

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2021

Report Title	PROPERTY UPDATE			
Purpose of Report	To report on property reviews since 2019 and set a timetable for updating the Corporate Asset Management Strategy.			
Decision(s)	Strategy & Resources Committee RESOLVES: that the current Corporate Asset Management Strategy is carried forward and reviewed in 2022.			
Consultation and Feedback	Discussions have been held between officers and the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy & Resources Committee			
Report Author	Jill Fallows, Property Manager Tel: 01453 754433 Email: jill.fallows@stroud.gov.uk			
Options				
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Appendix 1 - Property Review Update Appendix 2 - Examples of SDC Assets			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2016-2021 (CAMS) is a key corporate document which explains how the Council manages its property assets to achieve its corporate objectives. see the Council's website:

<https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/520038/corporate-asset-management-strategy-2016-2021.pdf>

There are separate action plans for General Fund and HRA properties.

- 1.2 The Council owns many different types of land and buildings, referred to as property assets which are located across the district. As at 31st March 2021 the Housing Revenue Account held 4,992 general houses and flats, including 38 shared ownership homes and 722 independent living dwellings. There are 172 leasehold flats, 633 garages, 12 retail shops and various play areas and open spaces. Property used directly for council services include Ebley

Mill, The Pulse, SPLC and Gossington Depot. Non-operational property is held for economic development or to raise income e.g. Brunel Mall, the Old Town Hall, Brimscombe Port, Littlecombe, 32 car parks and 10 public conveniences. Finally, there are Community and Heritage Assets such as Woodchester Mansion, the Paganhill Arch and woodlands, and open spaces such as Cockshoot Wood and Cam Peak and Long Down. The plan at Appendix 2 to this report shows examples of some of the Council's assets.

- 1.3 The property portfolio is published as a requirement of the Local Government Transparency Code and can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/opacity/registers/council-property-register>. An electronic property map will be made available to members to enable them to see Council owned properties.
- 1.4 The Strategy follows best practice and requires the Council to challenge the use and performance of its property assets by regular review, enabling it to identify and dispose of assets it no longer needs to raise capital to support its remaining properties and/or reduce costs.
- 1.5 The last report to Committee in June 2019 set a programme of property reviews with the Old Town Hall, Woodchester Mansion and Public conveniences being identified as high priorities. Appendix 1 shows the current position. Covid 19 has significantly delayed the review of the public conveniences until 2022 and the proposed asset transfer to Kingshill House Trust which has, in part, also been due to changes on the Board of Trustees.
- 1.6 Appendix 1 also shows the outcomes of reviews carried out since 2014 with some property assets being retained and some transfers completed. Some community transfers have passed control to an even more local level and reduced costs for example Stroud Subscription Rooms. More transfers are planned with other town and parish councils of amenity land, car parks, playing fields and allotments. Others disposals are raising major capital receipts, for example, the ongoing sales of HRA held garages which are supporting the New Build programme.

2.0 THE CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 2.1 The CAMS should be updated and renewed as property will continue to be held and maintained to deliver the Council's objectives. As the new 5-year Council Plan is now in place, CAMS will be reviewed in 2022 to reflect the key priorities set for the next five years and actions required will be identified.
- 2.2 The drivers for reviewing the Council's property have changed since the current strategy was approved. As well as financial reasons, new considerations such as the 2030 Strategy have emphasised the need to reduce the environmental impact of property assets highlighting the opportunity to work with other partners. An example of this is the One Public Estate - Zero Carbon Public Estate bid. This project aims to explore how the rationalisation, co-location and re-use of public property can deliver more sustainable buildings, homes, jobs and aim for a net zero carbon future. The Old Town Hall is part of this bid.

- 2.3 Environment and climate change is a priority in the Council Plan, and a strategic objective is to protect and enhance biodiversity. This will be a driver for reviewing the Council's woodlands and green spaces.
- 2.4 Post pandemic economic recovery is a priority as well as developing key regeneration and brownfield sites. The updated CAMS will also align with the Economic Development Strategy which is timetabled for final approval in 2022.
- 2.5 The 2022 CAMS is the opportunity for members to reconsider their priorities and emphasis on property in line with the new Council Plan which can be reflected in the Action Plans which will outline clear and measurable actions that can be implemented and an updated programme of property reviews. It is anticipated that the CAMS will be reported to Strategy & Resources by October 2022 at the latest.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That committee notes the current position on the reviews and approves the review of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy in 2022

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Each individual asset review will have financial implications which will be considered at the time of that review.

Graham Bailey, Principal Accountant

Tel: 01453 754133 Email: graham.bailey@stroud.gov.uk

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report but legal advice will be provided, as appropriate, in respect of individual asset reviews. Individual disposals will be required to comply with various statutory requirements depending upon the nature and terms of the disposal

One Legal

Tel: 01684 272203 Email: legal.services@onelegal.org.uk

4.3 Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision

4.4 Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.