

Agenda

Regeneration and Property Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, 13 September 2023
Time 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT*

Membership:

Councillors Monique Bonney (Chair), Hayden Brawn, Ann Cavanagh, Shelley Cheesman, Roger Clark, Simon Clark, James Hall, Mark Last, Peter Marchington, Sarah Stephen (Vice-Chair), Terry Thompson, Mark Tucker, Mike Whiting, Chris Williams and Ashley Wise.

Quorum = 5

Pages

Information about this meeting

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- (d) Anyone unable to use the stairs should make themselves known during this agenda item.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 6 July 2023 (Minute Nos. 183 – 193) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends.

The Chair will ask Members if they have any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) or disclosable non-pecuniary interests (DNPIs) to declare in respect of items on the agenda. Members with a DPI in an item must leave the room for that item and may not participate in the debate or vote.

Aside from disclosable interests, where a fair-minded and informed observer would think there was a real possibility that a Member might be biased or predetermined on an item, the Member should declare this and leave the room while that item is considered.

Members who are in any doubt about interests, bias or predetermination should contact the monitoring officer for advice prior to the meeting.

Part B Reports for the Regeneration and Property Committee to decide

- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 5. | Disposal of Minster Community Centre, New Road, Sheerness | 5 - 24 |
| 6. | Utilities Contract Award | 25 - 30 |
| 7. | Forward Decisions Plan | 31 - 32 |

Issued on Tuesday, 5 September 2023

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in alternative formats. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, please contact Democratic Services at democraticservices@swale.gov.uk. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

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Regeneration and Property Committee	
Meeting Date	13th September 2023
Report Title	Disposal of Part of Land Between 53-59 New Road, Minster
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson, Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning
Lead Officer	David Johnson MRICS Interim Property Services Manager
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Land Between 53-59 New Road, Minster be declared surplus and placed on the open market to effect a freehold disposal. 2. That authority is delegated to the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning in consultation with the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services negotiate a freehold sale of the property and to complete the necessary legal formalities.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 It is government policy that local authorities should dispose of surplus and under-used land and property wherever possible. This report recommends the freehold disposal of part of the Council owned property known as Land Between 53-59 New Road, Sheerness, as shown on the attached plan (Appendix I).
- 1.2 The property, of which the Council is the freeholder, was previously let to Minster Community Centre, who held a lease from 2017 for a term of five years. They have since closed and the premises are now vacant. The single storey temporary portacabin is in poor condition requiring substantial capital expenditure on it to enable beneficial occupation. A sale of the property would generate a capital receipt for the Council and would enable the site to be put to use by an occupier or redeveloped subject to planning.
- 1.3 The Council has fairly wide discretion to dispose of its assets (such as land or buildings) in any manner it wishes. When disposing of assets, the Council is subject to statutory provisions, in particular to the overriding duty, under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, to obtain the best consideration that can be reasonably obtained for the disposal. This duty is subject to certain exceptions that are set out in the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003.

2 Background

- 2.1 The property is a regular shaped site located on the south side of New Road, Minster that extends to approximately 495sqm. On the site sits a single storey pre-fabricated portacabin modular building, of approximately 222sqm GIFA,

and believed to be circa. 30 years old. The location of the property is predominantly a residential area with the property itself situated between residential dwellings.

- 2.2 The property falls within class F2 of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020. This use includes properties used as community halls and meeting places, as an individual shop of not more than 280sq.m serving a local community, for outdoor sport or recreation and swimming baths or skating rinks.
- 2.3 The property had been occupied for several years by Minster Community Centre (Registered Charity No. 1106267) before their most recent lease agreed in 2017. Minster Community Centre erected the portacabin on site with the Council's consent in 2020, at which point the portacabin was already second hand and estimated to have been at least 10 years old.
- 2.4 The most recent lease to Minster Community Centre was for a term of five years from July 2017 and was on a full repairing and insuring basis at a rent of £150 per annum.
- 2.5 In 2020, during the pandemic, Minster Community Centre closed the building and did not reopen. After the lease expiry in July 2022 Council officers attempted to contact the trustees of Minster Community Centre on multiple occasions and by various methods without success.
- 2.6 The Council served notice on Minster Community Centre in March 2023 to formally take back possession of the property and commissioned a schedule of condition (Appendix 2). The schedule of condition outlined the condition of the building as being very poor and being effectively life expired.
- 2.7 Two options to either repair or replace the building are considered in the schedule of condition. A capital cost of between £100,000 and £200,000 is estimated to refurbish the portacabin, while accepting that this is likely not cost effective given the age of the temporary structure and the fact it is life expired. The second option provides a capital cost of between £400,000 and £700,000, depended on spec, to replace the temporary portacabin with a permanent building.
- 2.8 Due to its lack of occupation the condition of the portacabin which is already poor, will continue to deteriorate and the Council's approved consultant recommends that if the property is to be retained that demolition and site clearance to prevent the structure from posing a health and safety risk and being a target for anti-social behaviour.
- 2.9 The Council has secured an independent valuation of the property, which is at exempt Appendix 3.
- 2.10 The Council has received several enquiries from users interested in purchasing the freehold for uses that fall within its current F2 planning use class. A sale of the freehold may potentially allow one of these users to invest the required capital to bring the property back into beneficial use or for the site to be developed subject to planning.

- 2.11 A sale of the freehold would generate a substantial capital receipt for the Council while removing a financial and health and safety liability.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 That the property be declared surplus and placed on the open market to effect a freehold disposal.
- 3.2 That authority is delegated to the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning in consultation with the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services negotiate a freehold sale of the property and to complete the necessary legal formalities.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 An alternative option proposed would be to refurbish or replace the property and attempt to lease it for a use within its current planning use. This option is not recommended as the Council does not currently have capital funds available to undertake either option to refurbish or replace the building. Refurbishment is also not advised given that the portacabin is deemed life expired. The Council could look to borrow to fund the capital for a replacement building however with a rental return of approximate £13,000 per annum from a similar sized building the yield on the investment would be lower than borrowing rates so is not financially viable.
- 4.2 A further option proposed would be to demolish the building and clear the site leaving it vacant. This option is not recommended as the Council does not have the capital funds available to cover the cost of the demolition and site clearance. Furthermore, leaving the asset vacant would mean that the Council would be failing in its obligation to manage its property portfolio and dispose of underused assets.
- 4.3 The Council could decide to do nothing at all and leave the property as it is with the portacabin on site and not dispose of it. This is not recommended as it would leave an asset underused, contrary to the Council's obligations and the structure will continue to degrade posing a substantial risk to the Council
- 4.4 An alternate option would be to demolish the portacabin, clear the site and seek to improve the value of the site through planning gain. This option is not recommended as the Council does not currently have capital funds available to undertake the demolition and the value of the property will not substantially increase as a result of an alternate planning use.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed Considered and Rejected

- 5.1 There have been no external consultations on this proposal as the property is currently of no beneficial use to the local community.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The proposal supports renewing local democracy and making the Council fit for the future by disposing of surplus land and achieving, a capital receipt, reducing ongoing liabilities and making an asset available for beneficial use of local residents
Financial, Resource and Property	The proposal looks to reduce the Council's future maintenance liabilities and produce a Capital receipt by way of a freehold disposal.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Legal will be required to draft freehold disposal contract agreement in consultation with Property once a sale is negotiated. Any proposed disposal will be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable in accordance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.
Crime and Disorder	The property remaining vacant and unused will likely result if it being a target for antisocial behaviour. A disposal to allow beneficial use will remove this risk.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The portacabin on the site is life expired and as a temporary structure it inherently inefficient. A substantial capital spend to refurbish a temporary inefficient structure would be at odds with the Council's goals.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The Proposal reduces the Council's risk in terms of holding a vacant and degrading property.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Plan
- Appendix 2: Condition Survey
- Appendix 3 Exempt Items

8 Background Papers

None

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SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Address: New Road Community Centre
55 New Road
Minster-on-sea
Kent
ME12 3PT



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Building Condition Survey Report

Property address

Minster/New Road Community
Centre
55-57 New Road
Minster
ME12 3PT

UPRN

Date of report

23rd May 2023

Introduction to the report

This bespoke condition survey report has been prepared by Simon Allchurch, Interim Building Surveyor, at the request of Eva Harris, Business Support Officer, to help inform an option appraisal of the future use of the Minster Community Centre site.

The site visit was carried out on the 10th May 2023, when the weather was dry and sunny. No pre-survey documentation was provided.

Minster Community Centre is a single storey pre-fabricated Portakabin modular building, of approx. 222m² GIFA, and believed to be circa. 30 years old.

The building and site have recently returned to Swale Council control, after termination of lease. It is understood that the previous tenant, the Community Association, provided the building themselves at the commencement of their original site lease, and were paying a peppercorn rent.

This survey is not a fully invasive or intrusive inspection and is not a substitute for a structural survey, mechanical & electrical services report, fire risk assessment, asbestos survey, H&S audit, energy saving audit, or disabled access audit.

Condition ratings

To help describe the condition of the property, we give condition ratings to the main parts (the 'elements') of the building, and some parts outside. Some elements can be made up of several different parts. The condition ratings are described as follows.

- ③ Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.
- ② Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent. The property must be maintained in the normal way.
- ① No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.
- NI** Not inspected

ELEMENT	CONDITION RATING ① ② ③ NI	COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS
Roofs & rainwater goods	③	Flat roof in bays with GRP finish. Major damage to one of eight bays of roof with evidence of water ingress internally. Water ponding to almost all bays. Roof surface is soft under foot and a H&S hazard for inspection. Guttering is missing or damaged in places. Building needs to be made weather tight to prevent further internal damage.
External walls and cladding	③	Rear external wall is showing signs of deflection. Generally difficult to inspect due to overgrown vegetation.
Windows doors and joinery	③	Single glazed windows. Numerous broken due to vandalism. External roller shutters across each window, some broken. Two external fire exit doors, both in poor condition. Numerous internal doors no longer shut correctly due to warping of doors or frames.
Structural frame	③	Rear external wall and roof is showing signs of deflection. Some internal doors no longer close flush. The overgrown vegetation restricts the ability for the underside of the building to be inspected.
Floors	NI	Not possible to inspect but no issues apparent. If water ingress persists, then timber floors are likely to be vulnerable to damage.
Finishes	②	Carpet and vinyl, some areas worn/poor condition. Internal redecoration required.
Sanitary fittings	②	Ladies, gents, and disabled persons toilets plus small kitchen. Generally reaching end of life in toilets. Kitchen is in relatively better condition.
Below ground drainage	NI	Not possible to inspect but no issues apparent or reported. Recommend CCTV drainage survey if building is to be put back into use.

M&E services	③	Electrical testing certificate not seen but expect there to be faults due to water ingress and general non-compliance issues with latest regs. Lighting needs to be upgraded to LED as currently all fluorescent. Gas combi boiler installed in kitchen serving wet radiator heating system. This is not contemporary with building and appears to have been installed within last 10 years. Servicing paperwork not seen. Legionella risk assessment not seen but expected to be low risk as appears to be no cold water storage tanks. Recommend full suite of statutory compliance inspections if building is to be put back into use.
External areas and boundaries	③	Overgrown vegetation needs removing or cutting back ASAP, including a small tree on boundary with next door house that needs pollarding. Timber fence on boundary with house is in poor condition and needs replacing with steel mesh fence to match that on other boundaries.
Fire precautions	③	Fire risk assessment required by end user if building is to be put back into use. Fire detection and emergency lighting likely to be non-compliant with latest regs. External fire exit doors likely to need replacement and requirement for internal fire doors to be reviewed (subject to type of future use).
Accessibility	NI	External overgrown vegetation needs removing ASAP and access reviewed (subject to type of future use).
Deleterious and hazardous materials	②	Built before 2000, so an asbestos management survey is required ASAP. Likely to be low risk though.
Sustainability	③	Lighting needs to be upgraded to LED as currently all fluorescent. Due to nature of portable building, the thermal insulation levels of roof, walls, windows, and floors will be low. Recommend that an EPC be carried out ASAP.

Overall condition summary

The building is generally life-expired, having exceeded normal useful timescales for modular buildings and maintenance having been somewhat neglected in recent times. Repairs could be made to bring the building back into use, though even if fully refurbished, it is always going to be a maintenance liability and not up to modern new-build standards, due to its age and inherent limitations of its lightweight modular construction.

Options for further consideration

1. Demolition of building and replacement of community facility on this site with a traditional new build or a new modular replacement.
Cost estimate £400K to £750K (excluding VAT and fees), depending on specification.
2. Demolition of building and replacement with community facility elsewhere, if required. Site seems an obvious one for a small housing development, though Planners may wish to see replacement of lost Community use land. Recommend seeking pre-app advice.
The demolition could be left to the new owners to do if the site is to be disposed of, but to avoid vandalism and the maintenance liability, and to maximise value, if it is decided to redevelop site, then demolition should be considered prior to sale.
Cost estimate for demolition £25K (excluding VAT and fees).
3. Refurbishment of building. Cost estimate £100K to £200K (excluding VAT and fees), depending on specification. The cost effectiveness of these works and return on investment would be questionable.

Photographs

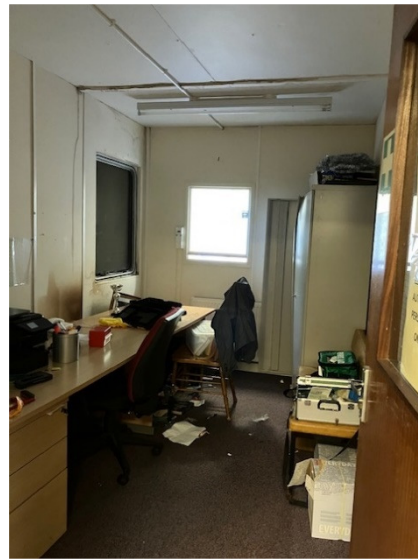












Caveats:

This report has been prepared by a surveyor ('The Employee') on behalf of Swale Council ('The Employer'). The statements and opinions expressed in this report are expressed on behalf of the Employer, who accepts full responsibility for these.

Without prejudice and separately to the above, the Employee will have no personal liability in respect of any statements and opinions contained in this report, which shall at all times remain the sole responsibility of the Employer to the exclusion of the Employee.

We carry out only a visual inspection. We inspect the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, but we do not force or open up the fabric. We inspect the roof space, where there is one, from the access hatch but we do not go into the roof space itself.

Cellars are inspected if they are reasonably accessible, but under-floor voids are not inspected.

We examine floor surfaces (although we do not move or lift furniture, floor coverings or other contents).

Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property. We inspect those parts of the electricity, gas/oil, water heating and other services that can be seen without removing secured covers, but we do not test them. The visual inspection cannot assess the efficiency or safety of electrical, gas or other energy sources; plumbing, heating or drainage installations (or whether they meet current regulations); or the inside condition of any chimney, boiler or other flue.

We do not lift the covers to the inspection chambers of the underground drainage system.

During the life of a building it may undergo a number of changes, driven by changing user needs, advances in IT, evolution of working practices and so on. In addition to the basic costs of maintaining a building, cleaning, and redecorating, there will be costs associated with essential upgrading to avoid obsolescence. This is particularly so in the case of building services, which are likely to require major upgrading and alteration several times during the life of a building. The structure and fabric of a building are likely to remain largely unchanged, other than by maintenance and redecoration for a relatively long period, possibly for the entire building life (40 years or more). The interior layout may change much more often – typically less than 10 years. This is due to changing user needs or changing users. Commercial buildings tend to be occupied on a leasehold basis and occupiers change regularly. These changes are facilitated by the use of loose fit building designs and the adoption of demountable partitioning etc. Building services will also be upgraded or renewed more often (typically every 15 to 20 years) than the structure and fabric as a result of the drivers for change identified earlier.

Although many commercial buildings have a design life of 40 years or more, it is more common for the useful life to be around 25 years. At 25 years, it is likely a major refurbishment would be required to bring a building up to date. Thus, the useful life of a commercial building may coincide with the life expectancy of major building service components.

Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	13 th September 2023
Report Title	Procurement of energy supplies
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins – Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson - Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning
Lead Officer	Eva Harris, Estates Officer
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the council continues to purchase energy supplies via Laser Buying Group for the period 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2028 on a two year renewing basis for both electricity and gas. This will provide flexibility and leaves open the opportunity to apply a full assessment of other Frameworks should the information required be made available by them. 2. To support Swale Borough Council's ambition to achieve net zero within its operations by 2025 it is proposed that the Council continue to purchase renewable energy via Laser Buying Group, paying the additional surcharge for renewable electricity and gas at an estimated additional total cost of £30,000 per annum. 3. That Members delegate authority to the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning, in consultation with the Head of Finance & Procurement and Chair of Regeneration and Property Committee to vary the contract during this term. This would be subject to consideration of the financial and environmental benefits of any such change.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report makes a recommendation to Committee regarding the purchase of energy supplies and associated management services for the period 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2028.

2 Background

- 2.1 Swale Borough Council currently purchases its energy via a framework agreement Laser reference Y18003 (electricity) & Y18002 (gas) which expires on 30 September 2024. It is usual for purchasers to have a supplier in place approximately a year in advance of supply, as this advance commitment has historically been required to secure best value from the market. The Council therefore will benefit from securing a new supplier this autumn. This supply will cover the majority of the Council's portfolio of assets.
- 2.2 The Pan-Government Energy Project, sponsored by the Ministry of Defence, recommends that all public sector organisations adopt **aggregated, flexible and risk-managed energy procurement**. With the increasing cost in wholesale energy prices, it is important to ensure that any future provider selected has a strong trading strategy (dedicated hedge funding to mitigate peaks and troughs). This approach needs technical knowledge of the energy markets and resource.
- 2.3 Public Buying Organisations (PBOs) are a recognised way of benefitting from local authorities' collective buying power. The expertise that PBOs offer is not only price negotiation but includes contract management with suppliers, billing management and energy management.
- 2.4 The Council's current supplier, The Laser Energy Buying Group, is listed in the Local Government Association, National Energy Category Strategy for Local Government 2022, as one of the few PBOs that offer an energy service framework. The Energy Buying Group was set up by Kent County Council's Commercial Services Unit and currently purchases energy on behalf of over 200 public sector bodies.
- 2.5 The Laser Energy Buying Group framework has a range of purchasing arrangements which have already been tendered through the Find a Tender service (FTS). This means that contracting through such a framework arrangement is compliant with procurement legislation and the Council's own Contract Standing Orders.
- 2.6 Where trusts and community groups have taken on the management of council buildings, they have also been permitted to purchase their energy supplies from Laser thereby allowing them to benefit from the collective purchasing arrangements.
- 2.7 Total spend for the past three years is set out in the table below

	2020/21 consumption cost	2021/22 consumption cost	2022/23 consumption cost
Gas	£31,191.72	£48,716.46	£62,308.34
Electricity	£84,292.47	£110,029.81	£184,036.56
Total	£115,484.19	£158,746.27	£246,344.90

- 2.8 As part of the current commissioning process, other organisations were approached, including another framework supplier and a broker. Unfortunately, despite repeated attempts to secure adequate information, this has not been forthcoming, and a full comparison has not been possible.
- 2.9 Although information received on other frameworks has been limited, based on what is currently known Laser remains a favourable framework, with many Kent local authorities still choosing to purchase through Laser.
- 2.10 Laser will continue to offer access to renewable energy. The cost of Renewable Electricity Guarantee of Origin (REGO) will have a surcharge of 1.179p/kwh from 1 October 2023 which equates to approximately £9,425 per annum across the Council's portfolio consumption. The cost of Renewable Gas Guarantee of Origin RGGO is a surcharge of 2.7p/kwh which equates to approximately £21,250 per annum. These prices are subject to market volatility.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that the council continues to purchase energy supplies via Laser Buying Group for the period 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2028 on a two year renewing basis for both electricity and gas. This will provide flexibility and leaves open the opportunity to apply a full assessment of other Frameworks should the information required be made available by them.
- 3.2 To support Swale Borough Council's ambition to achieve net zero within its operations by 2025 it is proposed that the Council continue to purchase renewable energy via Laser Buying Group, paying the additional surcharge for renewable electricity and gas at an estimated additional total cost of £30,000 per annum.
- 3.3 It is proposed that Members delegate authority to the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning, in consultation with the Head of Finance & Procurement and Chair of Regeneration and Property Committee to vary the contract during this term. This would be subject to consideration of the financial and environmental benefits of any such change.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Laser Energy Buying Group offers a four-year contract. This could potentially provide a greater financial saving but is not recommended at this time due to the limited information provided from other Framework agreements.
- 4.2 Not securing a renewable energy supply to minimise costs. This is not recommended, as whilst it attracts an additional surcharge which is subject to market volatility, these additional costs need to be considered against the Council's targets for net zero within its own operations and, in turn, any cost of offsetting that might be required against non-renewable energy consumption. These costs can remain under review, in the context of the recommendation at 3.3.

- 4.3 The Council could opt not to renew with any provider and have all meters on general business accounts, allowing each department to choose what supplier they wish to proceed with. This is not recommended as this approach would not allow the Council to access the wholesale prices that Laser is able to obtain through aggregating the demand of 200 public sector customers. According to calculations provided by Laser, the frameworks have so far achieved cost avoidance for Swale of £73,800 per annum. The new framework retains all the benefits and features of the existing framework, so similar cost avoidance can be expected if the purchase of the supply remains aggregated.
- 4.4 Alternative energy purchasing frameworks that could be used require further investigation. From the investigations so far, there is no indication that an alternative will provide better value for money than Laser Energy Buying Group. As Laser already has a successful track record of working with Swale Borough Council, it is considered that there would be little to no benefit to changing to another buying group now. However, Members could delegate authority to the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Procurement and Chair of Regeneration and Property Committee to appoint a supplier for the purchasing of energy via any Framework Agreement for the period of 1st October 2024 – 30th September 2028

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Procurement has been consulted and is of the opinion that the Laser framework provides value for money. The option of disaggregating the contracts will undoubtedly increase the cost of energy consumption, so this is not recommended. Providing delegation to the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property and Interim Head of Planning, alongside the Head of Finance and Procurement and Chair of Regeneration and Property Committee, to appoint a supplier does allow the Council the flexibility to move should a more advantageous offer become available from an alternative framework after the initial two-year period. Early confirmation to Laser will strengthen their position in securing good prices as part of the framework.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Council's use of energy is critical to the delivery of services. Cost is important and needs to be balanced against the Council meeting its ambitions to be carbon neutral in its operations by 2025, to which the source of supplies makes a considerable contribution.
Financial, Resource and Property	Securing energy supplies through as favourable deal as possible contributes substantially to the Council controlling its costs. Using a buying group to purchase energy provides value for money advantages, both in terms of savings achieved through bulk

	<p>purchasing, and in much reduced staff time in tendering for supplies for each site. Securing a supplier a year in advance as recommended also provides more clarity in a volatile market and supports future budget setting.</p> <p>The direct, additional costs associated with the purchase of renewable energy, at an estimated £30,000 per annum should be considered against the potential cost of any offsetting required to meet carbon reduction targets. These are not yet fully understood but could be substantial.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Statutory requirements are met using the Laser framework, as all energy procurement is carried out in line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Use of frameworks for procurements is supported in the council's commissioning and procurement policy and approved in contract standing orders.
Crime and Disorder	None at this stage
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The purchase of green gas and electricity to contribute to the council's net zero carbon declaration by 2025 within council operations will be at a cost, but these need to be considered alongside wider offsetting obligations.
Health and Wellbeing	None at this stage
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Use of an established framework provider of energy means their inhouse expertise and trading strategies helps 'hedge' against future market volatility, seeking to buy energy at the right time to the benefit of its customers.
Equality and Diversity	None at this stage
Privacy and Data Protection	None at this stage

7 Appendices

7.1 None

8 Background Papers

8.1 None

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Regeneration and Property Committee Forward Decisions Plan

Report title, background information and recommendation(s)	Date of meeting	Open or exempt	Lead Officer and report author
Property Asset Strategy Refresh and Property Procedure Rules (PPR)	14 November 2023		Head of Service: Joanne Johnson Report author: David Johnson
Disposal of Bridge Road Car Park and Associated Land	14 November 2023		Head of Service: Joanne Johnson Report Author: David Johnson
Central Stadium, Sittingbourne	TBC		Head of Service: Joanne Johnson Report author: David Johnson
Memorial Bench Scheme	TBC		Head of Service: Martyn Cassell Report author: Jay Jenkins

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