

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 26 March 2012

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Title: Transfer of Land for Specialist Housing Project

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Key decision - yes

Summary

1. This report asks Cabinet to consider the transfer of land for nil value to Safer Places for them to build a specialist housing project.

Recommendations

2. That Cabinet agrees the transfer of land at Newton Grove Dunmow to Safer Places - for a specialist housing project, subject to planning consent being obtained.
3. That land is transferred at nil or less than best consideration for affordable housing subject to full financial details being provided to Members in a future report which will detail the actual terms of the sale.
4. Transfer of land would be subject to terms and conditions.

Financial Implications

5. The council will be losing a capital receipt if the land is transferred at nil value. The land has been initially valued by the District Valuer at an open market value of £215,000. The value of the land if a supported housing project is provided is £95,000. Both valuations are subject to planning permission being obtained.

Background Papers

6. None

Impact

- 7.

Communication/Consultation	Sensitivity required due to the nature of the proposed project
Community Safety	All services would need to be informed including police and social services

Equalities	n/a
Health and Safety	n/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Land ownership to be transferred
Sustainability	n/a
Ward-specific impacts	Great Dunmow
Workforce/Workplace	n/a

Situation

8. Safer Places is an independent domestic abuse charity dedicated to supporting adults and children affected by domestic abuse. They provide a wide range of services in the Essex/Hertfordshire area including refuges and outreach support.
9. The Council has been asked by Safer Places to provide a site for them to be able to build a specialist housing project for women suffering from domestic abuse within Uttlesford.
10. The lack of this type of provision in the district has been highlighted by partner agencies as a problem for many years.
11. There is currently no such provision within Uttlesford and the expected level of provision is 1 bed space per 10,000 of population. This lack of provision has been highlighted as a problem for many years by partner agencies in the district and identified as a priority within the Housing Business Plan and Housing Strategy.
12. The figures for domestic abuse in the district have increased from 447 for the 12 months from January – December 2010 to 641 for the 12 month period November 2011 to October 2012.
13. The land that Safer Places and the Council have identified as a possible suitable site for such a project is a car parking area of Newton Green in Great Dunmow, shown hatched in the plan below.



14. The site is 556m2 and could provide 4 No. maisonette style flats with parking for residents.
15. Initial discussions with planners suggest that the site has potential for a scheme of this nature however the transfer of land would be subject to the relevant planning permissions being obtained.
16. Safer Places have indicated that they have the funds to build and run such a project within Uttlesford but would not be able to afford to openly purchase land.
17. The land has been valued by the district valuer at £215,000 at open market value and £95,000 for a supported housing scheme.
18. Safer Places, with funding from the council, has already implemented an outreach support service within Uttlesford for victims of domestic abuse. This accommodation would be the next step in developing domestic abuse services within Uttlesford.

Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Uttlesford continues to be without specialist accommodation	2 – a site has been identified and a provider identified with funds to build and manage a specialist unit in the district	3 – Growing domestic abuse numbers in the district	Site to be transferred at nil value to ensure scheme is viable

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.