

To receive a report on the purchase of land at Pillmere and consider any actions and associated expenditure

Report to: Services Committee

Date of Report: 11.02.26

Officer Writing the Report: Town Clerk / RFO

Pursuant to: minute 90/25/26 – Services Committee 11 December 2025

Purpose of the report: To provide an update on the transfer of land at Harebell Close and Campion Close, Pillmere.

Officer's Recommendations

Members are encouraged to answer any questions regarding the transfer process.

Members are advised to agree to the Chancel Indemnity Insurance at a cost of £22.68 per parcel of land as referred to in paragraph 7.23 of Coodes Report on Title allocated to budget code 6595 EMF Legal and Professional Fees.

Members are advised to delegate to the Town Clerk to obtain the relevant Searches to ascertain ownership of the trees adjoining number 9 Harebell Close, allocating associated cost within budget to code 6595 EMF Legal and Professional Fees.

To note the latest update.

Report Summary

The resolution agreed at the December Services Committee meeting has been actioned. However, the Town Council's Solicitor is still awaiting a response from Taylor Wimpey's Solicitor regarding the outstanding enquiries. This matter has been chased on numerous occasions, and the Town Clerk has also contacted Taylor Wimpey directly. The Town Clerk has requested confirmation of which enquiries Coodes are still outstanding:

I can confirm the outstanding enquiries are in relation to our Search of the Index Map result which revealed various Title Numbers. This indicates an overlap and so we requested for the Transfer Plan to be reviewed.

The other outstanding enquiries relate to copy planning documents revealed in our Local Search (Section 106 Agreement dated 25 September 1998, Tree Preservation Order dated 15 November 2000 ((E2/00/00870/TPO), and Reserved Matters (E2/00/00471/REM)) which we requested and have not yet been provided with. These need to be checked to ensure the same do not apply to/affect the land the Town Council are acquiring.

In relation to the trees, Taylor Wimpey have stated the following:

'...the purchaser will need to rely upon their own enquires / searches on the land adjoining number 9 at Harebell Close. We do not hold records of the trees in this area.'

We also await confirmation from Taylor Wimpey that they agree to settle our revised costs as highlighted to them on 27 November 2025.

Today, 12.02.26 we received a response from Taylor Wimpey Solicitors confirming they are still waiting a response from the technical team and have chased them again this morning.

On behalf of the Town Council, the Town Clerk has reiterated the importance of completing the transfer as soon as practicable, particularly as we approach Spring, when the growth of the areas in question will require increased maintenance.

Following receipt of the Report on Title, Members requested that Taylor Wimpey cover the cost of the Indemnity Insurance (£22.68 per parcel of land). Taylor Wimpey has declined this request. Coodes Solicitors advise that the Town Council proceed with obtaining the Indemnity Insurance. They can arrange this on the Council's behalf upon completion of the transfer, and the premiums will be reflected within Coodes' completion statement.

Section 7.23 Report on Title:

7.23 Chancel Repair Search

A chancel repair search shows whether the owner of a property may be liable to contribute towards the cost of repairs to the chancel of a parish church. We would advise you not to contact any parish churches directly in relation to chancel repair liability, as this may limit the availability of indemnity insurance.

The chancel repair searches were provided by PinPoint Chancel on 12 September 2025. The result of the searches showed that the Property is within the historical boundary of a parish which continues to have a potential chancel repair liability.

It is therefore recommended that you obtain chancel repair liability indemnity insurance and I would advise that the cost of each premium is £22.68. The policy is in perpetuity and would cover successors in title. I have asked the Transferor if they would cover the cost of the insurance and I will revert to you in this regard.

Budgets

Budget Codes: 6595 EMF Legal and Professional Fees (Grounds and Premises)

Budget Availability: £4,089

Signature of Officer:

Town Clerk / RFO