

Report to the Council

Portfolio: Housing

Date: 26 July 2016

Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Rule 53 (Special Urgency)

1. PURCHASE OF STREET PROPERTIES - 12 CALDBECK, WALTHAM ABBEY & 15 WILLOW PATH, WALTHAM ABBEY

Recommending:

To note that the Chairman of Council agreed that the following decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder be treated as a matter of urgency and not be subject to the call-in provisions in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule (Call-In and Urgency):

- (a) That the Council purchase the street properties at 12 Caldbeck, Waltham Abbey and 15 Willow Path, Waltham Abbey for the sum of £335,000 and £279,950 respectively, subject to a satisfactory property searches, surveys, valuations and contracts.**

1.1 In July 2015, the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee considered a report on the acceleration of the Housebuilding Programme, to ensure that all “1-4-1 Replacement Right to Buy” capital receipts were spent within the required 3 years of receipt and that none were passed on to the Government, with interest. One of the options agreed was the purchase street properties from the open market, and the agent appointed by the Council was subsequently instructed to source appropriate street properties.

2.1 In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule 53 (Special Urgency) of the Constitution, the Chairman of the Council (Councillor E. Webster) was satisfied that this decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder (4 May 2016) was reasonable in all the circumstances and should be treated as a matter of urgency. The Chairman of Council was also satisfied that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council’s interests in this respect, as the purchase prices for the properties subject of the decision had been negotiated on the basis of sales being completed quickly, due to both properties being vacant with no purchase chain, and to ensure that one-for-one receipts arising from Right to Buy sales were spent within the required timescale.

2. PURCHASE OF STREET PROPERTIES – 11 CANELAND COURT, WALTHAM ABBEY & 7 MILHOO COURT, WALTHAM ABBEY

Recommending:

To note that the Chairman of Council (Councillor J. Lea) agreed that the following decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder (7 June 2016) be treated as a matter of urgency and not be subject to the call-in provisions in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule (Call-In and Urgency):

- (a) That the Council purchase the street properties at 11 Caneland Court, Waltham Abbey and 7 Milhoo Court, Waltham Abbey in the sums of £310,000 and £290,000 respectively, subject to the completion of satisfactory property searches, surveys, valuations and contracts.**

- 2.1 In July 2015, the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee considered a report on the acceleration of the Housebuilding Programme, to ensure that all “1-4-1 Replacement Right to Buy” capital receipts were spent within the required 3 years of receipt and that none were passed on to the Government, with interest. One of the options agreed was the purchase street properties from the open market, and the agent appointed by the Council was subsequently instructed to source appropriate street properties.
- 2.2 In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule 53 (Special Urgency) of the Constitution, the Chairman of the Council (Councillor J. Lea) was satisfied that this decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder (7 June 2016) was reasonable in all the circumstances and should be treated as a matter of urgency. The Chairman of Council was also satisfied that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council’s interests in this respect, as the purchase prices for the properties subject of the decision had been negotiated on the basis of sales being completed quickly, due to both properties being vacant with no purchase chain, and to ensure that one-for-one receipts arising from Right to Buy sales were spent within the required timescale.