
Meeting	Executive (Calling-In)
Date	23 November 2017
Present	Councillors Carr (Chair), Gillies, Rawlings, Runciman, Waller, Lisle, Orrell and Reid
In Attendance	Councillors D'Agorne, Flinders and Williams

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, that they might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

13. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that one member of the public had registered to speak at the meeting and that one councillor had registered to speak as a Ward Member, both in respect of Agenda Item 4 (Called-in Item: Disposal of Willow House, Walmgate).

Grant McKenzie spoke on behalf of the Walmgate Community Association, re-iterating the Association's position against the proposed development, on the grounds that it would adversely affect both residents and tourism and set a dangerous precedent for harm to green space in the city.

Cllr Craghill spoke as Ward Member for the Guildhall Ward, underlining the concern expressed by local and other residents about the loss of open green space within the city walls and the effect of the proposed development on health, well-being and the historic setting of Walmgate Bar.

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting should any discussion arise on Annex B4 to Agenda Item 4, on the grounds that it contains

information relating to the business or financial affairs of particular persons. This information is classed as exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of The Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

15. CALLED-IN ITEM: DISPOSAL OF WILLOW HOUSE, WALMGATE

Members re-considered their decision, made at the Executive meeting on 19 October 2017, to approve the sale of Willow House to the highest bidder, Empiric PLC.

The decision had been called in for review by the Customer and Corporate Scrutiny Management Scrutiny Committee (CCSSMC) (Calling In). At their meeting On 6 November 2017, that committee had referred the matter back to the Executive for re-consideration, with a recommendation that the sale be delayed to explore options to protect open space on the site. Full details were set out in the report and the accompanying annexes, which included the report to Executive on 19 October.

Cllr Williams, as Chair of the CCSSMC (Calling In), presented and supported the committee's recommendation. Cllr Flinders, representing the three Members who had called in the decision, also spoke in support of the recommendation and of the points made under public participation.

Officers at the meeting reported that, due to the delay, Empiric PLC had withdrawn their original bid for the site and submitted a lower value bid. This meant they were no longer the highest bidder. It would therefore be necessary to review the remaining bids and bring a further report to the Executive. Members were reminded that:

- the open space in question did not fit the legal definition of public open space and
- the call-in did not affect the original decision to sell the site, made at the Executive meeting on 28 November 2016 (*Minute 74 of that meeting refers*).

After a full debate on all the matters raised, it was

Resolved: (i) That the decision to sell the whole of the Willow House site, within the boundaries illustrated in the site plan considered at the Executive meeting on 28 November 2016, be re-affirmed.

Reason: In order to generate a capital receipt to support the wider Older Persons' Accommodation Programme.

(ii) That a further report be received to determine who the site should be sold to.

Reason: In view of the decision of the highest bidder to withdraw their bid for the site and submit a lower bid.

(iii) That Officers be instructed to prepare a report for a future Executive meeting providing a wider re-assessment of green space across the council's holdings.

Reason: To enable residents' and Members' concerns about the lack of public green space, particularly in certain areas of the city, to be addressed in a broader context.

Cllr D Carr, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 5.38 pm].