

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of Maxine OMahony, Director of Commissioning

To: Cabinet – 19 June 2012

(Author: Zoe Footer, Land Management Officer)

Subject: Active Land Management Review

Purpose:

The report provides Members with information following a review of the Active Land Management framework and identifies issues and resets the focus of the framework and programme going forward.

Recommendations:

1. To adopt a new list of sites;
2. To cease re-active land management work;
3. To make minor amendments to the framework, primarily to the options appraisal and planning process.
4. To ring-fence income generated through disposals of Tranches 1 - 3 to fund future options appraisal(s) of the Active Land Management programme.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Asset Management have led on the Active Land Management framework since its adoption by Breckland's Full Council in November 2009. A programme of sites was devised processing in tranches of 10 pieces of land at 6 monthly intervals. To date three Tranches of the Active Land Management programme have been considered and actioned accordingly.
- 1.2 The Asset Management service has now undertaken a review of the Active Land Management framework which identifies issues and resets the focus going forward. The review makes some recommendations regarding the learning gained and issues encountered which are as follows:
- 1.3 Capacity is an issue and the ability to return receipts in the shortest period of time, therefore the first recommendation is to re-prioritise the remaining potential sites into a new list which a) are sifted from a planning perspective to prioritise the sites which have the greatest potential to succeed with a planning permission and b) to prioritise that list based on size. The affect of this is that the limited resources available can be assigned to the greatest potential in value, i.e. creating the greatest return on resources employed.
- 1.4 The second main recommendation is to cease reactive i.e. low priority land related applications. Again this is to ensure that the resources available are focused on the sites with the greatest potential return. It does mean that reactive applications will be declined unless there is a statutory requirement or they create significant receipt/reduction in liability.

- 1.5 The third recommendation is to make some minor changes to the framework, specifically inserting a gateway where planning make comment on the ability to deliver a planning permission.
- 1.6 The continuation of the project is dependant upon funding being made available to finance the costs relating to the appraisal of the sites. The final recommendation is to ensure the Active Land Management programme is self-financing, in that any receipts obtained from disposals are put back into the costs to deliver the future programme of appraisals. For information receipts from the land disposals resulting from the sites considered in Tranches 1 -2 will be able to provide the self-finance following execution of forthcoming disposals.
- 1.7 As defined in the Breckland Council Corporate Plan for 2011 – 2015 particular focus has now been given to commence the building of homes on Council owned land. The aim (under the 'To Be An Entrepreneurial Council' objective) is to 'Commence building on land owned by the Council'. To date and going forward the options appraisal undertaken as part of the Active Land Management project for each tranche identifies sites with development potential and therefore fits well in terms of this new corporate objective going forward. However given this particular focus, both the Asset Management service and the Housing service are now engaged in discussions on how to take this focus forward.

2. OPTIONS

- 2.1 As per the review undertaken:
- i. To adopt a new list of sites;
 - ii. To cease re-active land management work;
 - iii. To make minor amendments to the framework, primarily to the options appraisal and planning process; and
 - iv. To ring-fence the income generated through disposals of Tranches 1 - 3 to fund future options appraisal(s) of the Active Land Management programme.
- 2.2 Not to accept the recommendations.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council's land management resources are limited; therefore the focus needs to be on pro-actively assessing the sites, which have the greatest potential, which is the best use of the limited resources, in an attempt to fulfil the Council's income generation targets.

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

Increased asset value.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Legal** - There are no specific legal issues that require special comment here.
- 5.2 **Risks** – no risks identified.
- 5.3 **Financial** – proforma B attached.

- 5.4 **Timescales**
The Active Land Management framework and programme to resume with immediate effect.
- 5.5 **Equality and Diversity** – implicit within process
- 5.6 **Stakeholders / Consultation**
Internal officers and the local Ward representatives are to continue to be consulted, as their views are an imperative part of the Active Land Management project going forward.
- 5.7 **Contracts** – not applicable
- 5.8 **Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998** – implicit with process.
6. **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**
N/A

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Appendices attached to this report:

Proforma B