

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU ROCHFORD OFFICE**1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) is seeking to extend its premises in Back Lane, Rochford to improve facilities and office space. For funding purposes a longer-term lease is necessary and a request has been made to the Council for a new lease, subject to formal planning consent being granted to the extension proposal.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Council constructed the building and owns the freehold of the premises, which are occupied in part by the Rochford OAP day centre and in part by the CAB under the terms of a 21 year lease. The lease commenced in 1994 and includes 5 car parking spaces and one dedicated space in Back Lane car park for the CAB's use. The CAB pays a market rental for its premises, which are funded by grant support from the Council.
- 2.2 In April 2002 the CAB sought the Council's views regarding its proposal to extend the premises and, in principle, this was supported, subject to consideration of the detailed scheme by the submission of a planning application (Minute 204/03 refers).
- 2.3 Plans have been prepared and an application has now been received for planning approval. This follows the original scheme that was outlined to the Council in 2002 and involves an extension of the premises over two of the car parking spaces utilised by CAB adjacent to Back Lane. The application is presently being processed and will be considered by the Planning Services Committee in due course.
- 2.4 In order to secure funding for the scheme the CAB requires a longer-term lease arrangement and has requested a period of 25 years. Funding is being sought from external sources and the CAB has confirmed that it is not looking to the Council to fund the project.

3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The CAB provides an important public service and its role is developing, resulting in a need for increased facilities.
- 3.2 As landowner, the Council has indicated its support in principle for the scheme and the use of the two parking bays to accommodate the extension. The planning application, however, will examine the details of the proposal and determine its acceptability.

- 3.3 The current lease expires in 2015. The rental is based on a market rate which is currently funded by grant support from the Council. A new lease will be necessary for any extension of the premises. Subject to the grant of planning consent, it would be reasonable to agree to extend the lease term to assist the CAB in its funding arrangements.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 These would be addressed through the planning process.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The CAB has confirmed that it is seeking to finance the project without funding from the Council.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Any alteration or change to the premises would require revision of the lease.

7 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The premises are within Rochford Parish.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That, subject to the grant of planning approval, a new lease be granted to the CAB for a term of 21 years at a market rental and such other terms and conditions as the Head of Legal Services considers appropriate.

Albert Bugeja

Head of Legal Services

Background Papers:-

Letter from CAB dated 2nd June 2005 For further information please contact Albert Bugeja on:-

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