

Report to Executive

Meeting Date: 2nd August 2021
 Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources
 Key Decision: YES: Recorded in the Notice Ref: KD. 14/21
 Within Policy and Budget Framework Yes
 Public / Private Public

Title: Draft Asset Management Plan 2022 to 2027
 Report of: The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
 Report Number: GD 47.21

Purpose / Summary:

The Asset Management Plan is being updated to reflect the key issues and changes affecting the management and use of the City's property resources.

The Plan will also report on the current position and performance of the Portfolio, and the Asset Disposal Programme.

Recommendations:

The Executive notes the position and approves the update to the Draft Asset Management Plan in order for it to proceed for consideration by the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel, back to the Executive and then full Council.

Tracking

Executive:	2 nd August 2021
Scrutiny:	26 th August 2021
Executive:	31 st August 2021
Council:	27 th September 2021

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Council's property assets are one of the essential resources used to carry out our day to day business, generating income to support services, and delivering economic development goals and housing opportunities.
- 1.2. The Asset Management Plan (AMP) outlines how the Council's strategies and policies for its property portfolio are used to support corporate priorities and directorate service plans.
- 1.3. The AMP outlines the overall performance of the asset base, what it is costing and producing, and how it is being used and reviewed. It also takes account of, and links into, the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Capital Strategy (CS), which provides guidance on the Capital Programme and use of resources. The AMP is part of the Council's Budget.
- 1.4. For a number of years, the Council has been working towards the recommendations within the Asset Review Business Plan, approved by Council in January 2011. Along with the redefining of the Portfolio, the Business Plan proposed staffing and management structures should be realigned to provide the appropriate resources, skills and experience to run each category of asset. This has happened in the context of service transformation and is continually evolving.
- 1.5. An appraisal of the property portfolio identified a requirement to rationalise and consolidate assets and a programme of disposals has taken place to re-engineer the investment portfolio. A revised Disposal Programme was approved by the Executive in December 2018 with the aspiration to generate £10m in capital receipts.
- 1.6. Because of service transformation the Council has been looking at its operational assets. The Accommodation Review aims to more efficiently and cost effectively meet future service delivery, identifying savings and opportunities to generate additional income.
- 1.7. The AMP is reviewed annually and updated, along with the MTFP and CS, all documents forming part of the Council's Budget (Article 4 of the Constitution).

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The AMP provides a succinct document that reflects;
 - The Asset Review Business Plan & Disposal Programme – progress on the implementation and the impact on the Portfolio and its future management,
 - Structural changes in the portfolio – the makeup of the operational and non-operational assets, current capital worth and rental levels,

- Performance of the assets and how these are constantly reviewed and challenged,
- Condition of the Portfolio – the standard of our properties, current maintenance requirements, suitability and sustainability for future use, and the steps which are being taken to improve energy efficiency,
- Accommodation Review – the outcomes, achievements and next steps to improve the use and efficiency of our operational property portfolio,
- Capital Schemes and Maintenance Budget – where the money is going,
- Property acquisitions – what has been done to reinvest in assets to produce income, maintain service delivery, support economic development initiatives and deliver services,
- Future Asset Management Options at our Kingstown and Parkhouse estates, and
- How our Economic Development property portfolio is being managed to support economic growth.

3. RISKS

- 3.1 By having an Asset Management Plan the Council can ensure that it uses its assets efficiently and that they support the Council's priorities.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Internally via the Council's corporate structures and processes. The Draft Plan will go to Business and Transformation Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 26th August 2021 for consideration, comment and feedback.

5. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1.1. To update the Council's Asset Management Plan and the position of the property portfolio in the light of the Asset Review Business Plan and Disposal Programme and other corporate initiatives.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 6.1 The proper management of the Council's property resource makes an essential contribution to the achievement of the Council's action plans and priorities.

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Appendices attached to report: Draft Asset Management Plan 2022 - 2027

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL - The Council has a fiduciary duty to properly manage its assets and the Asset Management Plan is a vital part of this process. It is also a designated budget document in accordance with the Council's Budget & Policy framework and, as such, as the report indicates, it is required to follow the usual route of consideration by Scrutiny and, thereafter, recommendation by the Executive to the Council.

FINANCE – The Asset Management Plan provides details on the Council's asset portfolio and the issues around the management of these assets. This will be used to inform the Medium Term Financial Plan and budget setting process for 2022/23 to 2026/27.

EQUALITY – None

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE – N/A



Managing property as a resource for the City

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

2022 – 2027

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1. The Council

- 1.1 Carlisle City Council delivers services to around 108,000 people and for the year 2021/22 has a net revenue budget of £15.1 million and capital expenditure budget of £28.06 million. The Council uses its property resources to deliver services, either directly or through the rental income it earns, and improve the quality of life for local people.
- 1.2 The Council's asset base produces a rental income of around £4.69 million per annum, from its non-operational property, with a net asset value, taking account of depreciation, of circa £89.38 million.

2. Purpose, Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The Asset Management Plan sets out the Council's approach to managing its land and property assets and aligns to Council's policies and strategies, particularly the Carlisle Plan, Directorate and Service Plans, the Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy.
- 2.2 The aim is to own assets which are fit for purpose and sustainable, to enable services to be delivered effectively and with equality of access, and to meet the strategic objectives outlined below:
 - Identify all property the Council owns or uses, maintaining accurate records, establishing its value and the function it performs, ensuring a reliable and accurate property management system is in place.
 - Make services aware of the costs of occupying property, maximising the use of the asset base, identifying 'expensive' and 'obsolete' assets.
 - Respond to changing property needs for service delivery improvements, identifying improvements to assets or the asset base to enhance service delivery, disposing of assets no longer required for operational purposes and acquiring new assets to support service delivery.
 - Generate capital for investment purposes aligned to corporate objectives.
 - Ensure a healthy and safe environment for property users.

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- Apply “Green Design” principles to construction, refurbishment and maintenance projects and encourage environmentally sustainable management of operational properties.
- Encourage community and partnership use of assets by identifying opportunities for shared services, liaising with partners and working with the community.
- Contribute to the Council’s Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy, identifying investment opportunities.
- Provide sustainable planned maintenance programmes for a 5-year period by undertaking and reviewing condition surveys.

3. **Property Strategies and Principles**

3.1 The Council has developed the following strategies and principles:

- **Operational Property Investment Principles** – Investment will be made where a property is required for the medium or long-term use, enhances service delivery, improves environmental sustainability, improves utilisation, increases efficiency, adds value, and addresses statutory obligations.
- **Non-Operational Property Strategy** – to own property that supports the growth of Carlisle and the Economic Development Strategy, provides a sustainable income stream, is a key component of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- **Non-Operational Property Investment Principles** - commercial property will only be held where it provides an acceptable financial return, there is potential to deliver economic development objectives, it contributes to the delivery of other Council priorities, it addresses legal or contractual liabilities and obligations.
- **Surplus Property Strategy** – the Council will dispose of surplus assets on a freehold or leasehold basis at best consideration. Disposals at less than best consideration may be agreed subject to the necessary statutory and Council approvals.
- **Surplus Property Principles** - operational and non-operational property will be sold unless occupied for service provision, used to deliver social, housing, economic or environmental benefits meeting agreed priorities, or it is a long-term strategic investment.

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- **Property Acquisition Strategy** - the Council will acquire assets; that improve service delivery, assist with delivery of Economic Development policy, develop opportunities to assemble sites to deliver Council objectives, improve the financial returns and deliver the Asset Review Business Plan.
- **Property Acquisition Principles** - property will only be acquired where whole life costings and option appraisal exercises are undertaken and meet set target criteria around risk, income returns and yields.

4. Value for money

- 4.1 There is a Council-wide approach to managing assets as a corporate resource, using assets to help to deliver social, environmental and economic outcomes for local communities.
- 4.2 Collaborating with partner organisations on strategic asset management planning is an important requirement. The Council will continue to develop its strategic approach to working with other bodies to identify opportunities for shared use and alternative options for the management and ownership of its assets.

5. Property Services

- 5.1 Property Services are responsible for managing the City Council's extensive property portfolio. The multi-disciplinary team cover everything from ad-hoc property repairs to multi-million-pound developments such as the Sands Centre and Civic Centre refurbishment. The service is supplemented by external resources when specialist assistance is required.
- 5.2 The property team face many challenges in supporting the Council with the competing pressures to deliver income whilst supporting the delivery of front-line services and realising ambitions for economic growth. The Council's core values, clear, committed, and confident, are embedded within the team and our aim is to provide a first-class property service for the City Council.

6. The Portfolio and Current Performance

6.1 Gross Asset Value as at 31 March 2021

	Operational assets		Non-operational assets		Total
	Community Assets	Land & Buildings	Investment	Surplus	
No of assets	77	67	49	15	208
Total income	£22,600	£4,036,300*	£4,143,200**	£0	£8,202,100
Capital value	£4,195,000	£50,298,000	£89,379,000	£1,143,000	£145,015,000
Capital Expenditure	£102,647	£1,710,664	£4,603,133	£31,221	£6,447,665
Outstanding Maintenance		£2,209,200	£2,000,000	-	£4,209,200
* Income from operational assets (i.e. car parks, crematorium, Civic Centre rents)					
** Rental income from investment assets					

6.2 The total capital spend on property assets in 2020/21 was £9.75million a significant increase on the 2019/20 investment of £3.18 million, predominately down to the Gateway 44 retail park development.

6.3 The figure for the outstanding maintenance on the operational buildings is based on a costed 5-year plan. The condition surveys were last undertaken in the summer of 2018. The information which has been derived from the surveys has been considered to assess the current condition of the portfolio, whilst further having regard to the work undertaken during the same financial period. Outstanding maintenance has reduced from circa £2,380,200 to £2,209,200. The Pools continue to be removed from the programme given their impending closure as part of the Sands Centre redevelopment.

6.4 We are currently spending £250,000 p.a. to enhance our operational portfolio as detailed below in a bid to reduce the risk of major long-term capital expenditure being required.

6.5 Non-operational outstanding maintenance relates primarily to historical infrastructure costs associated with our industrial estate ground rent portfolio. We

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intend to review this as and when resources allow and anticipate that the level of outstanding maintenance will reduce given the asset disposals and investment undertaken at Durranhill and Kingstown Industrial Estates.

6.6 Outstanding Maintenance

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27
Total Revenue Budget	£760,700	£776,000	£791,500	£807,400	£823,500	£840,000
Capital Schemes Special Projects	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000
Ratio Planned: Reactive Maintenance	76 : 24	76 : 24	76 : 24	76 :24	76:24	76:24

6.7 Based upon the final condition surveys, the annual planned maintenance programme has been further developed for the operational assets. As discussed above, there is unplanned maintenance currently assessed at £2,209,200 for the portfolio of operational buildings. The planned delivery programme to reduce this, incorporates a degree of flexibility to respond to the demands of service delivery, asset review, and other circumstances which may arise during the programme. Members approved a 3-year programme of planned and reactive maintenance on 9 November 2020 (report reference GD.52/20). In condition category terms the split is:-

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Condition Category (as a % of Gross Internal Area Operational Property)			Sustainable Criteria
	2020-25	2021-26	
A. (Excellent)	0.73%	0.75%	Yes
B. (Good)	89.42%	89.20%	Yes
C. (Mediocre)	9.85%	10.05%	Review
D. (Poor)	0%	0%	No

6.8 The table above shows the condition categories of the operational portfolio. There has been a slight change to the condition categorisation of operational assets over the last year as work undertaken has focused on addressing maintenance issues rather than improvements. The condition is continually reviewed and for around 90% of the portfolio classed as either excellent or good, is a testimony to the proactive management regime, which would otherwise leave the portfolio falling short of that required to provide the Council's services.

6.9 Local Environment (Climate Change) Strategy

6.10 In March 2019 Carlisle City Council declared a Climate Change Emergency. In March 2021 the Council adopted its Local environment (Climate Change) Strategy with the ambition of getting to net zero by 2037.

6.11 Work is being undertaken to further understand the energy consumption across our portfolio and to assess our carbon footprint, this will establish a baseline from which improvements can be assessed and monitored.

6.12 The operational and investment portfolio has been assessed to produce up to date Display Energy Certificates (DECS) and Energy Performance Certificates (EPCS) where required. This exercise has created an understanding of the implications of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) on the sale and let ability of the non-operational assets and provide a benchmark from which to improve the CO2 emissions of the publicly funded buildings.

6.13 The data forms part of the wider consideration of the asset management of the property portfolio and particularly when assessing the viability of the long-term use, maintenance and ownership of the assets.

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- 6.14 Where assets have fallen below the required standard this has been assessed and maintenance work has been completed. During the past year a full re-survey and assessment of the Enterprise Centre was undertaken and consequent improvement works undertaken.
- 6.15 On a larger scale Capital works are completed to meet the relevant building standards and where financially viable and opportunities are available additional initiatives are being incorporated to further improve the energy standard of the asset stock.
- 6.16 The Sands Centre Redevelopment will have a significant impact on reducing the organisations carbon footprint. Initial calculations, based on the Consequential Improvements Report, estimate a reduction in production Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions of 96 tonnes per annum.
- 6.17 The Civic Centre Reinstatement Project will also bring improvements to the energy efficiency of the ground floor, the impact of which will be seen in changes in gas and electricity usage. The project also includes demolition of the Rotunda with associated Public Realm improvements and EV charging points in the extended Civic Centre car park.
- 6.18 The Property Services team have successfully completed the Footway lighting project which has resulted in the vast majority of the City Council's footway lighting portfolio being converted to LED's. The projected annual saving of production Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions is 93 tonnes, an estimated lifespan saving of 1,399 (t)CO₂e
- 6.19 The solar photovoltaic arrays at the Civic Centre and Sands Centre continue to be successful in terms of electricity generation and income received from the feed in tariff.
- 6.20 Capital Works and Repairs
- 6.21 The programme of works identified in the Capital Major Repairs Programme is initially shaped by a 5-year maintenance plan produced from condition surveys and adjusted each year to keep abreast with new legislation. The Council has a legal duty to maintain its properties and the programme is required to meet those statutory duties. Report GD.52/20 was presented to the Executive with proposals for capital investment for planned major repairs which was approved as follows:

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Property	Description of works	Estimated Cost
Cemeteries	Resurfacing	£30,000
Tullie House	Plant Replacement	£20,000
Raffles Community Hall	Roller Shutter Replacements	£15,000
Botcherby CC	Replace Timber Windows	£20,000
Morton CC	Main Hall Flooring replacement	£15,000
Morton CC	Overhaul Timber Windows (Listed Building)	£20,000
Upperby Cemetery Lodge	Property upgrade - to include rewire, kitchen, bathroom, external doors & windows	£30,000
Civic Centre	Upgrade heating & ventilation to floor 8	£25,000
Civic Centre	Fire safety enhancement works	£20,000
Civic Centre	Replace flat roof to 1st floor (around rates hall)	£10,000
Civic Centre	Upgrade WC's to 2nd & 7th floors	£20,000
Stony Holme	Car park surface overlay	£25,000
	Total	£250,000

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6.22 Key staff leaving the team and Covid-19 had a significant impact on the 2020/21 capital works programme due to a number of staff shielding and supply chain issues resulting in a number of projects being deferred to 2021/22.

Works Carried Forward From 2020 / 2021

James Creighton Memorial	Clean & refurbish	£10,000
James Steel Statue	Clean & refurbish	£10,000
Various Properties	Legionella RA's	£5,000
Civic Centre	Roof Beam Covers	£5,200
Tullie House	Pitched Roof repairs	£10,000
Bousteads	Resurfacing	£8,500
Talkin Tarn	Fire escape stair renewal	£14,300
Civic Centre	Lift motor bearing renewal	£10,000
Enterprise Centre	Fire alarm system renewal	£20,000
Tullie House	Plant Replacement	£20,000
Bousteads	Roller shutter renewals	£10,000
Crematorium	Flat roof renewal	£15,000
Cemetery	Surfacing	£30,000
Dixons Chimney	Stone repairs etc	£21,400
Greystone CC	Pointing & masonry repairs etc	£5,000
Currock CC	Flat roof renewal	£14,400
Total C/F:		£208,800

7. Continuous Review and Challenge

7.1 The Council continuously reviews and challenges how to best use its asset portfolio;

- The Council holds a significant, numerous and diverse portfolio of assets across the city, which generates considerable income and which has an important impact on the local economy. The Council uses property well to meet its aims and is planning future investment and development to allow it to continue to do this.
- The Council has a highly rationalised operational portfolio, however the significant level of maintenance yet to be carried out will present challenging issues going forward. New investment in assets such as the Sands will help alleviate issues by removing older, poorly functioning assets such as the current Pools facility.
- The accommodation review and Asset Review Business Plan is an ongoing programme that will continue to deliver efficiency benefits.
- The Council has a diverse and mixed non-operational portfolio which, through rationalisation, is becoming more efficient but has considerable further potential. This will be further explored and actions taken to realise efficiencies with the resources currently available.
- The Council is taking a more commercial approach to the management of the portfolio in order to strategically balance the need for operational assets, income generation and economic development, in support of the local economy, the protection of public services and other priority objectives.
- The Transformation Programme has identified the need for further rationalisation and consolidation of the operational property to improve access to public services and efficiency. The accommodation review will address these needs.

7.2 Accommodation Review

7.3 An Accommodation Review of both back office and front public facing service delivery assets is ongoing. This comprises an analysis of accommodation needs and the existing provision, exploring future solutions and implementing the most beneficial models for the Authority.

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- 7.4 It seeks to deliver effective and efficient accommodation that suits the needs of each service, establish a more corporate approach to accommodation, make more effective use of space, improve the working environment and make the accommodation as productive as possible.
- 7.5 The first phase of the redevelopment of the Civic Centre ground floor project is virtually complete with phase 2, the demolition of the Octagon and external landscaping, scheduled for completion by year end. The new accommodation will allow modern ways of working to be embraced, with more flexible multi-purpose space available. The design has incorporated flood resilience and energy efficiency measures where possible.
- 7.6 The new multi-functional chamber and enhanced parking facilities will also provide income generating opportunities.
- 7.7 The current programme of works is the first phase of a wider scheme to maximise space occupancy within the Civic Centre. The current pandemic has shown that alternative forms of working can be successful and the challenge going forward will be to incorporate these opportunities for greater space utilisation throughout the building. Past occupational models where every employee based at the Civic Centre has their own desk have been shown to be unnecessary and offer the opportunity to generate significant savings.
- 7.8 Agile working has not only cost benefits but others such as improving the attractiveness of the organisation to potential employees, improving both the health and well-being of staff and the local environment by reducing the need for travel.
- 7.9 We already have a number of public sector partners co-locating with the City Council and we are working with partners through the One Public Estate programme to encourage greater take up of vacant space in the building which will generate additional income as well as reducing the overall public sector property costs.

7.10 Major Projects Team

Funding was secured to via a budget bid, to secure a major projects team within Property Services. The team are responsible for delivery of all large construction projects on behalf of the City Council. This will ensure that the Council has the knowledge and expertise to deliver major construction projects on time and on budget.

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- 7.11 Covid and Brexit have offered up the perfect storm however the knowledge and experience within the team has ensured that the Council has been able to limit exposure to cost overrun on the Sands Centre and Civic Centre developments.
- 7.12 Going forward it is envisaged that the team will be delivering the construction projects associated with the Council's economic growth agenda.
- 7.13 Sands Centre redevelopment
- 7.14 The £27m redevelopment of the Sands Centre is progressing well on site, despite the implications of Covid and Brexit however supply chain issues are causing difficulties.
- 7.15 One notable success has been the temporary accommodation developed at the former Newman School to accommodate GLL & the NHS. The decision was taken to lease space at the former school and refurbish rather than take temporary portacabin accommodation to not only minimise cost but also to provide a more suitable temporary leisure facility and leave a legacy for the city once we vacate. On the back of the refurbishment works undertaken the remainder of the buildings on-site has been brought back into use with Carlisle College, the catholic diocese and a local undertaker now in occupation.
- 7.16 Asset Review Business Plan
- 7.17 An asset review and investigation into the options for the development of a new approach to the management and use of the portfolio was concluded in 2010 with the adoption by Council of an Asset Review Business Plan (Report Ref. CE 39/10 refers).
- 7.18 Work continues on the implementation of the Business Plan as detailed below:
- 7.19 Disposal Programme
- 7.20 In December 2018 a revised disposal programme was approved by the Executive with the aspiration of generating £10m to assist with funding major developments such as the Sands Centre and Gateway 44 scheme.

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- 7.21 Additional staff resources were engaged to deliver this 5-year programme. From July 2019, two new additional surveyors (one full-time / one part-time) were employed by the Council to progress the disposal of properties identified in the 2018 Asset Disposal Plan. They were supported from November 2019 by a dedicated solicitor on a part-time basis.
- 7.22 Capital receipts of £2,468,500 were generated in 2020/21 with a total of £4,624,520 being generated to date.
- 7.23 Extensive due diligence is required to bring the other disposal assets forward. This work has slowed significantly due to Covid and wider resource issues within the Property Services team due to staff departures and work pressures. Firstly the part-time Disposals Surveyor left the Council in February 2020 and, it has been considered prudent to redeploy the Senior Disposal Surveyor to a wider role managing the surveyors engaged in the estate management and valuation team. This change took place with effect from February 2021. The impact of these changes has inevitably been that there is less dedicated resource to the Asset Disposal Plan so the rate of disposals is likely to decrease.
- 7.24 Despite the reduction in resources significant work has been progressed as detailed below:
- 7.25 Carlisle Enterprise Centre
- 7.26 Energy Performance Certificates - during 2020/21 a full re-survey and assessment of the property was instructed in order to obtain updated EPCs that will both assist with the disposal of the property and ongoing lettings. With the exception of a few small units in the property, the Council now has a full set of compliant EPCs. In tandem with this Property Services has been working with Legal Services to ensure that any new lettings are on a more appropriate basis and at increased rents. This approach not only will help improve the short-term income stream but also the disposal as and when this is possible.
- 7.27 Stanwix House / Cottage – The University of Cumbria have given notice that they intend to vacate these properties in the summer of 2021. Property Services are currently engaged in trying to settle a dilapidations claim with the University whilst looking at future options.
- 7.28 Land at Longtown – Following the failure of a proposed sale in FY 2020/21, this asset is being re-marketed for sale.
- 7.29 Former Harraby Community Centre – To progress the disposal of the site, the demolition of the old building is being progressed. It is hoped that the demolition will be completed this summer.

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- 7.30 Durranhill Industrial Estate – detailed enquiries are being undertaken to identify all of the various interests held by the Council and other parties in order to help determine the best disposal strategy and bring together the copious legal documentation that will be required to effect a disposal
- 7.31 Land at Morton – Work is being stepped up to develop the masterplan for the employment land that forms this site. The Council's external consultants are currently engaging with several major potential occupiers in a bid to identify an appropriate anchor tenant / occupier for the scheme. Property Services have also had lengthy discussions with Cumbria County Council in order to arrange the disposal of assets required for the CSLR. The capital receipt that will result from this will be reported to the Executive next month
- 7.32 Update to Asset Disposal Plan
- 7.33 Given the due diligence work that has been done and changes in the market, Property Services intend to bring forward an update to the Asset Disposal Plan later this year. This will look to re-profile some of the disposal assets as well as identify others that are considered appropriate for disposal.
- 7.34 Reinvestment Options
- 7.35 The Business Plan envisages capital receipts will be used to generate additional revenue and support purchases in the economic development and operational property portfolios.
- 7.36 Opportunity purchases into the Economic Development portfolios are being progressed to support the aspirations of the Borderlands Growth Deal and are discussed further in section 7.44 below.
- 7.37 We continue to look for opportunities to enhance income generating opportunities for the City Council however changes to the Prudential Code, as discussed in the Capital Investment Strategy, will impact on the Council's ability to fund such activities.
- 7.38 Chancerygate – Kingstown and Parkhouse
- 7.39 Chancerygate, the Council's appointed asset managers for their Kingstown & Parkhouse assets, continue to make good progress with the management and development of our portfolio north of the City.

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- 7.40 Gateway 44 retail park was completed on time and within budget and the development is now 100% under offer despite Covid and the turmoil in the retail sector.
- 7.41 A further 10 rent reviews were completed during the year adding a further £135,158 p.a. to the rent roll.
- 7.42 In addition to this Property Services and their other advisors have completed 10 reviews during 2020/21 increasing rental levels by circa £9,000 p.a.
- 7.44 Economic Development Portfolio
- 7.45 The assets within this portfolio are directed towards supporting and creating opportunities for the growth of the City using employment, housing and retail development land.
- 7.46 The Council and its partners has been incredibly successful in securing over £250 million investment into the City by way of various central Government funding streams including Borderlands Growth Deal, Future High Street Funding, Towns Deal Accelerated Fund, Town Deal and HIF funding.
- 7.47 The Council has a significant role to play in these projects through both use of its assets and also the expertise of the professional teams. During the last financial year we have acquired the leasehold interest of Paton House as part of the Borderlands University of Cumbria campus proposal. We have also agreed terms with the County Council to transfer land to facilitate the Southern Link road.
- 7.48 As the various projects are progressed we anticipate a significant role for the Council and its property assets.
- 7.49 Coronavirus pandemic
- 7.50 The Coronavirus pandemic continues to have a major impact on the operations of the City Council.
- 7.51 From an operational perspective many buildings remain closed and colleagues continue to work from home where possible. The pandemic has however demonstrated that large sections of the Council can work remotely and there is no longer the need for staff to be permanently based in offices such as the Civic

Centre. Agile working is likely to become the norm in the future and now is the perfect time for the Council to grasp the opportunity.

- 7.52 There are a number of benefits for the Council; cost savings by reduced floor space requirements; environmental improvements with fewer people travelling into the city reducing pollution; improved staff retention and recruitment, greater flexibility around the workplace is attractive to many especially younger job seekers who see agile working as an essential part of the package.
- 7.53 The UK economy has experienced a period of severe contraction due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Short term income has been reduced and tenants will continue to vacate despite the significant assistance provided by Central Government. The long-term impact is still not clear; however it is likely that values will continue to fall impacting on the investment portfolio although this will vary between sectors with the High Street witnessing major structural change. The Council aims to minimise the long-term effect on its income levels through proactive property management.
- 7.54 Along with Covid, the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union (EU) is impacting on construction projects, with delays and shortages of materials now common place. At this stage we have no indication on how long it will take for the sector to return to normality.
- 7.55 The assets (and the values that will be realised from them) within the Disposals Programme will not be immune from the market influences and therefore the values achieved over the next few years may not be as great as previously forecast.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The Council has a highly rationalised and suitable service occupied portfolio. Despite the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic the Council has shown that it can quickly adapt to rapidly changing situations. As and when normality returns a key challenge will be to build on the opportunity that the pandemic has given us in relation to agile working.
- 8.2 The completion of the Civic ground floor redevelopment will provide an enhanced customer services operation and entrance to the building. Opportunities to co-locate with other public sector partners will be pursued.

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- 8.3 The Sands Centre redevelopment offers an opportunity to enhance leisure facilities within the city it will also reduce our maintenance liability and support our aspirations for economic growth.
- 8.4 The Council has a significant investment property portfolio; the challenge will be to protect this income stream as the long-term effects of the pandemic become clearer.
- 8.5 The unprecedented Government investment into Carlisle offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to grow the City and the Council needs to be ready to utilise its property assets and experience to ensure that opportunities for growth are maximised.