

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 19 November 2020



Portfolio: Commercial & Regulatory Services (Councillor A Patel)

Subject: Notes from informal virtual meeting held Wednesday 07 October 2020 – 17.00 to 17.30

Officer contact for further information: Karim Pabani (01992 564123)

Democratic Services Officer: V Messenger (01992 564265)

RE: Cabinet decisions 14 September 2020 – Release of Restrictive Covenants – Epping Forest College.

In attendance:

On behalf of the Call-in Members: Councillor Chris Pond.

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Aniket Patel (Commercial and Regulatory Services PH)

O&S Committee Chairman: Councillor Mary Sartin;

O&S Committee Vice Chairman: Councillor Robert Jennings

Officers: Natalie Boateng, Georgina Blakemore, Karim Pabani, Gary Woodhall & Adrian Hendry.

1. Councillor Sartin acted as Chairman for this meeting and asked Councillor Pond to give his opening statement. He indicated that he had nothing to add to points 1, 2 and 4 of the call-in sheet. He went on to note that this had been called in five years ago, when a number of Councillors thought it was ill advised. He noted that there were no detailed plans from the College for a Health Centre and Luctons Meadows. The district needed to keep the wellness centre and the open space. He did emphasise that points 5 and 6 of the call-in were important and would like the new covenant to include a provision of public access and reversion to community control in the event of non-construction.
2. Councillor Pond went on to ask about the willingness of the County not to use this land for educational needs and a new school. He was told that officers had been in contact with ECC recently and had received an email confirming that they had no such plans. Councillor Pond asked that this email be shared with him. This was agreed.
3. Officers noted that the covenants ran with the land and with the successors entitled to the land. Officers agreed that the point made on the use of the land for community purposes and a Wellness Centre was valid and they could ask that the contract include a community benefit such as a Wellness Centre. Natalie Boateng would seek to tie this in with the contract. She would draw up documents in liaison with Councillors Pond and Patel. Councillor Pond agreed if this could be arranged then it should satisfy most of the points his members had raised.
4. Councillor Sartin summed up, noting that some more work needed to be done on this by officers but subject to this, was the lead member of the call-in happy with the actions put forward. Councillor Pond indicated that he would be happy once he had seen the outcome of the contract negotiations and would endeavour to put this solution to his co-signatories for their agreement.

5. The Call-in was put on hold, subject to further work being carried out by officers in consultation with Councillors Patel and Pond.

Adrian Hendry
Democratic Services

9 October 2020