

Garage Sites update

Purpose of this Information Sheet

To inform members of the progress following Housing Committees decision of 22 December 2015

Introduction

The Council is proceeding with disposal of its stock of garages where practicable. Asset Management (AM) is managing the programme. A number of garages have been brought into the Small Sites project to dispose of or reuse a large number of smaller landholdings with the aim of maximising their values and potential.

The initial focus has concentrated on the disposal project, using the garages and small sites to recycle receipts from Right to Buy (RTB) sales. Since late 2015 RTB monies are at particular risk of having to be returned to Government under housing regulation as part of the Housing and Planning bill. AM are planning to assemble a package of sites from the garages and small sites portfolio, drafting an outcome development specification for new affordable housing and putting these to groups of Registered Providers (RP's) and/or Community Land Trusts (CLT) to develop out. The RTB receipts would be passed over to the RP's with the sites for which bids will be made.

Legal Services will advise if RTB receipts can be applied in this manner. Finance will be assisting by confirming the sums available, dates by which monies must be recycled and/or returned to Government and general compliance.

Summary

The garage sites have become an important tool to recycle RTB receipts and keep their value within the district. This will not impinge on the overall plan for property disposals and generation of new housing on underused landholdings. AM will be reporting and updating the Housing and Development Panel on progress. First disposals of the Small Sites project will be starting in April 2016. A further update will be produced for members in June 2016

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