



lowton east neighbourhood development forum< lendf99@gmail.com>

Lowton Civic Hall

1 message

J.Mitchell@wigan.gcsx.gov.uk <J.Mitchell@wigan.gcsx.gov.uk>

Fri, Dec 20, 2013 at 12:00
PM

To: lendf99@gmail.com

Cc: P.McKevitt@wigan.gov.uk, P.McGinty@wigan.gov.uk

Dear Sirs

Thank you for your recent e-mail which Donna Hall has passed to me and asked me to respond to on her behalf. I think it is important to make clear that the fundamental decision taken by the Council was that the Civic Venues lost money and the Council could no longer support financially their operation, and so they should be closed. The Council did, however, take the view that if someone else was willing to take on these venues and run them without any subsidy from the Council, then it would consider such a proposal rather than closing the venues and disposing of the sites on the open market. Eighth Wonder made the offer which gave the Council not only the best price for the taxpayers but also relieved them of the ongoing costs of maintaining and operating the venues which has saved the Council over £450,000 since they took over the operation of the venues. As Eighth Wonder are taking a transfer of the freehold of the property they take all the responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the venues so the Council has saved money in this area also. The Council never intended to impose any obligations on the purchaser as to how they operate the venues and they are now for all intents and purposes private businesses. Any concerns as to the way they operate need to be taken up with Eighth Wonder.

Covenants were placed on the properties restricting their use to leisure and community use however this was done to ensure that the properties could not be closed and sold on for a lucrative alternative use without the owners having to account to the Council for any profit they make as a result. They do not give the Council power to dictate to the operator how they should maintain or decorate the premises.

Although it has taken far longer to complete the sales than envisaged I am satisfied that the agreement with Eighth Wonder has achieved the best deal for the taxpayers for the borough in that it has already saved the Council a significant amount in running costs as well as keeping the venues open.

Regards

John Mitchell
Assistant Director - Legal
Resources
Wigan Council
Town Hall
Library Street
Wigan
WN1 1YN

Tel: 01942 827026

Internal: 2026

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