

LITTLEPORT SCHOOL LAND EXCHANGE

To: General Purposes Committee

Meeting Date: 7th October 2014

From: LGSS Director of Finance/
Head of Strategic Asset Management

Electoral division(s): Littleport

Forward Plan ref: 2014/012 **Key Decision:** Yes

Purpose: To approve the disposal of assets exceeding the LGSS Director of Finance's delegated limits.

Recommendation: General Purposes Committee is recommended to:

- a) approve the request to dispose of assets worth in excess of £500,000, which is in excess of the limit delegated to the LGSS Director of Finance; and
- b) authorise the LGSS Director of Finance to agree the detailed terms for the disposal of assets, in consultation with the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee.

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1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The County Council in the 2013-2017 Capital Programme has allocated £30m to build a 4FE school and a special school at Littleport opening in 2015/2016. A site has been allocated in the East Cambridgeshire District Council draft Local Plan.
- 1.2 A land swap has been agreed in principle using land on the County Farms Estate. The land values are in excess of the Director of Finance's delegated limits.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The County Council in the 2013-2017 Capital Programme has allocated £30m to build a 4FE school and a special school at Littleport opening in 2015/2016. A site has been allocated in the East Cambridgeshire District Council draft Local Plan.
- 2.2 Negotiations with the landowners began in 2013 and have been protracted. The Council appointed Faithful & Gould to project manage the acquisition of the land and the construction of the school. They in turn have appointed Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) to acquire the land.
- 2.3 There are approximately 6 landowners, some on unregistered land.
- 2.4 The largest landowner owns a 20 acre field required for the school. Compulsory Purchase Powers have not been used; this has not been the route used by the Council to acquire school sites.
- 2.5 A land exchange has been agreed in principle using land on the County Farms Estate where a tenant farmer has agreed to surrender his holding at Little Downham. The farm had been identified for sale when vacant on the current Farm Management Plans.
- 2.6 The acquisition will be on a conditional contract subject to planning consent being obtained.

3.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution now provides that the authority for all property transactions rests with the General Purposes Committee, but there is an agreed delegation to the Director of Finance to exercise that authority for transactions where the capital value is less than £500,000.
- 3.2 The cumulative disposal of assets, the land exchanged at Little Downham and the balance not used for the exchange which are identified for sale, are valued in excess of the Director of Finance's delegated limit.

4.0 MAKING ASSETS COUNT

- 4.1 The Council will continue to support disposals between partners in the Making Assets Count programme in accordance with the agreed protocols.

5.0. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

There are no significant implications within this priority.

5.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

There are no significant implications within this priority.

5.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

There are no significant implications within this priority.

6.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Resource Implications

The exchange means that effectively a capital receipt is forgone in exchange for acquiring a school site. This in turn represents a saving on the Capital programme budget allocation.

6.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

6.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The Local Member has been notified.

6.6 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Source Documents	Location
New Secondary and Special School in Littleport, East Cambridgeshire	http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2219/new_littleport_schools-background_information