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## Bargain basement Council Sales

Posted by John Franklyn - 2008/02/28 01:50

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### The Disposal of Council Assets at Auction

Some questions really need to be asked, but more importantly answers have to be given.

Around 50 lots were sold and a value of £1,000,000 attached, the auction brought in around the £2,000,000 mark, double the estimate.

Now, either someone under estimated to encourage bidding or some people realised the true land value and have just walked off with plots of land that will prove to be a developers dream.

There is going to be one loser in all this and that loser is going to the resident because of a Chief Executive who is a loose cannon.

It is unfortunate that these plots were all put up for auction about a month ago but the majority of the people we elected never had a clue about these "bargain basement" sales.

Firstly, the fact that the Chief Executive Steve Wellings never let elected members know about these bargains was confirmed in an email dated 27th February 2008 in which he said,

#### Quote Chief Executive Steve Wellings

"Firstly, I would like to apologise unreservedly for the fact that we did not let you know in advance about the schedule of assets we were putting up for sale. In our haste to try to arrange the best situation from an asset management and financial view (both laudable aims I am sure you would agree) the sequencing of involving you went awry."

Have I misunderstood this, he, as the senior council officer allowed tax payers lands and assets to be placed for auction, but failed to consult and inform the very people we elected.

I now ask, just what, as Leader of the Council are you going to do about this Andrew Eade. I know what I am going to do and that is to make a first call for the

Resignation of Chief Executive Steve Wellings.

#### Steve Wellings goes onto say

"I would like to make it absolutely clear that no deals have been done, that the person who has "offered to buy the site at Arleston" according to the Shropshire Star has not to my knowledge contacted our Asset and Property Management Section "

You already got things wrong with regards informing elected members and then went on to get things wrong again, because they were contacted and the Leader of The council was well aware of the issue, hence this plot was withdrawn from sale.

So, again, someone has strayed away from truth here and here I make a second call for the

Resignation of chief Executive Steve Wellings

#### Steve Wellings carried on and said

"that the comment made by Cllr Williams in that article was not an official comment endorsed by this council, and that the comment by Cllr Carter at the foot of the article was the true position"

Again a misleading statement as a generous member of the community, offered to buy the plot, submitting a bid to auction and had the intention of turning it over for community use, for the ultimate benefit of young people in the community.

It was this generous offer, that Andrew Eade was well aware of and involved in, that actually caused another U turn and the plot retained in Council ownership.

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Why?

Because a resident made a generous offer, to benefit the community which clearly caused a level of embarrassment to those flogging off our assets.

I am also informed that not every Councillor, who had plots for sale in their wards were informed.

Herel make a third call for the

Resignation of Chief Executive Steve Wellings

This whole debacle has brought the Council into disrepute and those responsible should now be held accountable – starting with Steve Wellings.

It makes me think,

What else is happening that we and the elected members should know about but don't?

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## Re:Bargain basement Council Sales

Posted by HOOP - 2008/02/28 13:06

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...and don't forget that as I mentioned last week when I posted the link to the auction site - according to T&W's own web site, on a page that hasn't been updated since 2006, they "currently have no land or property for sale".

As for other deals having been struck - why do you think that all the previous administration's proposals for building on the Town Park have failed to reconsider the disposal of land, unless it's because deals have already been struck. Personally, the more I see of this council, the more I wish they'd all just \*\*\*k off and die.

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## Re:Bargain basement Council Sales

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/02/28 13:27

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And still Wellings is pushing this as a success and there is nothing Eade can or will do about it.

It would be good if the Tories never won at the by-elections, they would then still have to listen to others although Eade has surrounded himself with his guardians.

Labour and Tories - you can't get a fag paper between them.

Independents - have only one or true really true Independents.

Lib Dem - nothing local

UKIP - No local voice

TAWPA are in a very good position.

I still feel that Wellings should go

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## The FULL email WELLINGS sent out

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/02/28 14:15

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From: Wellings, Steve (Chief-Exec)  
To: Members  
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2008 4:33 PM  
Subject: Disposal of land etc by auction

Dear Members

Having discussed this and corresponded with some of you I thought I ought to clearly put the record straight on this, especially in view of the rather unfortunate and misleading comments in last night's Shropshire Star.

Firstly, I would like to apologise unreservedly for the fact that we did not let you know in advance about the schedule of assets we were putting up for sale. In our haste to try to arrange the best situation from an asset management and financial view (both laudable aims as I am sure you would agree) the sequencing of involving and informing you went awry. I would nevertheless say that the ward members directly affected were informed some 4 weeks before the sale and have therefore had an opportunity to make their views known since, and that Asset and Property Management have listened carefully to those views. I am sure that this is a lesson that has now been learned by all the officers involved, and I know that these officers are very highly thought of by you as elected members and by their colleagues.

The idea of identifying these surplus assets and arranging to dispose of them was definitely the right course of action to take. They were not providing value for money and were in some cases costing more to administer than they returned. My understanding is that we were sending 67 lots off to auction - clearly the most cost-efficient way of disposing of them - but that having listened to some objections this was reduced to 55.

The guide price for the 67 was around £1m but I am absolutely delighted to be able to tell you that we have achieved around £1.9m (figures still to be confirmed) for the 55 lots we have sold today.

I want to make it absolutely crystal clear to all that the remaining 12 lots will now be looked into carefully before we decide what to do with them. If they are then sold, that will be done in an open and transparent way in the best interests of the taxpayer. The prices that we have achieved today, significantly over our estimates, require us to look at eventual disposals in the same way.

I would therefore also like to make it absolutely clear that no deals have been done, that the person who has "offered to buy the site at Arleston" according to the Shropshire Star has not to my knowledge contacted our Asset and Property Management section, that the comment made by Cllr Williams in that article was not an official comment endorsed by this Council, and that the comment made by Cllr Carter at the foot of the article was the true position.

If anyone wishes to discuss this further with me then I am happy to do so, but I thought I should tell you the position.

Yours sincerely

Steve Wellings

Chief Executive  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
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TF3 4LD  
Tel: 01952 380102  
Fax: 01952 380104

This is not factually correct and this should see Wellings disciplined.

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## Re: The FULL email WELLINGS sent out

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/02/28 20:31

and now, Steve Wellings has sent out another email, saying that Andrew Eade and Eric Carter were shown the first email prior to it being sent to members.

So, was this Andrew Eade not sticking to the truth almost stitching up TAWPA.

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## Re:The FULL email WELLINGS sent out

Posted by Jamie59 - 2008/02/29 00:37

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johnfranklyn wrote:

So, was this Andrew Eade not sticking to the truth almost stitching up TAWPA.

I think Andrew has got to be very careful. I hear there is more than a little concern amongst members of his own party about his being manipulated by Wellings, and supporting Gary (I've got more than 2 faces)Davies for Mayor.

He is upsetting TAWPA, who put him in overall control, and if they win Horsesay and the Liberals win Wrockwarddine, which is a possibliy because of the U turn over the City Region, then I'm afraid Andrews bubble is going to burst BIG style :woohoo:

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## Re:The FULL email WELLINGS sent out

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/03/03 10:34

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Andrew is walking on thin ice and I understand that people are getting whipped to death.

Andrew is playing games and I would suggest that if his own party are unhappy about him being manipulated, they either tell him or go for a leadership challenge.

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