

Capital programme funding framework and programme for the disposal of surplus assets

Report of the Assets Policy Committee to

Special Meeting of Council on 27 January 2016

Section 1 - Introduction

As members will be aware, at the Council meeting on 25 November 2015 it was resolved that an Assets Policy Committee be established on the basis set out below:

1. *To establish an Assets Policy Committee that shall:*
 - a) *Begin work immediately and exist until the date of the next meeting of Full Council*
 - b) *Produce a completed report to a Special meeting of the Council by no later than the end of January 2016 so that this can inform the preparation of the Asset Management Strategy 2016/17 and the budget setting process*
 - c) *Be composed of seven councillors and have authority to co-opt up to two independent members (who shall be non-voting) to assist the Committee in its work*
 - d) *Have a remit to recommend a policy for the disposal of the Borough Council's land assets for residential use in future*

2. *To request that Cabinet suspends the sale of land assets solely for residential use and included in the Asset Management Strategy, while the Asset Policy Committee is undertaking its work.*

Section 2 - Committee membership

Nominations were sought for this cross-party Committee on a politically-balanced basis as follows:

3 Labour; 2 Conservative; 1 Liberal Democrat; 1 Newcastle Independent Group. The following members were appointed to these positions:

Cllr Mrs Shenton; Cllr Turner; Cllr John Williams; Cllr Loades; Cllr Simon Tagg; Cllr Ms Reddish and; Cllr Huckfield.

Substitute nominations were made as follows: Cllr Mrs Beech; Cllr Sweeney; Cllr Stringer and; Cllr Mrs Braithwaite. Both Cllr Sweeney and Cllr Mrs Beech participated on one occasion each.

In addition two independent members were sought to provide both support and challenge to the Committee's work (including the review of evidence and the preparation of this report);

- Bryan Carnes (former Chief Executive of the North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce) and;
- Ron Dougan (former Chief Executive of Trent & Dove Housing Association and former Chair of the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership).

In view of the nature of the Committee's work the Council's Chief Executive was appointed to Chair the meetings.

Section 3 - Terms of reference for the Assets Policy Committee

Following minor revisions at its first meeting the Committee agreed the following terms of reference:

1. To review the Council's current and anticipated future capital expenditure requirements;
2. To consider options to fund these future capital expenditure requirements;
3. To review salient national and local policy documents relevant to the disposal of publicly-owned land (inc. Asset Management, Local Plan, Green Spaces, Housing Strategy) in light of other local policy objectives in relation to the future financing of the Council's services (e.g. raising finance through Council Tax and New Homes Bonus);
4. In light of item 3, to develop a draft policy for consideration setting out the Council's requirements and objectives when disposing of land assets to ensure that the widest range of policy considerations is achieved through such disposals;
5. To review the Council's land asset disposal programme and to commission an independent assessment of the anticipated receipts; such assessment to include the likely saleable value of the various sites taking account of current market conditions;
6. To immediately consider identifying a list of non-contentious sites for disposal (derived from a list of disposal sites which have been the subject of previous Asset Management Strategies or Cabinet decisions) and to advise Cabinet of the Committee's support for officers continuing to undertake the necessary work to facilitate their disposal;
7. To commission an independent assessment of the Council's anticipated land disposal strategy in the context of existing Planning policies and the emerging Local Plan (this may form part of the latter commission), taking account of the Government Safeguarding direction in respect of High Speed 2 and;
8. To formulate a medium term financial strategy for funding the council's current and anticipated future capital expenditure (i.e. for the next 4 years).

Section 4 - Financial strategy for funding the Council's capital expenditure

Members received reports at their second meeting (on 16 December 2015) about the options available for funding the Council's capital programme. Having considered all the options, the Committee accepted that the main two sources of funding were the use of receipts from the disposal of land/property and prudential borrowing. The illustration below shows the spectrum of policy approaches which can be adopted to capital expenditure.

<u>Make do and mend (do minimum)</u> Funding those activities required to maintain the condition of the existing assets	<u>Future-proof</u> Building a capital fund to meet future major capital expenditure programmes (e.g. building replacement)
<u>Self-funding</u> Speculatively purchasing land as part of a portfolio which would give significant capital yield on sale	<u>Place-shaping</u> Having sufficient capital funds to enable capital expenditure to support the delivery of policy priorities

A. The proposed Capital Strategy

The consensus of opinion amongst Committee members was to prioritise addressing the relatively short term capital funding requirements by proceeding with the disposal of what members considered to be the uncontroversial sites. At the same time there was agreement that the Council should begin to prepare for prudential borrowing so that this would become an established part of the Council's approach to funding future capital expenditure requirements. In summary this approach is set out below:

Years 1 and 2

- Sell assets as a first resort to fund Newcastle Investment Programme (NIP)
- Start to create revenue headroom for prudential borrowing

Years 3, 4 and 5

- Continue to sell assets as a first resort to fund the NIP
- Start to use prudential borrowing with revenue headroom built into the MTFs and annual revenue budgets on ongoing and escalating basis
- Establish the principle of strategic site acquisitions
- Start building capital replacement fund from asset sales

Longer term

- Establish a dynamically-managed portfolio of assets with land sales and acquisitions
- Establish in the base revenue budget an appropriate level of revenue provision to support prudential borrowing
- Create sufficient capital funds to fund NIP, capital replacement and to achieve policy objectives

B. An immediate Capital Strategy for 2016/17 and 2017/18 budgets

- Continue asset sales programme with non-contentious and previously-committed non-housing sites included
- Agree the principle of developing headroom in revenue budget to fund a degree of prudential borrowing in the future
- Request Council to continue work of Assets Policy Committee to produce a report on longer term capital strategy and programme of asset sales

C. A draft capital expenditure policy

- The Council will use a balance of asset sales and prudential borrowing to fund capital expenditure
- The Council may have to use temporary borrowing dependent upon the timing of the receipts from asset sales
- The Council will make provision in its future revenue budgets to fund a level of prudential borrowing
- The Council will bring forward sites for disposal to provide a prudent level of capital resources to be capable of funding known current and future capital expenditure and to hold a sufficient reserve of capital funds in order to be capable of funding a reasonable level of unforeseen expenditure
- The Council will at all times have (until the land bank of disposal sites is exhausted) sufficient sites identified for disposal to fund its known current and future capital expenditure commitments at a 'do minimum' level

For the avoidance of doubt it is important to reflect the fact that the Committee noted that in view of the difficulty of predicting the exact date of any individual capital receipt, the Council may have to use temporary borrowing to address cash flow requirements in capital

programme expenditure and capital receipt income in any individual financial year. This is currently allowable as part of the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Section 5 - Asset disposal strategy

That the Council holds land and property for one of three reasons:

1. Active service use (operational portfolio) – e.g. formal playing fields, leisure centres, public open spaces, play areas, car parks, crematoria, etc.
2. As a managed commercial portfolio – e.g. enterprise centres, industrial units, shops.
3. Delivery of future policy objective – e.g. to deliver regeneration outcomes such as jobs or housing, to build a new service-based premises such as leisure facilities.

All other land held by the Council should be regarded as surplus to requirements and should be disposed of as a matter of principle to avoid holding cost and land ownership liabilities; to recycle the receipt to fund service needs and; to facilitate private sector delivery of development needs such as housing. The Committee affirmed that the definition of assets for disposal is those which do not fall within one of the three categories above.

A comprehensive review of all Council land has identified 25 sites which are capable of being brought forward for development as meeting the definition of surplus to requirements defined above. These sites have been reviewed as compliant with other key Council policies such as the current Planning Policy framework, the Green Spaces Strategy and the Playing Pitch Strategy.

The Committee commissioned an independent review of these sites in accordance with its terms of reference. A copy of the full report was provided to all members of the Asset Policy Committee. This report was considered to be confidential and released to members solely for the purposes of their work on this Committee.

The findings of the consultant's work were presented to the Committee at its meeting on 6 January 2016 and they clarified the basis of their valuations (including the assumptions made and the likely market appeal of the respective sites). Summary level information from the consultants work is intended for sharing with all Council members in order to provide a reasonable level of confidence about the potentially realisable capital receipts from a proactive and sustained disposal programme.

A. An emerging disposal framework and delivery programme

The Strategy recommended by the Consultants was that in order to achieve its medium term financial requirements and in the context of current market conditions, the Council should:

- Retain its presumption to the disposal of sites upon which it has secured outline planning permission for the intended (preferred) end use. The rationale being that this would maximise the potential capital receipt and was therefore consistent with the requirement for the Council to achieve "best consideration" (in accordance with S.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)).
- Progress sites which are compliant with current planning policies. The rationale being that such sites could be brought forward for disposal in the shortest timescale therefore giving the Council the best likelihood of achieving its required capital receipt.

- Bring forward immediately three of the largest residential end use sites for early disposal. The rationale being that it is more financially beneficial for the Council to bring forward three large sites and that such sites would be attractive to the market and at this level would be in line with prevailing market demand for development sites.
- Acknowledge the lead time of typically two years required to bring sites forward for disposal taking account of the Council's approach to community consultation; the seeking of planning permission; the site marketing and; the final securing of the capital receipt (which may be the subject of negotiations).

In addition the consultants recommended that the Council should keep an open mind about the smaller sites and should consider how these might be packaged in a manner which would make them most attractive to the market in the medium term.

Having considered the 25 sites within the context of this strategy, the Committee considered the potential scope for the following large (and high value; >£1m) sites to be brought forward for immediate consideration and disposal:

- Market Drayton Road, Loggerheads
- Eccleshall Road, Loggerheads
- Newchapel Road / Pennyfields Road, Kidsgrove/Newchapel (packaged together as advised by the consultants)
- Clayton Road, Clayton
- Knype Way, Bradwell
- Clayhanger Close, Bradwell
- Dean's Lane, Chesterton

Within its terms of reference the Committee was asked to consider whether there were any less controversial sites which could be considered for priority disposal with the potential to deliver capital receipts in the next two financial years (2016/17 and 2017/18). A majority of members of the Committee identified the following as being in this group:

- Knype Way, Bradwell (2016/17)
- Dean's Lane, Chesterton (2016/17)
- Newchapel Road/Pennyfields Road, Kidsgrove/Newchapel (2016/17)
- Clayhanger Close, Bradwell (2017/18)
- Market Drayton Road, Loggerheads (2017/18)

The Committee would therefore recommend that these be prioritised for detailed site investigation and scheduling for disposal, subject to first obtaining planning permission for residential development and the undertaking of other actions required by the approved Asset Management Strategy, including public consultation if not previously undertaken.

In addition a majority of members of the Committee identified the following small site for immediate disposal (given that it had been on the market for over twelve months and had been granted planning permission):

- Gloucester Road, Kidsgrove

A majority of members of the Committee also considered that the following commercial sites should be included in the category of immediate disposal prospects:

- Crackley Bank, Chesterton
- Meadows Road, Kidsgrove
- Former toilet block, Merrial Street, Newcastle town centre

The Consultants recommended that in order to avoid the risk of creating an over-supply of land in the market that the Council would be advised to not release more than three large sites at any one time and that there should be a reasonable geographical spread (to minimise local market competition). The Consultants have also advised that the assessment about the marketability of the sites which they have reviewed is based upon the known site constraints. They have advised that more detailed assessment of these sites may reveal considerations which may delay the Council's ability to dispose of the sites or which may require remediation which would reduce the net overall receipt. The Consultants indicated that it would be advisable for the Council to consider commissioning relevant surveys of each of those sites which it considers it may bring forward for sale in the medium term so that a more accurate assessment can be made of the likely level of receipt and the potential impact which remediation might have on the final timescale for sale.

The Committee therefore wishes to recommend that more detailed site assessments be made of the five large housing sites listed above along with the potential employment site at Crackley Bank. In addition it was agreed that Consultants be asked to advise on a schedule of disposals designed to ensure that the Council is capable of generating capital receipts from these in line with its committed capital expenditure programme.

Whilst the focus of consideration was upon sites for residential end-use, the Committee has noted that within the list of 25 sites that there are three which are identified for commercial end use (see above). In the light of the Council's commitment to promote economic regeneration in the Borough it is considered that the commercial sites should continue to be considered as available for disposal but that the actual disposal of such sites should be assessed so as to ensure that the economic development, as well as the capital receipt objectives, are met. For financial purposes, therefore, these sites could be regarded as being held to enable a future policy objective to be delivered (economic regeneration). Nevertheless, given the present paucity of available employment sites in the Borough, the Committee agreed that there may be merit in bringing forward all three sites as part of the immediate disposal portfolio to achieve both economic regeneration and financial outcomes.

B. The former Keele Golf Course

The valuation review undertaken by the Consultants also included land in the Borough Council's ownership which lies to the west of Newcastle's urban area, including the former Keele Golf Course, and which is to be the subject of a specific master plan as agreed by Cabinet in 2014.

Due to the nature of the sites (in terms of their location, use and form) and the fact that they lie within the designated green belt, a valuation on the same terms as the other 25 sites could not be appropriately prepared. However, in order to give an indicative assessment of the potential market value of the sites owned by the Council in this area the Consultants provided a notional market value of ten acres of the land on the former Keele golf course on the future assumption (for the purposes of this review process) that at least some of the land may have been excluded from the Green Belt as part of the emerging Local Plan process.

The Committee noted that there is a significant amount of the Council-owned sites in the Newcastle-west/Keele area which are within the scope of the emerging master plan. Nevertheless a majority of members of the Committee considered that the former Keele Golf Course should be identified as surplus to current policy requirements at this stage and therefore should be within the council's schedule of sites for disposal. The Committee assessed the former Keele Golf Course against the strategy criteria and a majority of members confirmed that:

- The potential development of the former golf course site would not conform with current planning policy (because of the Green Belt designation) therefore not making the land suitable for immediate disposal (because any capital receipts would not be optimised).
- However, it was noted that the emerging master plan of the wider area and, in due course, local plan may well identify some parts of the former golf course site as suitable for alternative longer term development-led use and if this were to be the case would create a suitable policy framework for disposal with an appropriate (and potentially valuable) end use.
- The Committee noted that in view of the fact that this site could not be brought forward for development immediately that it should not be included for short term disposal.
- Further, the Committee had noted (on the advice of its consultants) that the scale of the former golf course site in the context of the Newcastle-west/Keele master plan area would require a phased release of land to avoid creating a market oversupply with a potential consequence on financial receipts and the Council's ability to achieve best consideration. In addition the Committee noted the consultant's advice that likely annual build rate of between 60 and 100 dwellings per annum, taken together with potentially significant infrastructure costs and the likely developer approach to cashflow, would make it unlikely that large up-front capital receipts would be realised.

A majority of members on the Committee therefore recommend that it is reasonable for the Council to consider that the former Keele Golf Course site should be disposed of and should be included on medium term list of sites for disposal with an expectation that the local plan would identify some or all of the land within the master plan area as suitable for residential or other appropriate end use.

The Committee has been advised that the most prudent route for consideration of the future of this site is through the master plan and local plan which are already in hand. However, Members of the Committee have asked, in light of recent Government announcements, that consideration should be given to bringing forward some development within the former golf course ahead of that plan and the local plan being completed. Within the timeframe of the Committee's work in this matter it is not necessary or practically possible to provide more conclusive advice on this subject. Nevertheless the relative merits of the Plan-led approach versus a planning application route could be considered within a short time period after the conclusion of this Committee's work.

C. Other sites in the Borough Council's ownership

The Committee requested, and was supplied with, a full list of all land and property assets in the Council's ownership. The Committee was asked to identify any sites on this register which members considered might be suitable for further development. Whilst the Committee noted that the Council owned a significant amount of land it was accepted that none of these

currently met the definition of being surplus to requirements (in accordance with the definition referred to earlier in this report).

The Committee confirmed that the 25 sites which had been subject to independent review are those which meet the definition of 'surplus' (i.e. not being in active service use; held as part of the managed commercial portfolio or; held for other policy use). These are therefore the sites which are currently surplus and therefore should be agreed for release as a matter of principle (subject to relevant processes regarding Planning and marketability).

However, a majority of members of the Committee resolved to recommend that a comprehensive review of all the sites currently in active service or policy usage should be undertaken and proposed that a series of area reviews be commissioned to inform a full refresh of the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

D. The Council's approach to the disposal of surplus assets

The Council has sought to sell land assets over a number of years and has learned some lessons from these experiences. The national and local considerations in this regard were presented in a policy review document as part of this Committee's work and the Committee was set up with the title and an objective to develop an asset sales policy for the Council. In making recommendations, the Committee has considered these past experiences and best practice. To that end the Committee has identified the following as a potential outline asset disposal policy:

1. Achieve best consideration in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). All funds generated from the sale of council land will be returned to the Council's capital funds in order to fund public services within the Borough.
2. Consider the scope for furthering other policy objectives of the Council which may include but not be limited to the provision of affordable and keyworker housing, provide employment land thereby facilitating job creation, provide local community facilities/spaces or improve play facilities.
3. Take account of other policy objectives set out in relevant Council strategies, policies and plans.
4. Consider any known technical, environmental or other site-specific consideration which may constrain the potential use or development of the subject land. In some instances there may be merit in commissioning further, intrusive, surveys; the standard desktop evaluation will assist in informing such decisions.
5. Consult with local members about any proposed sale in accordance with the Council's consultation procedure explained in the approved Asset Management Strategy but extended for a further week to enable the most appropriate member-led approach to public consultation to be determined (in addition to the approved notification procedure),. All comments received will be considered and will form part of a public report prior to any formal disposal being initiated.
6. Prepare a communications briefing to support the public consultation process to explain the rationale underpinning the land disposal programme and to explain the

process for local representations being taken into account in any disposal decision(s).

7. Commission and then consider an indicative layout of any site-specific scheme which may arise following the sale of the land (taking account of any issues arising from the technical assessments referred to at item 4) and ensure that this promotes high standards of development and in particular which contributes to the amenities and needs of local communities.
8. Consider the case to earmark a proportion of the overall capital receipt to invest in local capital projects. Such funds would be in addition to any requirement arising from the Town Planning process (e.g. s106 obligations or similar receipts associated with any a successful planning application) but monies from these two sources could be combined if it were appropriate and there was a case to do so.

Whilst the Committee wishes to recommend this as a potential approach further work would need to be done, since adopting such a policy would have resource and potentially other impacts which would need to be considered, particularly where the pursuit of such policies would have an impact on the overall level of receipt which would be achieved. For example it may be necessary for any 'local' contributions to be capped to minimise the risk of adversely affecting the corporate capital programme needs.

The Committee considered in particular the proposals set out in 6 and 7 above. The Committee believes that it would be good practice for the Council to set out its intentions for the final end use of a particular site at the point at which it puts forward a piece of land for potential disposal; this would then form the basis of any planning application made by the council prior to sale. However, this would require the investment of monies up front and resources would need to be identified to undertake this. Under the current accounting regulations, local authorities may use up to 4% of the capital receipt from each sale to fund any preliminary expenditure associated with that sale. Further any measures taken by the council to mitigate the impact of the development by not maximising the full development of the potential of the site could reduce any final capital receipt. Inevitably this would put pressure on the need to identify additional surplus land for disposal.

Regarding the case to potentially earmark a proportion of the overall receipt in local capital projects again this may be considered to be good practice but will have an impact on the overall availability of capital receipts. In addition there are likely to be viability issues in the assessment of some sites which would limit the availability of funds for local distribution. So if such a policy were to be adopted it may be advisable to set parameters around such an approach to ensure that the benefits of the capital receipt were appropriately balanced between the Borough as a whole and the immediate locality (see reference to capping above).

In the time available to it the Committee has not been able to develop a policy approach further than these initial thoughts. Should the Council consider that it would be worth investing further work in progressing this thinking then it might wish to consider asking for this work to be developed further. However, the Committee could not recommend this as policy without more detailed work particularly in relation to the financial implications of taking such an approach.

Section 6 – Conclusions (Recommendations highlighted in bold)

With regard to the preferred approach to funding the capital programme the consensus of opinion amongst Committee members was to prioritise addressing the relatively short term capital funding requirements by proceeding with the disposal of uncontroversial sites. At the same time there was agreement that the Council should begin to prepare for prudential borrowing so that this would become an established part of the Council's approach to funding future capital expenditure requirements. Accordingly:

(a) The Committee reaffirmed the decision of Cabinet taken in October 2014 “that the Council as a first resort, will seek to fund its known capital programme needs through the annual asset management planning process by the identification of land or property in its ownership that is capable of, and appropriate for, disposal”.

In addition:

(b) The Committee recommends to full Council that provision is made in future revenue budgets for prudential borrowing.

Taking account of this preferred approach to funding the capital programme requirements the Committee recognises that there is an urgent need to identify sites which are capable of being disposed of immediately to provide funds to support the Council's 2016/17 and 2017/18 capital programmes. Therefore:

(c) The majority of Committee members wish to recommend that the following sites be considered suitable for disposal within the next two financial years subject to confirmation of the appropriate level of capital receipt following a site condition survey (and any other appropriate surveys such as ecology Part 1 reports):

- **Knype Way, Bradwell**
- **Dean's Lane, Chesterton**
- **Crackley Bank, Chesterton**
- **Gloucester Road, Kidsgrove**
- **Newchapel Road/Pennyfields Road, Kidsgrove/Newchapel**
- **Clayhanger Close, Bradwell**
- **Market Drayton Road, Loggerheads**
- **Meadows Road, Kidsgrove**
- **Former toilet block, Merrial Street, Newcastle town centre**

(d) The Committee wishes to recommend that in light of the advice which has been received that the Council should seek to be marketing actively no more than three of its larger sites at any one time and that as sites are sold further sites should be brought forward.

(e) The majority of Committee members identified the following sites as falling within the group of sites referred to at (d) and that the sequencing of disposals should be prioritised in the financial years stated taking account of geographical spread, deliverability and potential value of receipts:

- **Knype Way, Bradwell (2016/17)**
- **Dean's Lane, Chesterton (2016/17)**

- **Newchapel Road / Pennyfields Road, Kidsgrove/Newchapel (2016/17)**
- **Market Drayton Road, Loggerheads (2017/18)**
- **Clayhanger Close, Bradwell (2017/18)**

Based on the desk-top evaluations which have been made these sites would have the potential to fund the Council's capital programme over the short to medium term. The Committee has been advised that the actual value which could be derived from these sites could be reduced due to adverse ground conditions or other factors not discernible from a desk-top study. It is for this reason that the Committee would wish to recommend that resources be identified to undertake condition surveys of these sites so that a more accurate assessment of their potential net sale value can be made. This information, along with the responses from community consultation, will enable Members to make a better assessment of when particular sites should be brought forward taking into account site condition-assessed market value and the council's capital expenditure requirements.

The Committee has received detailed market information about a range of other sites as set out at Appendix 1 (the appendix includes market value summarised within ranges and other relevant information about 25 sites referred to in this report, including those referred to above which have been prioritised for disposal). It has been advised that whilst these have the potential to provide capital receipts at the assessed value, due to their size further consideration should be given by the Council as to whether these sites should be packaged to increase their market attractiveness and therefore the potential receipt value.

The Committee has noted that there are sites which are in the Council's ownership which have the potential for development (see list of 25 sites above), and it is accepted that all other land and property is either in active service use, held as part of the Council's managed commercial property portfolio, or are held for other policy objectives. In summary a majority of the Committee's members propose that there should be a comprehensive review of the Council's entire property estate so that this can inform a full refresh of the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

(f) The majority of Committee members wishes to recommend that all of the Council owned land/sites together (including the smaller sites set out above) be the subject of a comprehensive area review process.

The Committee has considered the sites which are within the Council's ownership within the Newcastle-west/Keele master plan area. A majority of the Committee members consider that the former Keele Golf Course is surplus and that it should be disposed of as it is not in active service use, held as part of the commercial portfolio or held for another policy purpose. The Committee has noted that the master plan will consider this site in the context of the emerging master plan (which will inform the local plan) and that whilst this may identify other sites as suitable for future development the former golf course should be identified for disposal at this time.

(g) The majority of Committee members wish to recommend that the former Keele Golf Course be regarded as surplus and therefore suitable for disposable at the appropriate time should the planning policy framework support an alternative development-led use.

The Committee considered that there was scope to improve the currently approved approach to public consultation relating to the disposal of surplus land (as set out in the approved Asset Management Strategy). Therefore:

(h) The Committee wishes to recommend to Council that the preferred approach to local consultation about the disposal of surplus assets should be to consult with local members about any proposed sale in accordance with the Council's current consultation procedure but that it be extended for a further week to enable the most appropriate member-led approach to public consultation to be determined (in addition to the approved notification procedure). All comments received will be considered and will form part of a public report prior to any formal disposal being initiated.

Further to the point about enhanced consultation the Committee considered that there should be a clear briefing framework to enable local members to support effective public consultation. Accordingly:

(i) The Committee wishes to recommend to Council that a communications briefing should be prepared to support the public consultation process to explain the rationale underpinning the land disposal programme and to explain the process for local representations being taken into account in any disposal decision(s).

The Committee has considered the potential to formulate an Asset Disposal Policy however in view of the other requirements of its terms of reference and the priorities of its very short timescale to report has not been able to undertake a detailed assessment of such a policy and in particular of the financial implications of adopting such an approach. Therefore:

(j) The Committee wishes to recommend that Council may wish to consider whether further work needs to be undertaken to develop the Asset Disposal Policy from the outline formulated by the Committee.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – schedule of sites including broad and summarised market value information.

Background papers

Various reports and evidence reported to the Assets Policy Committee.