

**Report of the Director**

**PROPERTY MATTERS**

**1 Purpose of report**

To provide an update to members on the report submitted to the committee on 30 October 2019.

**2 Executive summary**

The report provides an update in relation to ongoing approved projects identified in appendix 1 – current projects.

**3 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Current projects.

**4 Proposed action:**

**The committee is invited to RESOLVE**

**4.1 To note progress with regard to the projects outlined in appendix 1.**

**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 large scale 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 planned 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 – whilst this authority is in existence.
- 5.6** The procurement of the contract for estate management services to the council is now complete and draft contracts have been issued to the contractor at the time of writing.

## **6 Discussion**

- 6.1** At the meeting of the committee on 12 December 2018, 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 the reporting, by exception, of changes and issues that require a steer or a decision. Officers have now set up a project board 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** A summary table including the current, previously agreed, projects appear in appendix 1. These are updated monthly by the project managers. This does not change the priorities previously agreed by members. However, it does ensure public transparency regarding how council resources are being used to invest in projects to improve Wellingborough.
- 6.3** A more robust project management framework 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, throughout 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 programme, to increase potential revenue income streams. An investment strategy for the acquisition of additional commercial investment property has now been agreed.
- 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** The sale of 40 Acres of land to the north of Niort Way, Wellingborough for residential development has been completed. 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 the Property and Projects team is ongoing with the majority of posts filled. Additional specialist resources are being procured on a project by project basis from external consultants. If additional permanent or fixed term resources are required to enhance the team a further report will be brought to the committee.

**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

Shaun Darcy, Director

Eric Symons, Assistant Director

Vicki Jessop, Assistant Director

Karen Denton, Assistant Director

Victoria Phillipson, Principal Property and Projects Manager

Paul Burnett, Property and Projects Manager

**14 Background papers**

Documentation in relation to viability of potential developments.  
Correspondence with interested parties or contractors.

## Borough Council of Wellingborough Project Register Property & Projects - Current Projects

No. (Capital budget code)	Project Name	Priority	Summary	Project Manager/s	Project start date	Original Project/stage end date	Revised Project/stage end date	Project status (R/A/G)	Latest update December 2019
PP003 (J122)	Street Furniture & Market	Expedite	Relocation, refurbishment and promotion of the market.	Denise York, Project Co-ordinator	Ongoing	Oct-19		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.19 - Complete</b> - Further consideration is being undertaken for the ground anchoring system as part of a wider project.
PP009	3G Pitch	Expedite	Delivery of a 3G pitch at Redwell Leisure Centre	Victoria Phillipson Property and Projects Manager & Denise York, Project Co-ordinator	Nov-15	Oct-19		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.19 - Complete</b> - All snagging issues have been dealt with and day to day management handed over to Gill Chapman. Further consideration required to install a new sign as part of a wider project. Project close down paperwork approved at Project Board.
PP010	Croyland Road development site (former swimming pool)	Expedite	Disposal of site with planning permission.	Adrian Piper, Assistant Director & Underwoods	Mar-18	Dec-19	Jul-20	<b>A</b>	<b>28.11.2019</b> - The site remediation costs are currently being reviewed with a view to agreeing heads of terms with the purchaser. The purchaser is preparing to submit a planning application in late January 2020.
PP012	Drill Hall - disposal	Expedite	Disposal of site.	Adrian Piper, Assistant Director & Underwoods	Mar-18	Dec-19	Oct-20	<b>A</b>	<b>28.11.2019</b> - Heads of terms have been agreed with the purchaser. A staged approach to seeking planning consent is estimated by the purchaser to take up to 5 months to complete. It is proposed to retain and extend the existing buildings.
PP014	Crematorium	Expedite	Crematorium roof light.	Paul Burnett, Project Manager	Mar-18	Aug-19		<b>G</b>	<b>3.12.2019 - Complete</b> - Crematorium roof light installed.
PP018	43/44 High Street	Expedite	Bringing back upper floors into use.	Paul Burnett, Project Manager	Mar-18	Sep-19	Mar-20	<b>G</b>	<b>28.11.2019</b> - Planning permission granted, lease heads of terms agreed with Amicus. Scheme redesign complete contractor procured. The lease terms are being finalised between solicitors to allow a start date to be confirmed.
PP021	20 Sheep Street - disposal	Expedite	Disposal of site with planning permission or for re-use as offices.	Paul Burnett, Project Manager	Mar-18	Dec-19	Mar-20	<b>G</b>	<b>15.11.2019</b> - As required prior to planning consent, the property was marketed again for commercial use. One offer has been accepted subject to contract and due diligence checks.
PP024	Retail improvements - shop fronts	Expedite	Providing grants for shop fronts.	James Murray, Economic Development and Delivery Officer	May-19	Mar-21		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Grant fund has been launched, been promoted through flyers, social media and press release. Interest high and growing
PP026	Street Lighting replacement	Expedite	Replacement of bulbs in BCW owned street lights.	Adam Bracewell, Project Officer	Feb-19	Mar-20	Jul-20	<b>G</b>	<b>02.11.2019</b> - Specification and procurement plan are being developed to confirm estimated costs and timescales.
PP033	Crematorium Green Infrastructure	Expedite	Design and delivery of pathways and gardens as the Crematorium.	Victoria Phillipson, Property and Projects Manager	Sep-19	Sep-21		<b>A</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Standpipes to be installed shortly and footpaths around the Scattering Lawn delayed to Spring due to cold weather. Project Scope for footpaths and gardens being confirmed to allow procurement to proceed.
PP001 J037	Redhill Farm - Roads & Sewers	High	Get unadopted roads, sewers and cycle ways adopted.	Victoria Phillipson, Property and Projects Manager	2012	Jun-19	Mar-20	<b>A</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Sewers have been adopted by Anglian Water. All information submitted to NCC and response needed and being chased, S38 agreement delayed for this reason.
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.	John Udall, THI Project Manager	2012	Oct-19	Jul-20	<b>A</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - The Hind Hotel scheme is progressing well, these works are estimated to continue to mid 2020 and are being monitored with HLF. Other works need to be completed by July 2020, HLF have confirmed informally that the end date is extended from October 31 to July 2020.
PP007	High Street Developer Procurement	High	To procure a developer for the High Street/Jacksons Lane site.	Victoria Phillipson, Property and Projects Manager	2012	Jul-19		<b>A</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - No change - Planning approved at Committee subject to completion of a S106. Keepmoat have undertaken site investigations, information has been provided to the council. Discussions progressing to allow a report to Council.
PP027	Greatwell Homes land rationalisation	High	Agreement to sell land	Paul Burnett, Project Manager	2017	Sep-19	Mar-20	<b>A</b>	<b>03.12.2019</b> - Development sites have been transferred. Further work progressing on the detail of the arrangement. Resources committee approval confirmed and Greatwell Homes board approval pending.
PP015	Multi-storey car park	High	Work to refurbish car park.	Errol Browne, Programme Manager	Feb-19	Sep-20		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Surveys being carried out and specifications being drafted. Final contracts and specs due in January with an estimated start date Spring 2020.
PP032	Property & Project relocation	High	Relocation	Denise York, Project Co-ordinator	Aug-19	Oct-19		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Complete.
PP019	BCW owned properties - flats over shops	Medium	Bringing flats back into use.	Dewa Hopson, Estates Officer	May-18	Dec-19		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - HDA Architecture appointed to progress with planning and building regulation application. Pre-App submitted and meeting to be arranged with planning.
PP006 (J153 & J143)	Bassett's Park Skate Park and Bassett's Close S106	Medium	Skate park facilities and other related facilities.	Raj Gill, Project Co-ordinator	2012	Mar-20		<b>G</b>	<b>2.12.2019</b> - Working through the costing for the recommendations from the TEP report to put in capital request for next years capital programme. Due to start contacting the skaters to develop a good design for the skatepark.
PP008	Tithe Barn - Public Realm	Medium	Open Space outside the Tithe Barn	Denise York Project Co-ordinator	Nov-18	Nov-19		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Works to start on site shortly, MBN circulated on this and other works. Further report to be brought to Committee on later phases.
PP028	Stanton Cross Community Centre	Medium	Consider options to deliver a community centre on Stanton Cross	Victoria Phillipson, Property and Projects Manager	Sep-18	Ongoing		<b>G</b>	<b>03.12.2019</b> - Workshop attended by all parties interested in the Neighbourhood centre to review how this can be progressed. Once a possible scheme has been identified discussion can take place with possible operators.
PP011	Doddington Road development site	Medium	Disposal and redevelopment	Adrian Piper, Assistant Director	Mar-18	Dec-18	May-20	<b>G</b>	<b>28.11.2019</b> - Outline planning consent has been granted for residential development. Initial discussions are taking place with a view to bringing the site forward for development.
PP029	Croyland Gardens	Medium	Improvements to the public realm - connecting green space to the town centre. Croyland Gardens landscaping.	Raj Gill, Project Co-ordinator	May-19	Nov-20		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Landscaping companies are producing designs for Croyland Gardens, WNorse are cutting back a lot of the areas as instructed by BCW to open up the space.
PP020	Digital High Street	Medium	Identifying and implementing the options for the WDT campaign and other schemes to improve the digital presence in the town centre.	James Murray, Economic Development and Delivery Officer	Feb-19	TBC		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - No change - Project start up documents and action plans to be completed, meeting to be organised with key partners of the project to finalise best approach and spending of money.
PP030	Office space review	Medium	Consider options for building use for staff.	Victoria Phillipson, Property and Project Manager	Jun-19	TBC		<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Project start up drafted, further information is being considered so that a project plan can be developed.
PP031	Park Improvements	Medium	Improve the parks and provide better facilities	Raj Gill, Project Co-ordinator	May-19	Apr-20	May-20	<b>G</b>	<b>02.12.2019</b> - Wetpour has been replaced at Newcommen and Redwell Leisure centre, the parks tender is live deadline is Jan 2020.
<b>Key</b>									
<b>R</b>	Project not started/at significant risk of non-delivery								
<b>A</b>	Project on hold/at slight risk of non-delivery or delay								
<b>G</b>	Project in progress and on target								
<b>F</b>	Project on hold								

