

DECISION NOTICE

Notice is given that the following decision has been taken under the Provisions set out in the Council's Constitution

Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Finance

Date: 23 January 2014

Decision in the matter of: Mode Cottage, Mobberley

Decision: That approval be given to proceed with the purchase of Mode Cottage for the sum of £470,000 and to enter into a Deed of Release/Modification with the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance in respect of the covenants affecting the use of the land.

Background: Based on the October 2012 School Census, pupil forecasts for the Knutsford Planning Area indicate that there will be a significant shortfall of places and forecasts for Mobberley CE Primary indicate that there will be insufficient places at the school with more children on roll than places available. This trend is forecast to continue reaching a shortfall of 70 pupil places by 2018 based on current admission patterns.

As a consequence Mobberley C of E Primary School is in urgent need of extending and remodelling to provide two additional classrooms together with associated storage, circulation and cloak areas. Due to the restricted nature of the school site, an original proposal was to construct the necessary extension on the existing rear playground of the school, and to negotiate with the adjacent land-owner for acquisition of 615m² of farmland which would become the replacement playground. However, following protracted negotiations with the land-owner an agreement could not be reached and therefore the option of acquiring Mode Cottage is considered the best alternative option.

The acquisition of Mode Cottage would provide a site sufficient to facilitate this expansion and would also create an independent access to the school which is needed to secure the future of the site. The property was valued at £400,000 on 9 July 2014 but, unfortunately, despite protracted negotiations the seller will not consider offers less than £470,000. As acquisition by private treaty is considered to be the only viable way to achieve the early expansion of the school it is recommended that it is purchased at the asking price.

Background Documents: The background papers relating to this matter may be inspected by contacting the report writer.

Approved:

Signed
Councillor Peter Raynes (Cabinet Member for Finance)

Date:

23 January 2014

**Advising
Officer:**

Signed
Joanne Jones (Property Services Manager)