

**Agenda for Asset Management Forum  
Tuesday, 9th March, 2021, 9.30 am**



**Members of Asset Management Forum**

Councillors P Arnott, P Hayward (Chair), D Ledger,  
J Rowland, F King and G Pratt

East Devon District Council  
Blackdown House  
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**Venue:** online via zoom

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Friday 26 February 2021; re-issued Thursday 4 March 2021

**Important - this meeting will be conducted online and recorded by Zoom only.  
Please do not attend Blackdown House.  
Members are asked to follow the [Protocol for Remote Meetings](#)**

This meeting is being recorded by EDDC for subsequent publication on the Council's website and will be streamed live to the Council's Youtube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmNHQruge3LVI4hcgRnbwBw>

Public speakers are now required to register to speak – for more information please use the following link: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say-at-meetings/all-other-virtual-public-meetings/#article-content>

1 Public speaking

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

2 Minutes from the previous meetings (Pages 3 - 10)

To agree the minutes from the previous meetings held on the 1 December 2020; and the 16 February 2021.

3 Apologies

4 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

5 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

6 Confidential/exempt item(s)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

- 7 Property Matters Newsletter (Pages 11 - 14)
- 8 Community Asset Transfer Procedure update (Page 15)
- 9 Place and Prosperity Investment Framework (Pages 16 - 17)

[Decision making and equalities](#)

**For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546**

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL****Minutes of the meeting of Asset Management Forum held on 1 December 2020****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 12.25 pm

**34 Public speaking**

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

**35 Notes from the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 9 January 2020 were confirmed as a true record.

**36 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Paul Hayward – personal, minute 41 - Parish Clerk to All Saints, Chardstock and Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Councils who may in future have to make decisions on asset transfers.

Councillor Dan Ledger – personal, minute 41 – Ward Member for Seaton.

**37 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

**38 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There was one item classified in this way and agreed to be considered in private session.

**39 Introduction to Service, portfolio and asset management priorities**

The Service Lead – Place, Assets and Commercialisation gave a presentation on the broad remit of the service, portfolio and asset management priorities.

He highlighted the staffing levels and defined the meaning of asset management for a Local Authority. The importance of asset data was stressed as key for informing strategic decisions on the Council's assets.

The current Council portfolio was outlined as circa:

- 465 land assets
- 434 buildings
- £1.1m rent roll
- 411 leases and licences

The broad areas of work of the teams within the service were outlined to the Forum as set out below:

Place and Prosperity Team:

- Place-prosperity projects across the Council's own asset base and working with others towards enhancing social, economic and environmental wellbeing of localities and communities through land and property;
- Unlock both physical developments and wider improvements to a locality and delivering greater place prosperity through the delivery of places to live, work and visit, connectedness, amenity and improved service delivery;
- Close links with Growth Development and Prosperity Service, Streetscene and Countryside services.

Estates Team:

- Manage leased out portfolio
- Acquisitions
- Disposals
- Estate management
- Statutory and non-statutory valuations/viability appraisals
- Property records
- Strategy and policy
- Support HRA

Property and Facilities Management:

- Reactive maintenance
- Planned maintenance and servicing
- Capital Investment
- Health and Safety Compliance
- Suitability and sufficiency
- Facilities Management of corporate offices

The key themes and projects across the service were outlined as:

- Climate change
- Corporate landlord function, understanding of assets performance and resulting decision making;
- Asset devolution;
- Commercialisation;
- Place Making;
- Investment in existing buildings and move away from reactive to proactive.

Discussion on this item included:

- Ensure that climate change is the greatest priority in the work of the service;
- Clarification of the background to the Mamhead slipway being listed as an asset;
- Clarification on how beach huts and beach hut sites are listed as assets;
- In response to a question about including carbon neutral target within the 30 year maintenance plan of an asset, the Service Lead confirmed that there was no reflection in costs on achieving the carbon neutral target, these costs being based on replacement of components at end of useful lives, maintenance and compliance costs rather than enhancement of assets, but outlined that this could be considered as part of the investment protocol;
- There were currently few empty premises; those that were empty were either currently being marketed for re-let or about to go to market;
- Members should have access to the asset register in order to be fully informed when taking a decision on any asset;
- The outstanding issue with differing systems holding asset information was outlined and it was hoped that a solution to draw the remaining data together was close to resolution.

**Resolved** that the presentation on the work of the service be noted.

#### 40 **Service Planning**

The key themes proposed for the Service Plan 2021/22 were presented as a short report under the following themes:

- Place and Environment
- Economy
- Homes and Communities
- Council and Council services

The elements within the themes were explored by the Forum and supported.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

#### 41 **Community Asset Transfer Policy**

The Forum were asked to assess the continuing suitability of the draft policy.

Cabinet resolved on 2 October 2019 to endorse the policy in principle and commence consultation with town and parish councils. Following that, consultation was put on hold while consultation took place through the Careful Choices initiative; but due to the current pandemic, the consultation on the Asset Transfer Policy was yet to start.

Councillor Pook, as former Chair of the Forum, gave the Forum background on the draft policy and his views on what the next stages could involve.

The Forum discussion on elements of the draft policy included:

- Distinctions between minor and major assets, and how the timeframe for transfer should reflect those differences;
- Consideration of the Council acting as lender of funds to assist town and parish councils to finance the adoption of assets;
- Assurances that assets transferring to lower tiers were not then lost to the public if devolved down further;
- Important to deal with those town and parishes that had already shown interest and potentially identified assets that they wish to take on;
- Need to share clear data on ownership of assets;
- Need to be mindful of resources needed both at a District and local level to process asset transfers;
- Replace reference to the Council Plan to be Statement of Intent;
- Review timescales and make appropriate to size of asset being transferred;
- Need for Forum members to work through the assets with officers;
- Effective communication to manage expectation of what assets would be considered for transfer.

Discussion took place on the report detail on the next steps to progress the draft policy to an adopted policy, which included:

- If consultation with Town and Parish Councils on the draft policy was necessary. The Forum were reminded that Cabinet had already agreed for the consultation to take place, and that it gave lower tier councils an opportunity to comment, particularly if they felt that the timescales or processes involved would be difficult

to meet. The suggestion that consultation was not needed was subsequently withdrawn;

- Consultation period would commence before the next scheduled meeting of the Forum in March 2020, and be conducted over six weeks. The Forum were keen for the consultation to be clear that this was consultation on the process, and not the opportunity to discuss individual assets at this stage.

**Resolved** that the agreed consultation with Town and Parish Councils commences in January/February as resources permit, (but committed to commence before the next AMF meeting in March) for a six week period, on the draft policy with questions to obtain feedback on the policy itself rather than the aspirations at this stage of different Councils.

## 42 **Commercial Investment**

Mention was made on the most recent acquisition, reported to Cabinet on 8 October 2020. No other investment opportunities are actively being progressed due to the current pandemic and new direction being sought.

The Forum were asked to provide direction on:

- The appetite for commercial investment;
- How to align investment with the Council's priorities;
- How to align investment with supporting economic recover from the pandemic;
- How to align investment to provide quality social and affordable housing;
- Decision making relating to investment.

Discussion by the Forum included:

- Ensuring early engagement of Ward Members as part of the framework followed;
- Review urban capacity studies to help identify possible sites for development;
- Borrowing from the Public Loans Board for commercial investment was no longer permitted if the purpose of the investment is to purchase solely for yield. More information was needed to determine if there was still availability to borrow if the purpose was for social benefit, with yield as a secondary benefit;
- Existing framework would now require updating if the Council were to switch to social benefit being the primary driver, due to the change in legislation;
- Opportunity to review the framework fully to incorporate necessary and suggested changes. An informal and closed discussion on the framework with Forum members, open to all Councillors to contribute, was considered the best option to develop the review before debate at the Forum in a public meeting and recommendation onto Cabinet and Council.

**Resolved** that a special meeting of the Forum, not open to the public, be held to begin the review on the Commercial Investment Framework, prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Forum in March 2021.

## 43 **Exclusion of press and public**

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt and private information (as set out against each Part B agenda item), is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing the items in private session (Part B).

44 **Marpool Workshops**

The Forum received an update on the site and discussed instructing officers to review options for the site.

**Resolved** that the report be noted, and officers are instructed to review the site further and report back to the Forum on future options.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

P Arnott  
P Hayward (Chair)  
D Ledger  
J Rowland  
G Pratt

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

M Armstrong  
K Blakey  
P Faithfull  
N Hookway  
G Jung  
A Moulding  
H Parr  
G Pook

**Officers in attendance:**

Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation  
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer  
Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance  
Rob Harrison, Senior Estates Surveyor  
Alison Hayward, Project Manager Place, Assets & Commercialisation  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Steve Pratten, Interim Principal Surveyor

**Councillor apologies:**

F King

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Special Asset Management Forum held on 16 February 2021.**

**This meeting was held in private under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as exempt and private information was likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest was in discussing the item in private session.**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10:15am and concluded at 12:18pm.

#### **45 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Paul Hayward – personal, minute 46 - Parish Clerk to All Saints, Chardstock and Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Councils who may in future have to make decisions on assets.

#### **46 Commercial Investment - review**

The Forum discussed the approach to a review of the currently adopted Commercial Investment Framework.

The existing framework had its primary focus on generating a commercial return through investments in assets. Following the adoption of the Council's Statement of Intent, with a focus on supporting businesses, providing more social and affordable homes, and in responding to the impact of the pandemic, the existing framework needed to be amended to reflect the intent of the Council.

Rules over borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) had also been changed, in that yield could no longer be the primary objective of an investment funded by such borrowing.

The Forum discussed the opportunities in utilising borrowing, whereby the social, economic, and environmental benefits to the District as a whole would be the primary goal, with any yield generated being a secondary element that could be utilised to further assist the Council in its delivery of projects and services. Some existing projects, that had been previously reported in recent months to Cabinet, were highlighted as being some of those opportunities that the Council could take up. An investment fund of this nature could be a valuable tool in the Council directly taking forward projects to support wider economic recovery.

The Forum were reminded that the removal of the previously forecast commercial investment return had a significant impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan, and to fill that gap remained a challenge.

Discussion on the framework included:

- Renaming as "Investment Framework" to reflect revised purpose;
- Review delegation element to ensure a balance between making agile investment decisions so as not to miss opportunities, but including Portfolio Holder and (as relevant) Ward Member involvement;
- Explore if regeneration is a permitted reason by the PWLB for borrowing – specifically, if it can be argued that investing in a hotel, which would help regenerate an area, would meet their criteria; in response, such a specific

example had not yet been tested and would need considered legal opinion before pursuing;

- Key to look at existing assets in the Council's ownership, including how they could be utilised in other ways to deliver projects to support economic recovery and other objectives of the Council;
- Building on existing assets of seafronts, parks and gardens, and nature reserves, to help boost tourism offer;
- Investment in charging points for electric cars to meet future demand and meet climate change priority;
- Look at business unit provision and where best placed for emerging businesses as the area comes out of the pandemic;
- Cost and efficiency benefits in taking opportunities with Council owned land or asset;
- Criteria for project will need to include climate impact, poverty proofing and direct/indirect investment payback, on top of existing criteria in the currently adopted framework;
- Take advantage of fixed term borrowing while it is still available;
- More analysis needed on flexible office space demand;
- Work needs close links with both the PH Economy and the newly appointed PH Leisure, Sport and Tourism;
- Work was already underway outside of the investment fund to secure social housing where possible, but that was difficult in a competitive market;
- Consider if current proposed level of borrowing were sufficient to utilise on existing projects/investments and new opportunities;
- Look to maximise funding opportunities from other funding streams by using the investment framework to unlock the potential.

The Forum

**RESOLVED** that

- a) The Service Lead – Place, Assets and Commercialisation take forward the preparation of a new Investment Framework to support the aspirations set out in the report and addressing the outcomes from the meeting;
- b) An Investment Fund be an integral element in our supporting and sustaining of long term recovery from the pandemic;
- c) A new Member consultation process be drafted for planned use of the Investment Fund and brought to the next available Cabinet with respect to recommendation 10 of the Public Accounts Committee report of the July 2020, in order to balance speed and democracy.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

P Arnott  
P Hayward (Chair)  
D Ledger  
F King  
G Pratt

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

M Armstrong  
S Bond

S Chamberlain  
O Davey  
P Faithfull  
S Gazzard  
N Hookway  
G Jung  
P Millar  
A Moulding  
H Parr  
E Wragg

**Officers in attendance:**

Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Wood, Service Lead - Growth Development and Prosperity  
Tim Child, Service Lead - Place, Assets & Commercialisation

# PROPERTY MATTERS

Place, Assets &amp; Commercialisation Update

March 2021

## Acquisition Adds Flats to Housing Stock

Working on behalf of the Housing Service, the Estates Team have negotiated the acquisition of 51 St Andrews Road in Exmouth in a deal which will add 7 units of accommodation to the Council's housing stock.

The property is arranged as 6 one bedroom flats and a 1 bedroom house and having been recently refurbished will be able to be put to use to deliver much needed accommodation of this type.

The purchase was completed on 19 February with the purchase price £900,000.



51 St Andrews Road, Exmouth

*The latest deals and updates on the activities in Place, Assets & Commercialisation*



Unit 5 Manstone Workshops

## In This Issue

- HRA Acquisitions
- EV Charging Points
- New faces in Property & FM team
- New Letting at Manstone
- Fire Damage works near completion



Unit 5 Manstone Workshops

## Letting agreed at Manstone Workshops

Following vacation of Unit 5 Manstone Workshops in Sidmouth by the previous tenant, the Estates Team moved swiftly to market the unit and agree terms for a new letting.

A successful marketing campaign saw significant interest in the unit and an increase in the rent achieved for the unit.

## Grab a drink in Seaton & Exmouth

The Estates Team have agreed terms for a number of licences to allow Seaton and Exmouth Town Council's to install Water Bottle Filling Stations at locations in the towns.

The stations will allow seafront visitors to fill their own water containers which should reduce the use of single use plastic bottles.

It is hoped that on completion of the Legal agreements the stations will be installed ready for the summer season.

## Fire Damage work nears completion

Following an arson attack which caused extensive damage to the Bumble & Bee Café in Manor Gardens, Exmouth the Property & Facilities Team have been working to reinstate the building.

The work has involved liaison with the Council's insurers and loss adjusters to agree the works, tendering works, instructing contractors and overseeing the project. The team have also Liaised with the tenant so that they can work to re open the café.

During the works there were a number of issues which arose not least being the extent of the damage turning out to be worse than first thought and additional reinstatement works being required.

It is hoped that the works will be completed by the end of February ready for the tenant to undertake their fitting out works ready to re open.



## Modular Changing For Seaton

The Property & Facilities Team have been working to deliver new modular changing rooms at Seaton Town FC.

Following the grant of planning approval for the changing rooms, the offsite manufacture of the facility is underway and it is currently programmed that they will be brought to site for installation in early June.

The summer installation should have them up and running in time for the new Season.

## Ready to Charge

The Estates Team are currently working on a number of projects with our Car Parks colleagues which will see the delivery of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in a number of East Devon car parks.

As the move towards Electric Vehicles speeds up with more production and more and more of these vehicles on the roads the need for a wider network of charging facilities is essential.

Delivery of these charging points will allow for quick charging of vehicles in convenient and accessible locations across the district and fits well with the Council's climate change objectives.

The current work for the team involves identifying locations and agreeing the terms of the complex lease agreements which will be needed to allow operators to install the charging points.

## Wetlands Link Agreed

The Estates Team have negotiated agreements with Seaton Tramway and an adjoining landowner to allow works to take place to create a link between the Council's Seaton Wetlands and a new tramway halt to be created adjacent to the site.

The agreements will see a new boardwalk installed which will allow visitors from the Tramway to access the Wetlands improving visitor numbers and allowing more people to enjoy the site.

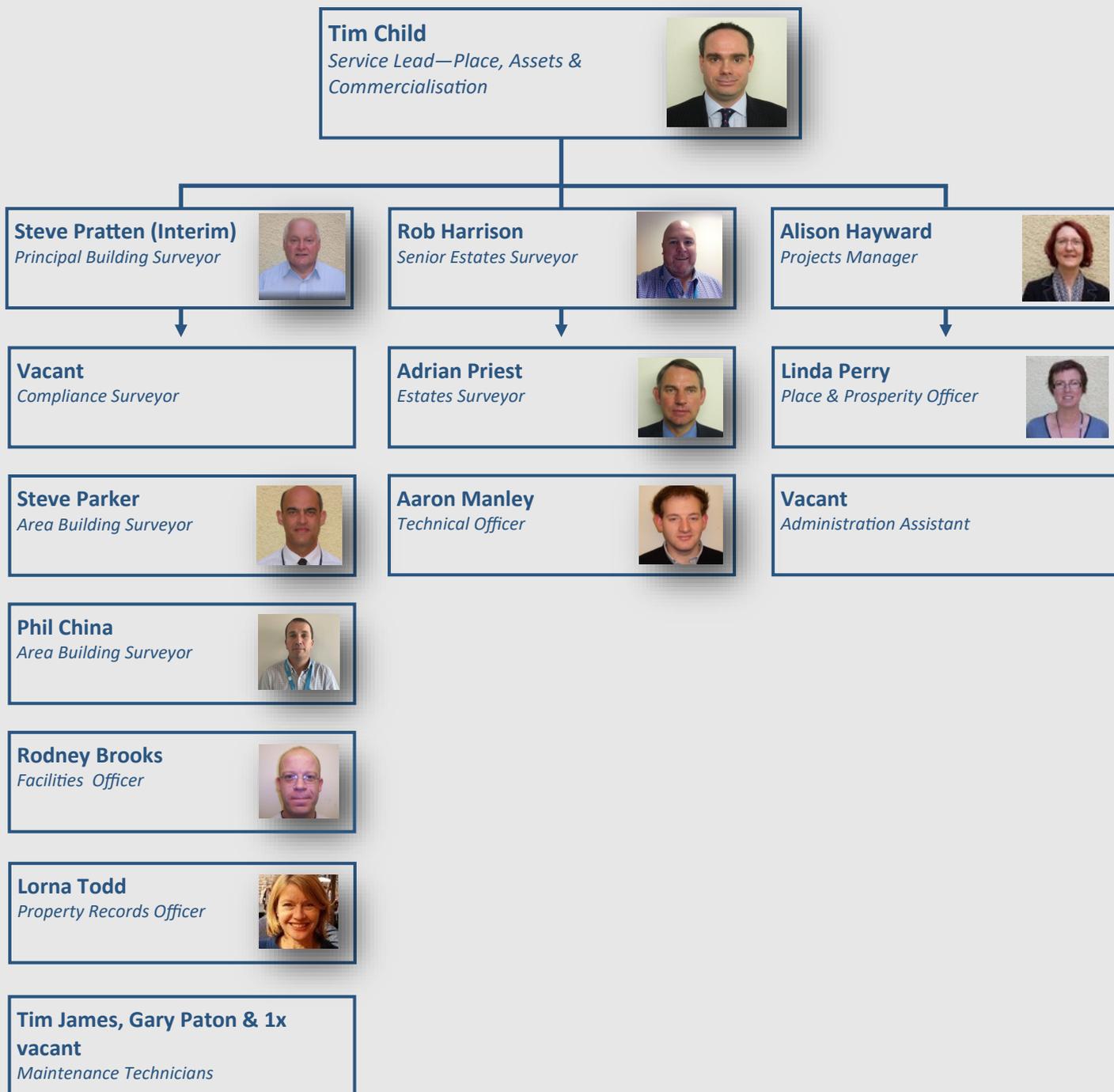
## Housing Acquisition Work Gathers Pace

The Estates Team have been busy in recent months seeing to secure additional residential properties to be added to the Council's existing housing stock.

In the first 3 weeks of February the team have agreed a further 4 acquisitions with a combined purchase price of £823,000. The team have further deals in the pipeline as they continue with this important area of work.

This acquisition work uses Right to Buy Receipts to add additional housing stock to the Council's portfolio which in turn allows the Housing Team to address some of the increasing Housing need in the District.

# Your Property & Facilities Management, Estates and Place & Prosperity Teams



For all general enquiries, please call us on 01395 571589 or email [property@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:property@eastdevon.gov.uk)

**Report to AMF 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**Draft Community Asset Transfer Procedure Consultation**

**Recommendations**

To note.

**Background**

Following the previous AMF meeting (1<sup>st</sup> December 2020), officers were instructed to proceed with preparations for the consultation with Town and Parish Councils. The following progress has been made:

- The Draft Community Asset Procedure has been updated to reflect recent changes in personnel and relevant Council policies.
- A draft covering letter/email has been prepared and a questionnaire has been set up on SNAP (survey software tool).
- Documents approved by Portfolio Holder.
- Consultation commenced 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and AMF Members provided copies.

**Next steps**

- Closing date for consultation responses is 25<sup>th</sup> April.
- Further report to June AMF.
- Report to Cabinet for adoption.

Tim Child  
Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation

Report to: Asset Management Forum

Date of Meeting: 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



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## **Place & Prosperity Investment Framework**

### **Report summary:**

Following the Special AMF on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 on this very matter, the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation has started drafting a Place & Prosperity Investment Framework to accord with the Confidential February report and the debate that followed. Some key points:

- A Framework specifically for Place & Prosperity Investments to support economic recovery. Must cover PWLB borrowing costs, and where possible and remaining economically viable, a small risk premium, but not to generate a commercial yield.
- Sitting behind the Framework, a Fund agreed by Council to deliver the Framework – avoids each investment decision needing to go to Council. Size of fund yet to be considered.
- The Framework introduces how the fund will be utilised, types of investments, high level investment criteria, risks, process & governance arrangements. On the latter, the proposal is to still utilise in part the methodology in the existing Commercial Investment Framework but with some key additions - assessment against an agreed weighted scoring matrix – to ensure all opportunities are considered in a consistent and fair manner and enabling opportunities to be easily dismissed if they don't qualify, then on to Outline Business Case involving key Cabinet Members and now Ward Members, through to Detailed Business Case now to Cabinet or other Member forum which itself would include Ward Member comments. Whilst the objectives of the Framework are very different to the existing adopted Commercial Investment Framework, and of course the decision making arrangements are very different, the general approach whereby the Framework underpins how investments will be considered is not dissimilar.

The section that I require input from Members on at this stage before Members consider the Framework as a whole at a subsequent AMF is the scoring matrix and how we should develop this to inform, subject to Outline and Detailed Business Cases, where we should invest.

The questions that are therefore put forward to this AMF and would welcome a debate on following explanation are:

1. What outcomes do these investments need to deliver?
2. What is the priority of these outcomes and therefore the relative weighting?

**Recommendation:**

None

**Reason for recommendation:**

None

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01395 571692

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergencies
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

**Financial implications:**

None at this stage

**Legal implications:**

None at this stage

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; This report seeks to address the approach the Council would like to take to investment. Any decision on a specific investment will be subject to a full review of the risk and mitigation measures.

**Links to background information:**

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services