



Planning and Transport Committee

Date: 24 July 2019

Title: Creation of a Policy Document to help inform future land uses on land known as south of the High Street, Leighton Buzzard

Purpose of the Report: To draw down a maximum of £3,000 from earmarked reserves (9035/920 Professional Fees - £13,987) for the purposes of carrying out a scoping opinion in respects of the potential merits or otherwise of creating a document to help guide development for land known as south of the High Street, Leighton Buzzard

Contact Officer: Mark Saccoccio (Town Clerk)

Corporate Objective/s	To consolidate processes and procedures, ensuring operational efficiency and a structure which will underpin future service delivery by the Town Council.	
Implications:		
Financial	X	Yes
Human Resources	X	Yes
Operational/Service delivery	X	Yes
Procedural/Legal	X	Yes
Risk/Health & Safety	X	Yes

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should Members be minded:-

1.1 To note the report.

1.2 To recommend to Policy and Finance Committee that a maximum of £3,000 (Budget Code 920/9035 – Professional Fees) be drawn down and ring fenced for the purposes of obtaining a planning opinion in respects of the potential merits in the creation of a document to help guide future development on land known as south of the High Street, Leighton Buzzard.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As Members are minded, there has been much speculation surrounding the land parcels collectively known as land south of the High Street, Leighton Buzzard. Despite reasonable endeavours, the site has remained undeveloped for many years. At its meeting held, Wed 12th June 2019, the Planning and Transport Committee of this council resolved to object to the planning application submitted on land parcel c (as identified within the development brief). The objections have since been submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council for its consideration as part of the planning application determination process.
- 2.2 In 2012, Central Bedfordshire Council endorsed a development brief for the said land parcels. Its purpose, to encourage development to come forward in the common interests of safeguarding the future vitality and viability of the High Street. For many, the development brief was welcomed as it provided a framework plan that would help address deficits in retail, leisure and business provision within the town. The reasons why those uses considered more appropriate to the town centre have yet to come forward is a matter that the determining authority is best placed to answer.
- 2.3 At its meeting held 6th June 2019, the Partnership Committee resolved to support the recommendation that professional opinion be sought on the merits or otherwise of creating a town council sponsored neighbourhood plan (or similar document). Its purpose to better reflect present parish thinking and by doing so, encourage those sites that have remained undeveloped for many years to come forward.
- 2.4 The purpose of this paper is not to discuss the merits or otherwise of carrying out a Town Council sponsored development document. It is simply to seek endorsement of this committee that it is appropriate to ring fence town council funds of up to £3,000 to carry out this exercise. Should Members be minded, endorsement of the Policy and Finance Committee will thereafter be sought.

End.