

Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26

IMPORTANT - Appendix 3 & 4 which forms part of this report contain exempt information of the kind described in paragraph 14 of Part 4 and paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Reason for the Report

1. To provide the Committee with an opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's updated Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26 and Annual Property Plan 2021-22

Structure of the Papers

2. To assist Members' preparation for the scrutiny as described above, papers attached to this cover report are as follows:

Appendix A: Cabinet Report Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26

Appendix 1: Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26

Appendix 2: Annual Property Plan 2021/22

Confidential Appendix 3: Core Office Condition Survey

Confidential Appendix 4: St David's Hall Condition Survey

Appendix B: Committee Letter 2021-11-17

Background

3. The Committee's Terms of Reference confer responsibility for scrutiny of the Council's property estate. This is comprised of both 'operational' property from which the Council operates and delivers its services, and 'non-operational' or 'investment' property which is often let for commercial return or to promote local employment, small businesses and the economic regeneration of local areas. The Council's operational

and non-operational estates both fall within the Investment and Development Cabinet Portfolio and the Economic Development Directorate.

4. At its meeting on 17 November 2021 the Committee was updated of progress in developing the strategy, following which they captured concerns in a letter as attached at **Appendix B**
5. In February 2021 the Council approved its Corporate Plan 2021-24, a clear statement of the strategic priorities of the organisation, setting out eight Well-being Objectives and, as such, underpinned by Directorates Delivery Plans which provide greater detail on how the Well-being Objectives contained in the Plan will be delivered.
6. Well-being Objective 7 is: **Modernising and Integrating Our Public Services**, and a key **Step** listed to achieve the Objective is:
 - **Deliver fewer and better Council buildings**
7. To deliver fewer and better Council buildings the aim is to '*develop(ing) a plan to secure investment into the Council's historic assets, including City Hall, by December 2021; and review(ing) the Council's existing corporate estate to identify potential disposals to generate capital receipts.*'

Issues

8. Attached at **Appendix A** is the Cabinet report to be considered on 16th December and attached the new Corporate Property Strategy (Appendix 1) and Annual Property Plan (Appendix 2) to facilitate pre-decision scrutiny. The Property Strategy will provide the framework within which the corporate property function manages the Council's estate, both operational and non-operational. The Property Plan shows the property transactions completing in 2020-21 and the proposed transactions for 2021-22.
9. The policy framework for the Property Strategy is built on five key objectives.
Objective 1: Corporate approach: Build on the achievements of the 2015-20 strategy, continue to develop the governance, business processes and reporting arrangements that ensure property is managed as a corporate asset.

Objective 2: Strategic direction: Establish the strategic direction of each property portfolio (Operational, Non-operational and Investment) and work with services areas through established governance to ensure accommodation alignment with service requirements.

Objective 3: Modernisation the retained estate: Embed the theme of modernisation across the estate, focussing on the improvement of quality and suitability of the Council's property. Establish Hybrid Working and One Planet Cardiff as central to the asset management decision making process

Objective 4: Property Performance Targets: Measure performance against targets through the Annual Property Plan.

Objective 5: Partnership Working: Continue to develop strong strategic working arrangements with public sector partners to achieve common and mutually beneficial objectives in support of the Council's well-being priorities.

10. **Appendices 3, & 4** are confidential and set out the condition surveys for the Council's core offices, County Hall and City Hall and St Davids Hall.

Scope of the Scrutiny

11. The Committee will receive a presentation on the Corporate Property Strategy, which is programmed for decision by Cabinet on 16th December 2021. As such, Members are invited to raise any issues of concern for relaying to the Cabinet Member to inform Cabinet's consideration of the final report.

12. Should Members wish to ask questions relating to the confidential appendices, 3 & 4, the Chair will announce that the meeting is moving into closed session and webcasting will pause.

13. Councillor Russell Goodway, Cabinet Member, Investment & Development will be in attendance to answer Members' questions, supported by Neil Hanratty, Director of Economic Development, Donna Jones, Assistant Director County Estates, and Matthew Seymour, Asset Management Officer.

Legal Implications

14. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

15. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to

- i. Consider the information presented at the meeting;
- ii. Agree whether it wishes to make any comments, observations or recommendations to inform the Cabinet's final consideration of the Corporate Property Strategy 2021-26.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance & Legal Services

8 December 2021