

PROPERTY MATTERS

1 Purpose of report

To provide an update to members on the report submitted to the committee on 12 December 2018.

2 Executive summary

The report provides an update in relation to ongoing approved projects identified in Appendix 1- Current projects and Appendix 2 – Business as usual.

3 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Current projects
Appendix 2 – Business as usual.

4 Proposed action:

The committee is invited to RESOLVE;

4.1 To note progress with regard to the projects outlined in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

5 Background

5.1 The council has approved an efficiency plan which was developed in conjunction with the medium term financial strategy to consider ways in which the council can either increase revenue income from its assets or reduce the cost of the operation of its assets. This, together with the proposal to set aside capital receipts to bring about those efficiencies was agreed by this committee in 2016.

5.2 Whilst there are a number of potential projects which the council could pursue to address the issues outlined above, a prudent approach has been taken to initiate those which can be managed with existing (or moderately enhanced) project resources; further projects are likely to require a development partner for which a procurement exercise will be necessary.

5.3 The majority of the proposed projects for which recommendations are outlined in Appendix 1 are either identified in the efficiency report or are outstanding issues which remain to be resolved.

- 5.4** In addition to the efficiency projects, some of the projects involving the development and/or disposal of sites will enhance the council's five year housing land supply position.
- 5.5** Given the potential changes to local government in Northamptonshire, the focus of this report is on the projects members have previously identified as priorities, and projects which can either be completed – or substantially progressed – within 2019/20.

6 Discussion

- 6.1** At the meeting of the committee on 12 December 2019, a revised list of projects and priorities was agreed. These projects are now being progressed and project documentation developed to better enable future monitoring. This will also assist communication with regard to progress and reporting, by exception, of changes and issues that require a steer or a decision. Officers are currently planning the setting up of a project steering group to support the governance of projects. Reports seeking approval for key changes in priorities or projects will continue to be made to the resources committee.
- 6.2** Summary tables including the current, previously agreed, projects appear in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. These will be updated monthly by the project managers. These summary tables include more information than has previously been reported to the committee. This does not change the priorities previously agreed by members. However, it does increase public transparency regarding how council resources are being used to invest in projects to improve Wellingborough.
- 6.3** **More robust project management and structure to reporting will enhance this transparency and give members a clear direction of travel on the progression of projects, and the use of resources, through out the year.**

7 Legal powers

The council has full power to manage its property assets under the incidental powers in section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972. Furthermore the council has all the powers of an individual under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. Accordingly it has full power to carry out the proposed actions.

8 Financial and value for money implications

- 8.1** Requirements for capital investment are outlined in each project, as are potential capital receipts for any sales proposed. Any new proposals for capital investment are processed by the S151 Officer for presentation to members as part of the capital report.
- 8.2** In terms of capital investment there is no proposal for investment unless a business case has been put forward. Business cases will either demonstrate a

cost saving, income generation, an improved facility for the borough, or a combination of the three.

- 8.3** Further investment in commercial property will be undertaken as agreed via the capital program, to increase potential revenue income streams. A report seeking approval for an investment strategy for the acquisition of additional assets will be brought to a future committee.
- 8.4** The level of capital investment in these projects is likely to be significant and extend over a number of years. When planning the delivery of the schemes consideration will need to be given to the position on partial exemption for VAT. A breach of this level could result in significant costs to the council and will therefore be included as a risk in planning the project programme.
- 8.5** The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) may be used to support investment in some of the buildings mentioned.
- 8.6** Contracts have been exchanged and deposit received for the sale of 40 Acres of land to the north of Niort Way, Wellingborough for residential development. This has secured a substantial capital receipt that can be used to resource approved priority projects in the council's capital programme.

9 Risk analysis

- 9.1** One of the greatest risks in respect of many of these properties is inaction. A number of the buildings are listed and, even "mothballed"; these are costing the council money in terms of maintenance and repair, but with no return which, in itself, presents an added reputational risk.
- 9.2** Leaving listed buildings unoccupied is expensive as the council has obligations for their maintenance but – at present – no return on that investment.
- 9.3** Since 2011 the council's staffing resources have remained significantly lower than in years gone by, so it is essential to undertake projects which can be run concurrently using existing (or moderately increased) resource. Any further major projects will either need to follow on or be the subject of an agreement with a developer – for which a procurement exercise will be required.
- 9.4** The delivery of property related projects, and particularly those involving the need for agreement with external parties, involves risks affecting the timing and delivery of outcomes. Project management techniques identify and manage those risks where possible.

10 Implications for resources

- 10.1** Significant officer resources will be required to make these projects a success, but the need to maximise the council's assets may be regarded as an appropriate use of such resources. Recruitment to approved vacant posts in

the Property and Projects team is ongoing. . Four members of staff are in post as this report is published. One further post will be put out for recruitment.

11 Implications for equalities, and stronger and safer communities

There are no direct implications for equalities, or stronger and safer communities.

12 Author and contact officer

Adrian Piper, Assistant Director (Corporate Landlord)

13 Consultees

Liz Elliott, Managing Director

Julie Thomas, Director

Paul Burnett, Property and Projects Manager

Victoria Phillipson, Principal Property and Projects Manager

Vicki Jessop, Assistant Director

Karen Denton, Assistant Director

14 Background papers

Documentation in relation to viability of potential developments.

Correspondence with interested parties or contractors.

Borough Council of Wellingborough Project Register Property and Projects - Current Projects

No. (Capital budget code)	Project Name	Priority	Summary	Project Manager	Latest update
PP003 (J122)	Street Furniture & Market	Expedite	Decluttering of Market Street, improvements to street furniture and repair of Mosaics. Refurbishment and promotion of the market.	Denise York	17.01.2019 - The market has been relocated on a trial basis and this will be considered at the next Town Centre Sub-Committee.
PP004	Mosaics	Expedite	Considering and implementing options for the Mosaics.	Denise York	17.01.2019 - The two mosaics in the town centre at Market Street; the 'Twin Towns' and the 'Five Wells'. have been damaged since they were last repaired in 2015. The damage is thought to be caused by vehicles and associated deliveries to business premises. The Town Centre Sub-committee has approved repairs to the Five Wells mosaic using existing budgets and further work by officers to establish options for future protection of the mosaics.
PP005 (J148)	Allotment Improvements	Expedite	Improvements to fencing and access	Alice Arden-Barnatt	17.01.2019 - Last grants to be paid shortly if approved at Resources Committee.
PP009	3G Pitch	Expedite	Delivery of a 3G pitch at Redwell Leisure Centre	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - Planning application approved and FF funding granted. Contract and condition discharge being progressed to allow start on site as soon as possible.
PP010	Croyland Road development site (former swimming pool)	Expedite	Disposal of site with planning permission.	Adrian Piper	17.01.2019 - Planning permission granted. Site has been marketed, a preferred bidder has been identified and solicitors have been instructed.
PP012	Drill Hall - disposal	Expedite	Disposal of site.	Adrian Piper	17.01.2019 - Site marketed and offers received. Preferred bidders unable to submit a acceptable scheme, therefore works progresses on timber etc. before re-marketing.
PP014	Crematorium	Expedite	Atrium installation	Paul Burnett	17.1.2019 - The atrium skylight has been ordered and will be installed as soon as possible.
PP018	43/44 High Street	Expedite	Bringing back first floor into use.	Paul Burnett	25.01.2019 - Planning permission granted.
PP021	20 Sheep Street - disposal	Expedite	Disposal of site with planning permission.	Adrian Piper	17.01.2019 - Following the decision of the committee to dispose of this property, architects are preparing documents to submit a planning application prior to disposal.
PP024	Retail improvements - shop fronts	Expedite	Providing grants for shop fronts.	James Murray	17.01.2019 - The criteria for these grants were agreed at the Town Centre Sub-committee on the 1 October. The process for this grant is currently being developed for launch as soon as possible.
PP001 J037	Redhill Farm - Roads & Sewers	High	Project to bring unadopted roads and cycle ways up to the required level for adoption.	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - Some further works may be needed by NCC, S38 agreement progressing with District Law and LGSS.
PP002 (J100 & J151)	Wellingborough Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)	High	To provide grant funding to critical/key buildings, shop fronts and other buildings in the Town Centre for restoration and refurbishment. J151 is the budget for match funding	John Udall	17.01.2019 - The Hind Hotel scheme has been submitted to the Heritage lottery Fund (HLF) who are supportive of the scheme. Work is progressing on public realm and working up proposals for BCW owned properties.
PP007	High Street Developer Procurement	High	To procure a developer for the High Street/Jacksons Lane site.	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - Planning permission granted. Deloitte are progressing discussions to allow a report to Council.
PP009	Wellingborough Homes land rationalisation	High	Agreement to sell land	Paul Burnett	17.01.2019 - Valuations completed and solicitors instructed to complete this transaction. This will help reduce the councils liability and allow the development sites at Milner Road, Finedon, Pentrith Drive and Nest Farm Road.
PP015	Multi-storey car park	High	Capital bid submitted awaiting outcome.	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - Capital bid submitted to progress this work and allow consultants to be procured.

No. (Capital budget code)	Project Name	Priority	Summary	Project Manager	Latest update
PP023	Town centre car parking study – benefits and opportunities – including High St	High	Review of town centre car parks.	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - An indicative layout for car parking on the High Street was agreed at the Town Centre Sub-committee on 1 October 2018 subject to further committee reports as necessary. The town centre parking study which informed the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough is in the process of being updated with car parking counts showing little change in 2 years in the majority of the town centre car parks apart from the High Street car park where there has been a larger reduction in occupancy. No further work needed at this time, specific projects can be identified at the appropriate time.
PP026	Temporary Accommodation - purchase of land	High	Purchase of land for use as temporary accommodation	Vicki Jessop	17.01.2019 - 6 properties purchased and 6 in the process of being purchased. Housing identifying possible properties and Underwood's proving support.
PP006 (J153 & J143)	Bassett's Park Skate Park and Bassett's Close S106	Medium	Skate park facilities and other related facilities.	Raj Gill	17.01.2019 - Officers to seek engagement of residents in the area using media and posters in the area.
PP008	Tithe Barn - Public Realm	Medium	Open Space outside the Tithe Barn	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - Feasibility study to be procured to apply for THI funding.
PP008	Stanton Cross Community Centre	Medium	Consider options to deliver a community centre on Stanton Cross	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - Discussion had with scouts and Northants Carers. Pick Everards have been procured to consider the design and feasibility of such a facility.
PP011	Doddington Road development site	Medium	Consider options for the site.	Adrian Piper	17.01.2019 - Outline planning consent has been granted for residential development. Further work is needed to consider this alongside the Tithe Barn Road offices.
PP013	Tithe Barn Road offices - options	Medium	Consider options for the site	Paul Burnett	17.01.2019 - Feasibility study completed, further consideration of how to progress with this alongside the Doddington Road site. A report will be brought to committee at the appropriate time.
PP016	High Street/Jacksons Lane retained land	Medium	Develop a scheme for the development of the retained land including car parking.	Victoria Phillipson	17.01.2019 - KierWSP have provided a parking scheme which was approved at the Town Centre Sub-Committee. Fee proposal requested to understand the cost of further works.
PP017	Redwell Leisure Centre	Medium	Options for future use/investment in the centre, to identify sustainable use of the building linked to the management of 3G pitch.	Victoria Phillipson/Gill Chapman	17.01.2019 - Officers currently in discussion with Places for Leisure in relation to the future of the Redwell Leisure Centre. A further report will be brought to committee to consider the future of the centre.
PP0019	BCW owned properties - flats over shops	Medium	Bringing flats back into use.	Dewa Hopson/Underwoods	17.01.2019 - Costs have been requested following feasibility studies.
PP020	Digital High Street	Medium	Identifying and implementing the options for the WDYT campaign and other schemes to improve the digital presence in the town centre.	James Murray	17.01.2019 - The Economic Development and Delivery Officer is researching a number of options on this and discussing with the Chamber of Commerce.
PP022	London Road chapels - disposal	Medium	Disposal of site.	Adrian Piper	17.01.2019 - Representatives of a community organisation are interested in their potential use, they have viewed the chapels and are considering the options.
PP025	Tithe Barn Hall	Medium	Considering other uses of the building.	Paul Burnett	17.01.2019 - A second business case has been provided and a meeting has been arranged to discuss this further.

Borough Council of Wellingborough Project Register Property and Projects - Business as usual

No.	Project Name	Priority	Summary	Latest update
PPBAU001	Stanton Cross	Ongoing	Progress delivery with Development Management	17.01.2019 - Monthly meetings being held to provide updates and address any issues.
PPBAU002	Tresham	Ongoing	Maximise the opportunities for skills and regeneration	17.01.2019 - Officer are working with Tresham to maximise the opportunities available.
PPBAU003	Wellingborough Prison	Ongoing	Maximise the opportunities for skills and economic development.	17.01.2019 - Ongoing discussions on how to work with the local community/economy and construction skills training.
PPBAU004	External Funding	Ongoing	Support the submission of bids	17.01.2019 - Reviewing funding opportunities and identify if they could be of use. Future High Streets fund is being considered.
PPBAU005	Town Centre Strategy	Medium	Identifying a strategy to move forward town centre projects.	17.01.2019 - The town centre high level review identifies that connections and signposting of connections in the town centre should be improved and was approved by the Town Centre Sub-committee. It is proposed that a brief feasibility study be procured to identify where there are gaps/weaknesses in connections and how these can these be resolved. This will then identify quick wins for linking together areas, destinations and assets, improve links to car parks, railway station, bus stops to encourage visits to town centre.
PPBAU006	Castle car parking	Ongoing	Identification of possible options	17.01.2019 - Further consideration needed on parking and what areas to consider. Parking update to be produced to allow this to be considered. Currently £20k in the budget for the Castle Parking.
PPBAU007	Asset strategy	Medium	To cover disposal and acquisition.	17.01.2019 - Whilst further disposal/acquisition is not ruled out, should any additional properties be identified there would need to be a sound business case which supports the council's objectives and provides value for money before any action could be taken.
PPBAU008	Commercial Property Management	Ongoing	Tender for management of the commercial property.	17.01.2019 - Tender documents being finalised to allow procurement as soon as possible.
PPBAU009	Swansgate Shopping Centre	Ongoing	Possible re-gear/assignment of Lease	17.01.2019 - Proposal for re-gear of lease made to head-lessee of shopping centre.
PPBAU010	Road adoptions/street lights and brooks	Ongoing	Review our ownership, health and safety reviews and progress any upgrades necessary.	17.01.2019 - The Technical Officer is reviewing the position with street lighting and brooks to identify if any immediate works need to be done, to monitor the situation, save money or improve efficiency and report back as necessary. A capital bid has been submitted for replacing the current street lights to improve emergency efficiency and reduce electricity costs.
PPBAU011	Community Asset Transfer	Ongoing	Develop a process for managing applications.	17.01.2019 - Project Support Officer to manage the process.
PPBAU012	Sale of land	Ongoing	Develop a process for managing applications.	17.01.2019 - Project Support Officer to manage the enquiries. Underwood's to provide specialist advice.
PPBAU013	Growth Deal	Ongoing	Submission of information into the North Northamptonshire Growth Deal bid.	17.01.2019 - Investment Framework has been drafted by Nathaniel Litchfield, and discussed at workshops with members by the Joint Planning and Devliery Unit.
PPBAU014	Investment Brochure	Ongoing	Develop an Investment brochure for Wellingborough	17.01.2019 - The Economic Development and Delivery Officer is developing a draft suite of documents including the brochure, newsletter and website.
PPBAU015	Council owned assets	Medium	Identify proerties to become projects.	17.01.2019 - Further work is being carried out to assess the viability of attracting external funding, to match fund council investment in council owned property in the town centre.
PPBAU016	Office space review	Medium	Consider options for relocation of staff.	17.01.2019 - Further work to be done once the future of the Tithe Barn Road offices is identified.
PPBAU017	Business Newsletter	Ongoing	Develop and circulate a newsletter for businesses proving information and links to support them.	17.01.2019 - The Economic Development and Delivery Officer is developing a draft suite of documents including the brochure, newsletter and website.

