



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

Policy and Finance Committee

Date: 20 June 2022

Title: Feasibility Study – Land South of the High Street

Purpose of the Report: To seek Committee direction on securing a feasibility study for the potential relocation of town council functions as well as potential cultural and community facilities.

Contact Officer: Mark Saccoccio - Town Clerk

Corporate Objective/s		To continue to support a thriving, vital and successful town centre through a town planning partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council and initiatives including management of the street market, support for local businesses, town and community promotions, and town centre enhancements.
Implications:		
Financial	Yes	There will be a cost implication should the Policy and Finance Committee recommend to Council that feasibility studies be undertaken by the Town Council.
Operational/Service delivery	Yes	Any scoping and study thereafter would be undertaken by third parties on behalf of the Town Council.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should the Policy and Finance Committee be minded:-

1.1 To note the report

1.2 To seek direction from the Policy and Finance Committee on the most appropriate way in bringing forward a feasibility study for “Land South of the High Street” namely:

- i) For the Town Council to fund the feasibility study; or**
- ii) To encourage the landowning interests to undertake such work given the level of community interest in realising the said project.**

1.3 To endorse the recommendation from the South Side Working Party that a social infrastructure needs analysis of the town be commissioned in order to provide evidence to support relevant future uses on land South

Side of the High Street. That Central Bedfordshire Council release S106 funds to facilitate this activity.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 At its meeting held 21st April 2022, the Land South of the High Street Working Party resolved:

(a) That the Town Clerk seeks suitable authorisation from the most appropriate Committee to do what is necessary to enable the Town Council to secure a feasibility study for the potential future relocation of council offices and that the study extends to include options that may incorporate other facilities that the South Side Working party has referenced:

- (i) Council Offices**
- (ii) Community use/meeting spaces**
- (iii) Facilities that accommodate cultural activities**
- (iv) Facilities that accommodate heritage activities**
- (v) Facilities that accommodate the TACTIC Youth Centre**

2.2 Whilst the Town Council is not the planning authority and has no land-owning interest in the land parcel known as “Land South of the High Street”, the Town Council is keen to see land come forward as soon as is practicable. To this end, the Town Council created a working party whose purpose as set out in its terms of reference is to:

“To continue the work started by the Land South of High Street Task & Finish Group by liaising with the local authority on plans to develop the whole of the site, as part of the regeneration project led by Central Bedfordshire Council for this site, and to liaise with third parties to further investigate the requirements and viability of a number of community facilities for the town, potentially to be sited on land south of the High Street or for consideration in relation to other sites/repurposing of existing buildings”.

2.3 As set out above and in accordance with its terms of reference, the working party is keen to further investigate the requirements and viability of community facilities that could potentially be sited there. To do this, the working party (through the Town Clerk) seeks direction from the Policy and Finance Committee on the most appropriate way in taking the feasibility study forward. That is, to endorse the Town Clerk to lobby the landowning interests in seeking its creation or for the Town Council to undertake this work itself. The latter will have resource implications which at this stage are unknown.

- 2.4 At its meeting held 23rd May 2022, the South Side Working Party resolved that a social infrastructure needs analysis of the town be undertaken. Its purpose to better inform future uses for land South of the High Street. Whilst the scope of the study has yet to be agreed, it is hoped that Central Bedfordshire Council would agree to the use of S106 monies for this purpose. For the working party, this is considered a key study as it would provide the necessary evidence to inform future uses thereon.

End.