

Report of:	Head of Housing and Partnerships
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Portfolio Leader:	Housing
Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Cabinet: 23/08/18

CABINET
23 AUGUST 2018
STILE COP CEMETERY LODGE, STILE COP ROAD, RUGELEY

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet authority for a disposal of the freehold interest in Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge, Rugeley.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet authorises an open market disposal of the freehold interest in Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge, Rugeley on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Head of Housing and Partnerships.
- 2.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Housing and Partnerships to instruct agents to market the above property for sale and to take all other actions required to implement the recommendation.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge is a two storey residential dwelling attached to a single storey staff area (for use by cemetery operatives) situated at the entrance of Stile Cop Cemetery, Rugeley. The dwelling was occupied until recently by a Council employed sexton on a service tenancy agreement. The sexton retired at the end of March this year and the Lodge is now vacant.
- 3.2 The Council recently commissioned a condition survey report in respect of the Lodge. It is anticipated that the cost of bringing the dwelling back into lettable condition is in the region of £32,000, with a further £5,000-10,000 required to refurbish the staff area.
- 3.3 A disposal of Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge will necessitate relocation of the cemetery operatives' accommodation within a purpose built modular building (similar to the allotments building recently constructed at the Stadium) elsewhere

within the cemetery site. The new building could also provide a separate room for members of the public to view records etc.

- 3.4 It will also be necessary to fence off the Lodge from the remainder of Stile Cop Cemetery and create a separate access and driveway to the Lodge.
- 3.5 External agents have expressed the view that, subject to the works at paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 being undertaken, Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge would be attractive to potential residential purchasers. The proposed sale of the above property will not only avoid ongoing maintenance and security costs for the Council but should also generate a substantial capital receipt the level of which will be determined by market demand.
- 3.6 It is therefore recommended that Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge is declared surplus to Council requirements and offered for sale on the open market.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This strategy supports the Council's Corporate Priority of Promoting Prosperity.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge comprises a two storey residential dwelling attached to a single storey staff area. The staff area consists of an office, tea point/rest room a storage room and a toilet.
- 5.2 Within the grounds of the cemetery there is also a separate building with a garage, storeroom and public toilet facilities. The separate building incorporating the public toilets is to remain within the ownership and management of the Council.
- 5.3 Following the retirement of the cemetery sexton, the dwelling is now vacant though the staff area is still used daily by the cemetery operatives. The recent condition survey indicates that although the building is externally in good condition, the timber windows are severely rotten and in need of replacement. Internally, the building is tired and dated with damp present. It would need full redecoration and all sanitary ware needs updating.
- 5.4 It is anticipated that the cost of bringing the dwelling back into lettable condition is in the region of £32,000 with a further £5,000-10,000 required to refurbish the staff area.
- 5.5 The anticipated cost of constructing a new purpose built modular building to accommodate the cemetery operatives and erecting a fence around the Lodge is in the region of £60,000. However, relocation of the cemetery operatives to a modular building on site and separation by fencing off the Lodge from the rest of the cemetery site would render the property attractive to potential residential purchasers.

- 5.6 It is therefore recommended that Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge is declared surplus to Council requirements and offered for sale on the open market.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The Council's interest in the Stile Cop site was last valued as at 31 March 2018 at £574,000 (land value £118,000 and buildings £456,000 based on the Depreciated Replacement Cost method of valuation).

It should be noted however that the DRC method of valuation is not representative of the market value of the property.

6.2 Legal

Section 123 Local Government Act 1972 prevents the disposal of Council land, otherwise than by way of a short tenancy, for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained (except with the consent of the Secretary of State).

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None

6.5 Human Rights Act

None

6.6 Data Protection

None

6.7 Risk Management

None

6.8 Equality & Diversity

None

6.9 Best Value

None

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1 Site Plan

Previous Consideration

None

Background Papers

None

