

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

To: Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

**LAND AND PROPERTY ISSUES IN PORTBALLINTRAE
AND LAND DISPUTE ISSUE AT WESTBAY, PORTRUSH**

18 August 2015

For Decision

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority	Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Assets
Objective	Protecting our natural heritage and being economically prudent
Lead Officer	Moira Quinn
Cost: (If applicable)	

1.0 Background

At a meeting of the former Coleraine Borough Council's Corporate Affairs Committee on 16 September 2014, members considered a comprehensive report on a number of land issues in Portballintrae and a land ownership issue at West Bay Promenade, Portrush. These issues concerned Council owned land and land leased and owned by the Sweeney family.

At that meeting it was agreed to authorise the preparation of a more detailed land and property Options Report, including independent valuations and legal advice.

2.0 Summary of issues

The main issues for consideration by Committee are as follows:

- West Bay Promenade Disputed Title
- Land exchange proposals submitted by Mr Sweeney, on behalf of Seaport (NI) Limited and Acorn (NI) Limited as a means of settling the West Bay Promenade title issue; and
- Historic land issues in the Portballintrae area.

The Options Report (see Appendix 1) brings together these issues under one comprehensive report. The report outlines the advantages and disadvantages of each option in legal and financial terms and the potential impact on local residents.

Legal and valuation reports referred to in the Options Report are contained in Appendix 2 and 3.

For ease of reference Appendix 4 outlines the schedule of meetings when the issues were discussed and a brief summary of the Committee/Council decision.

Appendix 5 provides an overview map of the land issues in Portballintrae

Appendix 6 shows the disputed land at West Bay Promenade, Portrush.

3.0 Current Position

This issue has prompted an almost unprecedented level of interest from the community in Portballintrae who have a long history of involvement with the land owner in this case. Indeed the final presentation to Council from the local action group was presented through a barrister instructed by a firm of Belfast based solicitors.

Given the sensitivities involved, the significant time that the issues had been under negotiation and the imminent transfer of authority from CBC to CC&GBC CBC decided not to make any decision on any of the proposed transfer options but to transfer the file as an 'open file' to CC&GBC for its consideration.

In relation to the title issue regarding the West Bay Promenade this matter has been referred to the CC&GBC legal team to progress.

Recommendation

It is recommended that a site visit be arranged for Portballintrae, with all elected members invited to attend. This would allow for a "walk through" of the complex issues on site, and also provide an opportunity to brief those members with no former knowledge of the issues.