

Appendix 1 – Formal Complaints received in respect of the Disposal and Acquisition

Email 1.

From: David Bilbe <David.Bilbe@guildford.gov.uk>

Sent: 17 January 2022 11:32

To: Paul Spooner <Paul.Spooner@guildford.gov.uk>; Joss Bigmore <joss.bigmore@guildford.gov.uk>; Claire Morris <Claire.Morris@guildford.gov.uk>; Nigel Manning <Nigel.Manning@guildford.gov.uk>

Subject: Liongate

Dear All. I have read carefully the information provided in relation to the sale of Liongate. I have deep concerns about the sale and I am formally requesting that this decision be reviewed independently under the auspices of O and S. Without reciting all of the information my concerns relate to

- The reference to a hurried decision and urgency to dispose of the asset
- the reference to a £20m valuation excluding the additional value from the mezzanine level(s) which would add an additional 10% to the value
- the speed at which delegated approval authority was granted following completion
- the inadequate exposition of flood risk/mitigation

This sale was rushed through in my view and there appears from the information which I have been given to allow sufficient value for it to be disposed of at least book value and not at a loss.

I am asking that O and S assign a body – possible an independent accountant – to review this decision and to produce an independent report and view.

With regards

David Bilbe

Email 2.

From: Joss Bigmore <joss.bigmore@guildford.gov.uk>

Sent: 18 January 2022 08:04

To: Diane Owens <Diane.Owens@guildford.gov.uk>; Tom Horwood <Tom.Horwood@waverley.gov.uk>; Claire Morris <Claire.Morris@guildford.gov.uk>

Cc: Dawn Hudd <Dawn.Hudd@guildford.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Liongate [UNC]

Dear All,

I think it best if I stay out of this now. I do not want to be accused of interfering in any process that may or may not occur. However I would insist that any investigation looks at the whole period of GBC ownership including the purchase which many Councillors believe was rushed, ignored the risk of an unsecure tenancy and had no Plan B if the tenant were to leave early.

Over to you,

Joss

Email 3.

From:

Sent: 21 January 2022 13:23

To: Tom.horwood@guildford.gov.uk

Cc: Subject: GBC's SALE OF LIONGATE..

Hello Tom

You won't remember me, but I was a Lead GBC Councillor 2015-19.

We discussed the possibility of merging the refuse services, Waverley and Guildford, but we didn't find an answer at that time..

I send my congratulations on your joint Chief Executive position, and wish you well – hoping for good things.

I write to request your further involvement please into the Council's Freehold sale of the Liongate office building, which I think was a very big mistake for a number of reasons.

There was no proper reason to sell such a valuable Freehold asset, particularly in the depths of the first Covid scare..

I have been in the property business for over 57 years, 47 of those in Guildford. Now semi-retired, but keeping my "added value" credentials intact.

Firstly, I simply cannot understand why the property was not kept and switched into the desperately needed housing stock – such a simple move.

The property was marketed in a great rush, before the Permitted Development rights were established, losing the Council a significant value uplift.

Even worse, there was apparently no "overage clause" in the contract, so the Council could share any value increase if further units were obtained.

That was particularly negligent, as the purchasers achieved an extra 18 units very readily as soon as they had purchased

I think the situation certainly needs an Independent Inquiry, so that the serious misgivings circulating Guildford can be properly aired and considered.

After I ceased being a Councillor, there was a KPMG Inquiry into the letting of Burchatts Barn, a relatively trivial matter, on the basis that certain Councillors used to hold their family socials in there.

On that basis, there can be no sensible reason why an Independent Inquiry should not be held into the worrying disposal of Liongate, preferably by an outside body, not KPMG..

I am hoping that you will please respond to this formal request from me, and authorise the requested Independent Inquiry.

With many thanks in advance.

Kind regards,