measham Canal basin, the County Council are seeking to acquire the Measham Youth Club premises, along with other premises in Measham, under a Transport and Works Order. The Order expires in October 2010 and therefore entry to the land needs to be taken prior to this date.

## **Proposals/Options**

5. The Youth Club have identified alternative premises in Measham which they wish to acquire, for the sum of £165,000. The premises are the former Methodist Church, High Street Measham. In addition to the acquisition costs, the Youth Club envisage further costs of £100,000 to cover adaptations/refurbishment works.
6. The County Council is restricted by statute as to how it assesses compensation. There is a set of rules laid down in Section 5 of the Land Compensation Act 1961 which govern the basis of compensation. The current valuation of the site has been based on what is considered to be the market value of the site in accordance with Rule 2 of these Rules and reflects what is felt to be the value for the site assuming potential for its development for residential purposes. In addition, the County Council will pay any eligible Disturbance and other statutory payments due to the Youth Club. The Youth Club site extends to approximately 1 acre and whilst a residential development value has been applied, the valuation assumes a deduction to allow for the need to negotiate access to the site over other land. The Youth Club have appointed Surveyors to act on their behalf (and whose fees will be met by the County Council).
7. Since the last Scrutiny Commission meeting on 21 April two meetings have been held with the Youth Club's representatives and their Agent to progress the compensation issues. An offer has been made to the Youth Club to provide them with sufficient funding to acquire the former Methodist Church in Measham, to pay for their reasonable legal and surveyors costs and also to provide a contribution towards refurbishment and adaptation works. This offer is under consideration by the Youth Club and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting on the latest position.
8. The County Council have also advised the Youth Club that they can remain in the premises on a temporary basis on terms to be agreed, until the County Council require the site for the canal.

### **Resource Implications**

9. The Council has an identified budget of £1,000,000 to cover the acquisition in all interests in land for this section of the Canal; a total of 31 land holdings need to be acquired. Of the identified Budget, Emda provided £850,000 and the National Forest £95,200.

### **Timetable for decisions**

10. The Transport and Works Order needs to be implemented and entry taken to the all of the plots by October 2010, in order that the County Council does not lose its power of entry. In addition Emda, who have provided funding for land acquisition costs wish to see the monies spent within this financial year.

### **Consultations**

11. Discussions have been held with the Director of Children and Young People and also with the Better Places Team. As one of the 19 priority neighbourhoods, Measham will figure in the future plans of Departments, especially those Services that are charged with securing positive activities and addressing anti social behavior. Youth work staff are already involved in enabling young people to have a say in the future of provision in the area and during a visit to the proposed relocation site young people and workers both felt the new venue had much to offer both in terms of the current quality of accommodation and the location of facilities. The team of part-time staff and the Locality Youth Development worker is in regular contact with the Youth Club Management Committee members. Measham is expected to benefit from other investment in young people's provision in the area with initiatives such as the 'YTalk' social networking sites project, which has received funding from the 'Connecting Communities' grant.

### **Conclusions**

12. The offer which has been made to the Youth Club will enable them to purchase the freehold interest in the former Methodist Church premises in Measham and to cover adaptation works.

### **Background Papers**

Report to the Cabinet October 2007

Questions submitted by Dr. Vaughan to the Commission on 21 April and replies thereto.

**Circulation under the Local Alert Issues Procedure.**

Mr. G. Jones CC

**Officers to Contact:**

Elaine Derrick, Estates Practice Manager

Tel: 0116 305 6991

Email: [elaine.derrick@leics.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.derrick@leics.gov.uk)

Steve Robson, Principal Valuer

Tel: 0116 305 6982

Email: [steve.robson@leics.gov.uk](mailto:steve.robson@leics.gov.uk)

Lesley Hagger, Assistant Director – Strategic Initiatives

Tel: 0116 305 6340

Email: [Lesley.hagger@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Lesley.hagger@leics.gov.uk)

**Equal Opportunities Implications**

13. This proposal will enable the youth club to remain operational for users in Measham.