

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: RESOURCES SUB COMMITTEE - 7TH FEBRUARY 2000

SUBJECT: 4 - 6 CLEMENS STREET, ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA

FROM: COMMISSIONING TEAM

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To bring Councillors up to date with the progress being made in respect of raising funding to purchase and renovate 4- 6 Clemens Street and to seek a decision on a request to extend the period by which to purchase the building.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Resources Sub Committee decided at its meeting in August 1998 that the District Council could help initiate the Leamington Spa Conservation Trust's work by purchasing 4-6 Clemens Street for the Trust to subsequently purchase. The intention was that the Conservation Trust would then raise funds, restore the property (which is a Listed Building) to its former glory and sell it to Age Concern who would also be raising funds so that it could be used as its County Headquarters. Through this process the Trust would then have sufficient funds to be able to afford feasibility studies on the purchase and restoration of other historic buildings in Leamington Spa. The Trust had not been able to do that previously.
- 2.2 The property was purchased by this Council on 4th December 1998. The original agreement was that the Conservation Trust and/or Age Concern would purchase the property from the Council at the price at which it was obtained - £110,000. The Council agreed to hold the property for a year, until December 1999. However, at a meeting of the Sub Committee in March 1999 Councillors agreed that a report should be presented at this meeting to provide information on the likelihood of the Trust/Age Concern purchasing the property within the stipulated time.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 18th October 1999, the Resources Sub Committee agreed to give up to the end of March 2000 for the Conservation Trust and/or Age Concern to purchase the property but that at the end of that period Regenesi would then be able to purchase the property from the District Council for £110,000.
- 2.3 The Conservation Trust and Age Concern have been working to raise funds for the purchase and the restoration works. The Conservation Trust has now received a letter stating that the Heritage Lottery Fund will not consider the Trust's application until 29th March 2000. The Conservation Trust has therefore written to ask if the Council would agree to extend the deadline until

the end of June 2000. Regenesis would still be able to purchase the property from the Council if the Trust were not able to buy the property by the end of June 2000.

- 2.5 The Single Regeneration Budget Round 5 bid (SRB5) for Old Town includes provision in the 200/2001 financial year for the purchase of a property to act as the headquarters of Regenesis - the Leamington Old Town Community Partnership. Regenesis is currently using 4/6 Clemens Street as its headquarters. Regenesis maintains its stance if the Conservation Trust or Age Concern are unable to purchase the property then it would like to purchase the property instead on the same basis as the Trust.
- 2.6 The extension of the deadline would not expose the Council to risk as it will get back its money one way or the other. However, any further extension beyond the end of June 2000 would affect Regenesis' plans and Councillors may therefore wish to make it clear that, if they are minded to agree an extension of time, that this is the very last time the Council will agree to do so.

3. KEY ISSUES STRATEGIES

Key Issue policy EC6 which aims to support the implementation of the Old Town Community Audit is of direct relevance to the principle of the regeneration work in Old Town that this project is trying to achieve.

4. DECISIONS REQUIRED

Do Councillors agree to the proposal to extend the deadline for the purchase of 4/6 Clemens Street by the Conservation Trust/Age Concern to the end of June 2000 but that if the Trust or Age Concern are unable to buy it by that time, that the property is then sold to Regenesis at the price for which this Council bought it?

Chris Elliott
Commissioning Director

Background Papers: Report to Resources Sub Committee in 24th August 1998, 8th February 1999, 31st March 1999 and 18th October 1999. Letter from Conservation Trust dated 26th January 2000.

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Areas Affected: Brunswick Ward