

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 16 February 2010

Portfolio Holder: Councillor M Cohen
(Legal and Estates Portfolio)

Item: 12A

1. 148 BROOKER ROAD, WALTHAM ABBEY - PURCHASE OF LEASEHOLD INTEREST

Recommending:

That a capital supplementary estimate for 2009/10 in the sum of £220,000 be approved for the purchase of the leasehold interest in the property.

(NOTE: The decision of the Cabinet was to request a capital supplementary estimate of £220,000. However, that figure includes the sum of the rent arrears (paragraph 2 below) which will be written off. The sum required to purchase the leasehold interest is £210,000 and the Council is requested to agree this sum for the capital supplementary estimate and not £220,000)

1. The Council is the freehold owner of 148 Brooker Road, Waltham Abbey. There is currently a lease of 80 years from 1 January 1974 at a passing rent of £6,600 per annum to PNG Enfield Limited who are in receivership.
2. The receivers have been marketing the leasehold interest and an offer by the Council subject to contract and Cabinet approval of £210,000 was rejected in favour of another bid in October 2009. It now appears that the proposed purchaser has not proceeded quickly enough and the receivers have offered the property to the Council for £210,000 plus waiving the arrears of rent which total £6,600 to 31 December 2009 (£8,250 to 31 March 2010).
3. The property has a floor area of 4,577 sq.ft and it is estimated that it has a current rental value in the region of £34,000 per annum (£7.50 per sq.ft).
4. The Museum Service have indicated that 148 Brooker Road would provide efficient accommodation for the consolidation of the storage of the Museum Collection which is currently stored at the Langston Road Depot, Gunpowder Mills and the Museum itself. This would achieve additional temporary exhibition display space at the Museum and the potential for an onsite education room. The accommodation at 148 Brooker Road would also provide a research space where interested members of the public would be able to book an appointment to inspect/research items that are held in the collection, but are not currently accessible.
5. In addition 148 Brooker Road would realise the opportunity to re-locate the Council's Countrycare Team and respective equipment/storage from Town Mead Depot along with the community services equipment currently stored at Town Mead.
6. The purchase of the leasehold interest will initially enable the Council to provide accommodation for services that are currently located elsewhere and are paying rent

to third parties or are on sites that when vacated will have redevelopment potential.

7. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.