



Members of the Public's Questions to Housing Committee 11 June 2019

Questions from Marcus Dixon

1. ShIPS have tried on multiple occasions to obtain a true market valuation of the Ship Inn site Stonehouse (Asset No. 010090803133 STO/LA/06). Without this valuation a Business case cannot be created as it potentially is a major capital expense in the plan.

In ShIPS research, the Ship Inn Site was part of a deal with GCC that £1M was contributed to the canal regeneration for receipt of 3 plots of GCC owned land in the Stroud District. In the S&R Committee meeting of 3-12-2015 (P16) The Ship Inn site is shown to have a value to SDC of £550K. There is no trail that shows how this valuation was arrived at. There is a document showing a perceived valuation of the 3 plots of land mentioned above at £1M, however this document also alludes to this valuation being made on the assumption of planning permission on all sites (which the document agrees would be extremely difficult and costly). There has been no planning consent on the Ship Inn Site in the last 23 years.

It is also noted that the land at Wharfdale Way (for which this housing requirement was allocated and existing housing stock was demolished) that is not strategic to Stonehouse Town's future, was sold to a commercial developer at a value of £300K.

ShIPS has approached a local agent for a valuation, the result of which is dependent on the evaluation of the amount of contamination on the plot which could not be assessed without trespass. The valuation given was approximately £25K.

To resolve this and allow ShIPS to create a business plan, can the committee give ShIPS a true market valuation of the Ship Inn site and further, provide the value and date at which the site was transferred from district into the HRA?

Reply

A red book market valuation has been commissioned. Council approved the appropriation from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account in January 2016 at a value of £500,000.

2. On what criteria the decision will be made as to the disposal of the Ship Inn Site into Community/Town Council ownership.

If a business plan is required to secure the land for community use, on what criteria is that plan to be judged? What would this plan achieve for the Housing Committee? As the Ship Inn Site for community use is fully supported by STC should it not be judged on the merits of the case already submitted? It should be noted that a commercial application would not require this amount of scrutiny.

Reply

If the committee is presented with a proposal for a transfer of the site its consideration will have to comply with the criteria for the sale of transfer of any asset as set out in S123 of the Local Government Act 1972 which has to be for best consideration (generally taken to be demonstrated by market value) unless the council is satisfied that a transfer would be in the interest of the economic, social or environmental well being of the area. There is no

guidance as to how councils satisfy themselves that a transfer meets this test and each case must be considered on its own merits.

3. If the disposal of the Ship Inn Site is agreed by the Committee, what basis will that disposal be on? Maintained by SDC for Community Use, Town Council Owned, Community Owned, Community Land Trust, rented, leased etc.

Reply

Officers aim to progress discussions with Stonehouse Town Council and the community over the coming months. To date no clear bid or scheme has been put forward so at this stage the basis of any disposal is unknown.