

Portfolio Holder Decision

Smallholdings New Lettings

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property
Date of decision	14 October 2022
	<p>Signed</p>  <p>Pp</p>

1. Decision taken

- 1.1 The Portfolio Holder approves the grant of a new Farm Business Tenancy at Famington Farm, Bidford-on-Avon to the preferred bidder on terms outlined in paragraph 2.3 below and acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources.

2. Reasons for decisions

- 2.1 Following the death of the tenant farmer and the removal of any Agricultural Holdings Act status on this farm, a new occupier was needed to manage and take forward the stewardship of this asset.
- 2.2 Aligned to the Warwickshire County Farms and Smallholdings Strategy a competitive tendering process was undertaken. This process followed key asset plan principles, promoting good standards of stewardship whilst providing equal opportunities for entrants to bid. A competitive tendering process provides a level playing field for new entrants into the farming industry.
- 2.3 The terms proposed in the tender reflect the market rental value for a 10 year Farm Business Tenancy from October 2022 at a rent of £45,015.39 pa. It will be a fully repairing and insuring Farm Business Tenancy based on an initial rent of £45,015.39 pa with a rent review every 3rd year on the 1st October. It is proposed that the Tenancy will commence in October 2022.
- 2.4 The Council will be required to undertake some enabling works including refurbishments to the farmhouse to meet decent homes standards together with repair works to address impact damage and drainage matters. The cost of these works is estimated at £50,000 which will be met from the Smallholdings Capital Maintenance budget.

3. Background information

- 3.1 Famington Farm which is situated in Bidford-on-Avon extends to 148.36 acres and includes a farmhouse, farm buildings, mixed arable and pastureland together with woodland. The Farm had been subject to a historic Agricultural Holdings Act lease which came to an end following the tenant passing away.
- 3.2 A new 10 year Farm Business Tenancy has been marketed via a competitive tender process which was advertised nationally. Due to the quality of the land and a range of modern buildings, we received a high level of interest with strong rental offers.
- 3.3 Candidates were assessed and shortlisted in accordance with the terms of the invitation to tender. The shortlisted candidates were then invited to attend an interview process. The outcome of this interview process has identified a preferred applicant for this farm.

4. Financial implications

4.1 Famington Farm – 10 year fully repairing and insuring Farm Business Tenancy based on an initial rent of £45,015.39 pa. Rent review every 3rd year on the 1st October. Proposed start date October 2022. Landlord enabling works to include refurbishments to the farmhouse to meet decent homes standards plus repair works to address impact damage and drainage matters (Budget estimated at £50,000).

5. Environmental implications

5.1 This new letting presents an opportunity to consider energy efficiencies within the works proposed. The council will consider the potential to improve on the existing EPC ratings when refurbishing the farmhouse building.

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Assistant Director	Sarah Duxbury Assistant Director Governance and Policy
Strategic Director	Rob Powell Strategic Director for Resources
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Butlin Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property

Urgent matter?	No
Confidential or exempt?	Yes

Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?

No

List of background papers

None

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Peter Butlin

Corporate Board – Rob Powell

Legal – Sarah Duxbury

Finance – Andrew Felton

Equality – n/a

Democratic Services – Deborah Moseley and Isabelle Moorhouse

Councillors – Warwick, Birdi, Boad and Philipps

Local Member(s): Daren Pemberton