



Subject:	i) Beechvale Farm – Options ii) Fullerton Park Pavilion – Licence Agreement to Dunmurry Community Association iii) Half Moon Lake – Acquisition of land from Northern Ireland Housing Executive at Gweedore Crescent, Suffolk Court iv) Gloucester Street offices - Licence Agreement
Date:	20 March 2020
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to asset related disposal, acquisition and Estates matters.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to - i. Beechvale Farm – Options

	<p>– Agree Option 2 (Progress disposal of the c110acres which is considered as prime agricultural land and the c3acres of the previous farmhouse dwelling and surrounding land and retain the remaining c24acres) in relation to Beechvale Farm as this provides the best opportunity to maximise use of the land</p> <p>ii. Fullerton Park Pavilion – Licence Agreement to Dunmurry Community Association</p> <p>- approve the renewal of the existing Licence Agreement for a period of 3 years from 31st September 2018</p> <p>iii. Half Moon Lake – Acquisition of land from Northern Ireland Housing Executive -</p> <p>approve the acquisition of 0.168 acres of land from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive at Gweedore Crescent adjacent to the Council owned Half Moon Lake site.</p> <p>iv. Gloucester Street office - Licence Agreement - approve a Licence Agreement to Heron Bros to occupy the car park at Gloucester Street for a period of one year from 1st April 2020 to allow them to use the site as a compound for the construction of new office accommodation nearby on behalf of a private developer.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Beechvale Farm – Options</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>On 21 June 2019 the SP&R Committee agreed to dispose of Beechvale Farm and to appoint agents to market the site. (A Site Map showing the site boundaries outlined in red is attached in Appendix 1). On 21 February 2020 the SP&R Committee agreed to defer the actioning or implementing the decision of 21 June 2019 to enable a further report to be submitted on other future options for the site taking into consideration the motion agreed earlier in the meeting on Market Gardens and Urban Farming.</p> <p>3.2 Beechvale Farm is a substantial 137acre site on the outskirts of Belfast and outside of the Council boundary. The majority of the site is agricultural land along with a former farmhouse and associated outbuildings, former nursely land and greenhouses and a site of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI).</p> <p>3.3 Following the Committee decision of June 2019 and a competitive tender process, O’Connor Kennedy Turtle (OKT) were appointed as selling agents on 30 October 2019. Whilst OKT has compiled initial information, the marketing of the property has not commenced. A Planning Appraisal Report was also carried out on behalf of the Council in December 2019. This report identified that there are a range of potential development options (subject to satisfying the relevant planning policy requirements) at the site in addition to the agricultural use of fields. The Council’s intention was that the Beechvale Farm site would be sold in a number of lots</p>

rather than as an overall lot to in order to maximise interest from the market encompassing the areas as laid out below -

Agricultural land (c110acres - marked blue on the map at Appendix 1) – the selling agent and the planning consultant consider this to be prime agricultural land suitable for a variety of agricultural use (primarily arable farming to include the growing of Comber potatoes and winter wheat). It is expected that there would be a good level of market interest in the agricultural land. This is likely to be offered in a number of lots.

- *Former farmhouse, outbuildings and surrounding land (c3acres - marked pink on the map at Appendix 1)* - The selling agent and the planning consultant consider that there is a good opportunity to refurbish or redevelop the disused farmhouse and surrounding outbuildings including a disused bungalow and disused mill building to allow for a small number of replacement dwellings. It is expected that there would be a good level of market interest in this.
- *Former nursery land including glasshouses and nursery offices/stores (c13acres - marked yellow on the map at Appendix 1)* - The Planning Appraisal report has identified that there the potential uses in this area could include horticulture, tourism, renewable energy and outdoor recreation uses. These buildings have been vacant for c20 years and it is not known if it is physically or financially feasible to bring the these back into use given their current condition and given this it is considered that there will be less market interest in this land.
- *Gransha Fen (c11acres - marked green on the map at Appendix 1)* – Gransha Fern is designated as a Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI). It comprises fen scrubland and mature broad woodland and adjoins the former nursery lands above. The Planning Appraisal report advises that the area could potentially be used for uses compatible with the SLNCI such as horticulture, leisure and outdoor recreation uses. Given the SLNCI designation, there is likely to be very limited market interest in this area of land.

3.4 Given the different current and potential future uses for the site there a number of options that Members may wish to consider –

OPTION	SUMMARY
Option 1 - Progress with the disposal of the entire site	<p>+ will secure a capital receipt for the Council and removes the ongoing management and maintenance implications</p> <p>- limits the opportunity for the Council to use the site to help deliver on its wider environmental ambitions</p>
Option 2 – Progress disposal of the c110acres which is considered as	<p>+ will secure a capital receipt for the Council</p>

prime agricultural land and the c3acres of the previous farmhouse dwelling and surrounding land and retain the remaining c24acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + allows an opportunity for the Council to use the remaining sites for uses which will help deliver on its wider environmental buildings - will require some ongoing management and maintenance implications however these will be minimised as it is only part of the site
Option 3 – Retain all 137acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limits the opportunity for the Council to use the site to help deliver on its wider environmental ambitions - does not secure a capital receipt and will require ongoing management and maintenance by the Council

3.5 Officers would consider that Option 2 provides the best opportunity for the Council and would recommend that this option is agreed by Members. This will allow for the disposal of the agricultural lands and the former farmhouse buildings which will realise a capital receipt for the Council. The combined remaining acreage of c24acres will allow the opportunity to look at a range of options which will help the Council deliver on its environmental ambitions, subject to any planning approvals required with further details on this to be brought back to Committee in due course. If this is agreed then the Council will look at what innovative uses could be available for this land (e.g. renewable energy etc.)

3.6 If Option 2 is agreed the Estates Unit will continue to progress the marketing with the appointed selling agents. Following marketing and receipt of offers, a report brought back to the Committee for approval of any proposed disposals. Terms of the proposed sales are to be agreed by the Estates Unit and Legal Services.

3.7 **Financial and Resources Implications**

If Option 2 is agreed by Members the sale of the c110acres of agricultural land and c3acres of the former farmhouse and outbuildings at Beechvale Farm would provide a capital receipt. The retention of the remaining acres of land would provide a potential site for other uses to help deliver on the Council's environmental ambitions.

Equality and Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.

ii. Half Moon Lake – Acquisition of land from Northern Ireland Housing Executive at Gweedore Crescent, Suffolk Court

3.8 The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) recently declared 0.168 acres of land surplus to requirements at Gweedore Crescent, Belfast. NIHE subsequently instructed LPS to undertake a D1 trawl of public sector organisations and seek initial expressions of interest in acquiring the site. The site is outlined red on the map attached at Appendix 2 along with the existing Council owned Half Moon Lake site shaded green. The site consists of mature woodland and on the ground appears to be a continuation of the Half Moon Lake site with no boundary features separating the two lands. The remainder of the boundary has a secure

palisade fence which ties in with the Half Moon Lake boundary fencing. As the land is contiguous with the Half Moon Lake site the C&NS Department has expressed an interest in acquiring the land to ensure the maximum amount of open green space is made available to the local community. The Department would plan to utilise the land as part of their ongoing education and outreach programme delivering workshops and events on the land focusing on biodiversity, environmental and health outcomes for the local community.

- 3.9 The Estates Management Unit responded on behalf of the City and Neighbourhood Services (CN&S) Department and expressed an interest in acquiring the site subject to the approval of SP&R. NIHE have now offered to dispose of the site to the Council, subject to their own approval process, on the basis of a 999 year lease at a nominal rent to include a covenant restricting the use to public amenity space only.

Fullerton Park Pavilion – Licence Agreement to Dunmurry Community Association

3.10 **Key Issues**

Fullerton Park transferred to the Council in April 2015 under Local Government Reform. Dunmurry Community Association currently have a Licence Agreement with the Council in respect of a portion of the Pavilion located within the Park (location map at Appendix 3). Officers have now agreed that the existing Licence Agreement should be renewed for a period of 3 years from 30th September 2018 and Members are asked to approve the renewal of the licence agreement.

3.11 **Financial and Resources Implications**

Staff resources from the Estates Unit and Legal Services will finalise the conveyance. No capital amount is being sought for the lease, with the intention that a nominal rent (if requested) will be reserved to reflect a restriction in use to public amenity space only.

Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.

Gloucester Street office - Licence Agreement

- 3.12 At its meeting on 25th October 2019 SP&R were asked to note the update on the disposal and marketing process in respect of a site comprising former Council offices at Gloucester Street, with further updates to be brought back to Committee as appropriate in relation to the future development or disposal of the site. The Gloucester Street Offices have since been included in the Strategic Sites Assessment (SSA) which is currently assessing some Council owned assets and adjacent public sector land to consider locations which would maximise the contribution to the Council's strategic objectives set out in the Belfast Agenda and other strategic documents. The offices and car park at Gloucester Street remain vacant at this time.

<p>3.13</p> <p>3.14</p> <p>3.15</p>	<p>The Council has been approached by Heron Bros who are the main Contractors of new office accommodation adjacent to our site which is on behalf of a private developer. Heron Bros have requested to use the car parking at Gloucester Street as their main compound for the period of construction of this new office accommodation. The car park is shaded blue on the map in Appendix 1.</p> <p>Heron Bros have initially sought a Licence Agreement for a period of one year and then on a month to month basis thereafter. Heron Bros have been made aware that the site may be released for development by Council within this time frame and are happy to take on a licence agreement on the understanding that the Council can terminate at any time should we require possession. Detailed terms of the Agreement to be agreed by the Estates Manager and Legal Services.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Heron Bros to pay the Council a Licence fee to be agreed by the Estates Manager and cover all reasonable Legal Fees associated with the Agreement.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Map of Beechvale Farm</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Map showing site at Gweedore Crescent outlined red and Council owned Half Moon Lake shaded green.</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Map showing the Fullerton Park Pavilion outlined in red.</p> <p>Appendix 4 - Map showing Gloucester Street Offices outlined in red</p>