

# Draft Asset Management Plan 2023/24

For Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board

## Summary

**Lead Member:**– Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

**Lead Director:** Lee Colyer Director of Finance, Policy & Development (S151 Officer)

**Head of Service:** David Candlin, Head of Economic Development and Property

**Report Author:** David Candlin, Head of Economic Development and Property

**Classification:** Public document (non-exempt)

**Wards Affected:** All

Approval Timetable	Date
Management Board	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
Portfolio Holder	TBC
Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
Cabinet	8 <sup>th</sup> December 2022

**This report relates to the following corporate priorities:**

The Strategic Direction, Focus on Five provides the overall priorities and objectives for the Council . All assets are managed in accordance with this and the property portfolio is managed and maintained having regard to the objectives within the framework of legislation and the state of the current property market. The Asset Management Plan is a fundamental contributor to core business resource planning and to empowering wellbeing within the Borough, as set out in the Council’s Strategic Direction. It also recognises the importance of the declaration of a Climate Emergency by Full Council in July 2019, with the Asset Management Plan being critical to support a reduction in carbon emissions from its own estate.

## Recommendations

Officer recommendations as supported by the Portfolio Holder:

1. That Cabinet approves the AMP for 2023/24 for consultation.

# 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Asset Management Plan (AMP) for the period 2023/24 provides a management strategy for the Council's property assets. It details the principles, procedures and mechanisms to be adopted that effectively and efficiently manage the Property Asset Portfolio. It summarises the value and composition of the current portfolio and evaluates specific actions for the previous financial year relating to the Council's property estate and identifies the main portfolio ambitions for 2023/24. The AMP has been produced in October 2022 part way through the financial year and therefore figures and details will change as the year progresses. Some figures are subject to updating as the year progresses and will be added to this report as the report is finalised.
- 1.2 The portfolio is currently valued at £102.98M (31/03/2022).
- 1.3 So far this financial year the Council has negotiated lease renewals, new lettings and rent reviews to an increased value of approximately £37,549 annually on Council property, excluding transfers to the new property company. Property and Estates Services have established and will support the activities of Tunbridge Wells Property Holdings Ltd.
- 1.4 All property rentals that are subject to an annual rental increase at the RPI were increased over this financial year to date, resulting in a rental increase of £9,366 per annum (included in the figure given in 1.3). These reviews are usually based on the previous year's RPI figure which was 9% for April 2021/22.
- 1.5 Vacant space on the portfolio has been reduced by letting or licensing space to reduce occupation liabilities and to achieve rental income. Property and Estates continues with the disposal of surplus land held by the Council from the review that was commenced a few years ago, continuing to identify and dispose of specific sites for development for affordable housing, for private residential development or other regenerative purposes.
- 1.6 The Planned Maintenance Programme for the financial year 2022/23 will have completed works to the value of £750 K to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and to carry out priority repairs and upgrades to maintain assets and as indicated in the 10 year PMP additional planned maintenance expenditure will be required to maintain assets and prevent dilapidation.
- 1.7 Capital projects to the value of £2.9m are being progressed or completed in 2022/23.
- 1.9 No property assets have been acquired or disposed of during this period.
- 1.10 The AMP outlines the forward projection and management strategy for the Property Asset Portfolio in 2023/24. It identifies the aims and objectives for next year.
- 1.11 Following the declaration of global climate and biodiversity emergencies by the Council in July 2019 the Climate Emergency Advisory Panel contracted Laser to produce a Carbon Audit and a Carbon Reduction Plan. The initial results of this work in respect of the Councils estate are set out under sustainability in the cross-cutting considerations of this covering report. Recommendations arising from this work have

been included in the revised draft AMP 2023/24. The AMP will be critical in identifying, planning, and delivering on energy saving and carbon reduction interventions.

## 2. Options Considered

- 2.1 **Option 1:** That Cabinet approves the Draft Asset Management Plan 2023/24 for the public consultation, which will end on 31 December 2022.
- 2.2 **Option 2:** To not approve for consultation.

## 3. Preferred Option and Reason

- 3.1 **Option 1:** That Cabinet approves the Draft Asset Management Plan 2023/24 for public consultation.
- 3.2 The Asset Management Plan needs to be issued for consultation before adoption, which will help the authority to improve its efficiency and focus on delivering its objectives, aiding the decision-making process. The Asset Management Plan is a requirement of the Constitution and of local government statute.

## 4. Consultation on Options

- 4.1 The AMP is going through the due process in accordance with the Constitution.

## 5. Implementation

- 5.1 If Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board approve the draft for consultation it will need to consider the AMP before any recommendation is made to Cabinet.

## 6. Appendices and Background Documents

The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Plan Document
- Appendix B: Text for Ten Year Maintenance Plan
- Appendix C: 10 year PMP requirement
- Appendix D: Asset Register (Investment, Operational, Non-Operational)

## **7. Cross Cutting Issues**

### **A. Legal (including the Human Rights Act)**

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires councils to put in place proper processes for the management of their finances, including their assets. The Asset Management Plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to fulfilling its duties under the Act.

The Local Government Act 1972, section 111(1) empowers a local authority to do any thing (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions. This enables the Council as part of its asset management strategy to acquire and/or dispose of assets meeting relevant statutory requirements.

In particular, section 120(1)(2) of the 1972 Act enables the Council to acquire land to be used for the benefit, improvement or development of their area; or for the purpose of discharging the Council's functions.

Section 123(2) of the 1972 Act enables the Council to dispose of land or property for the best consideration reasonably obtainable, otherwise the consent of the Secretary of State will be required subject to certain conditions.

Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers as set out in the above statutory provisions.

#### **Human Rights Act**

There are no consequences arising from the recommendation that adversely affect or interfere with individuals' rights and freedoms as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Claudette Valmond, Interim Head of Legal Partnership

### **B. Finance and Other Resources**

Ensuring that assets are properly managed and accounted for will impact on maintenance expenditure, revenue income and capital receipts.

Jane Fineman, Head of Finance, Procurement and Parking

### **C. Staffing**

Work will be prioritised to be undertaken by permanent staff, but specialist consultants will be appointed when necessary, subject to approval, in order to deliver the aims and objectives of the AMP.

Nicky Carter, Head of HR, Customer Service and Culture

## **D. Risk Management**

Strong asset management should ensure that risks are quickly identified and that there are procedures in place to remedy them.

Jacqueline Tolhurst, Interim Estates Manager

## **E. Environment and Sustainability**

The Council passed a notice of motion of a Climate Emergency in July 2019, by agreeing an ambition to make the Council's operations carbon neutral by 2030. A carbon audit completed August 2020 (based on 2018/19 data) to identify the Council's carbon footprint shows that its buildings account for 68% of its total carbon emissions. Therefore, reducing emissions from buildings owned or for which the Council is responsible for, will be essential if the Council is to meet its ambition of being carbon neutral by 2030.

To achieve this ambition the following actions are recommended: -

- Recognise the scale of emission reduction required to achieve the objective.
- Provide clear policy direction relating to the property portfolio, estate rationalisation and long-term use of buildings.
- Develop a clear pathway in terms of the property portfolio to achieve the Council's ambition on being carbon neutral by 2030
- An assessment of each project including maintenance schemes to identify the impacts on carbon emission, cost effectiveness of retrofits, energy reduction measures etc. to make an informed decision on meeting the ambition of being carbon neutral by 2030. Including the long-term financial implications and reputational risks of not meeting this goal.

Karin Grey, Sustainability Manager

## **F. Community Safety**

There are no consequences of concern arising from this report.

Terry Hughes, Community Safety Manager

## **G. Equalities**

Decision-makers are reminded of the requirement under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups.

The Draft Asset Management plan includes proposals and projects which have the potential to support the aims of the duty to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with regard to:

- Property and projects – maintenance programmes that could impact on access for protected characteristics;
- Working with the Parish and Town Councils to progress community facility projects;
- Cranbrook and Paddock Wood;
- Managing the asset portfolio in accordance with the Council’s Focus on Five
- Managing the asset portfolio to deliver the needs of the Council’s services;
- Ongoing support for regeneration of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Cranbrook, Southborough and Paddock Wood Town Centres and working with land owners and Town and Parish Councils to progress potential opportunities including the provision of new community facilities for Cranbrook and Paddock Wood;
- Monitoring changes in compliance legislation relevant to the property portfolio and maintain and manage accordingly to ensure statutory compliance;
- Supporting development initiatives in Royal Tunbridge Wells, Cranbrook and Paddock Wood central areas.

One of the aims of the Property Management Strategy is to ensure that the portfolio is managed in accordance with the Council’s Equalities Policy, with Equalities Impact Assessments being undertaken as and when appropriate.

, Estates Manager

## **H. Data Protection**

No specific issues.

Jacqueline Tolhurst, Interim Estates Manager

## **I. Health and Safety**

No specific issues.

Mike Catling, Corporate Health and Safety Advisor

## **J. Health and Wellbeing**

No specific issues.

Rebecca Bowers

Health Improvement Team Leader