

Cabinet Member Response to the Recommendations of the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee following its review of Change and Improvement: LCC Change Plan and Council Estate, Use of Occupancy of Council Buildings and Asset Disposal on 28 September 2023

At its meeting on 28 September 2023, the committee considered reports on the LCC Change Plan and Council Estate – Use of Occupancy of Council Buildings and Asset Disposal, a written response was provided by the Cabinet Member and was circulated to members of the committee via email. The recommendations of the committee are detailed below and the response from the Cabinet Member is also provided.

Item 6 – Change and Improvement: LCC Change Plan

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Resources, HR and Property (Deputy Leader):

- i. A further update to be provided to the committee on Change and Improvement: LCC Change Plan in 6 months' time.**

An update on the LCC Change Plan will be presented to the committee at their May 2024 meeting.

Item 7 – Council Estate, Use and Occupancy of Council Buildings and Asset Disposal

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Resources, HR and Property (Deputy Leader):

- i. Current map data provided for each of the Service areas, presenting the location of assets, to be provided in a table / grid form and, broken down by district.**

Please see attached - **Appendix 'C'**.

- ii. Further information to be provided in relation to Table B: Property Assets Running Costs to include the following:**
 - a. Costs to be broken down further for buildings that are owned by the county council (freehold) and those that are leased and include property holding responsibilities.**
 - b. A performance table detailing the grades of costs for assets, for example different highlights for very expensive buildings to inexpensive buildings.**
 - c. Breakdown of assets by cost per meter squared and information explaining what the total condition cost means. Where possible,**

data to be provided on the age of buildings and the impact this has on cost.

d. Clarity on what each of the P1, P2 P3 and P4 categories mean, including a link to the Asset Management Strategy.

Please see attached - **Appendix 'C'**.

The Property Asset Management Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2020 and can be accessed [here](#). Annex 2 of the strategy sets out a definition of each condition category (P1, 2, 3 & 4).

iii. A briefing note to be provided on the following:

a) Information on RAAC and what the situation is for Lancashire Schools and other county council owned buildings.

The county council responsible for 303 schools and each of these have been reviewed for the potential presence of RAAC and intrusive inspections commissioned as appropriate. The survey programme of these schools is now complete and no RAAC has been found.

RAAC has been identified in three schools which are not maintained by the council: Our Lady's High School, Fulwood; St James Primary school, Haslingden; and Knuzden Primary Academy, Blackburn. The DfE is working with each school and the respective responsible body to carry out remedial works.

The current list of the council's operational buildings has been reviewed and those buildings still in use and which fall within the responsibility of the council have been prioritised for survey where appropriate. This prioritisation has been based upon potential risk to the occupants.

There are approximately 309 sites containing 846 operational buildings within scope of the review. Additional surveyors are being deployed to enable the RAAC survey programme to be completed by Spring 2024.

b) Details on what the cost of working with LASER is to undertake a base line carbon assessment, and consideration be given to whether it would be more cost effective to bring this in house.

£20,000 has been allocated for the development of a carbon descent roadmap and sector specific proposals for low-carbon works. The funding for this activity has been met through staffing underspend where it has not been possible to recruit to posts in-house. Collaboration with external consultants will support the development of low-carbon skills within the council.

- c) Regarding property asset disposals, data to be broken down by district (geographic location) and by category to determine what type of asset had been disposed.

Property Asset Disposal Since 2016														
There are a total of 272 capital receipts from 247 premises. This includes freehold, clawbacks and parts of a site. Community Asset Transfers are not included.														
Asset Group	District													Total
	Burnley	Chorley	Fylde	Hyndburn	Lancaster	Pendle	Preston	Ribble Valley	Rossendale	South Ribble	West Lancs	Wyre	Other	
Community (front-facing, targeted and universal)	8	2		4	3	2	5		3	3	2	1		33
Country Parks				1					1					2
Education	4	1	1		2	1	3	1	1	3	4	1	2	24
Highway, Fleet and Depot											1			1
Miscellaneous out of scope				1	1									2
Museums												1		1
NA (e.g., Sites without buildings)	26	6	11	10	20	13	11	2	23	18	30	10	10	190
Offices and Storage	2	1	2		2		4		1					12
Residential and Care Provider Services	1	2		2		2								7
Total	41	12	14	18	28	18	23	3	29	24	37	13	12	272

- d) Moving forward, data to be provided on relocation costs and / or savings for moving staff and facilities from buildings.

This approach can be further developed in line with future strategic property reviews.

- e) Information on what the revenue implications are of Property Asset Disposals, as detailed in Table C. Consideration to be given to business planning and tightening up the business case process, where the county council has service ambitions and opportunities for reconfiguring and relocating.

This approach can be further developed in line with future strategic property reviews.

- f) Data to be provided on buildings or rooms that have been let and leased for revenue purposes rather than disposed of.

County Hall has the following tenants:

Tenant	NIA Sqm
UK Health Security Agency	224.92
Northern Trains Ltd	160.63

Office of Police and Crime Commissioner & Violence Reduction Unit	356.5
Local Pension Partnership Administration	1190.00
Integrated Care Board NHS	1779.93

The current direction of travel is for the council to vacate the whole of Christ Church Precinct and let to partners or third parties.

- iv. Consideration be given to improving the briefing process to councillors so they are informed earlier in the process about assets that are available for community asset transfer so they can share their expertise and information in their communities and with prospect community groups who may be interested.**

Where surplus assets are to be made available under the Community Asset Policy 2023, County Councillors will be briefed in advance of such opportunities being posted on the council's website.

- v. Benchmarking Data in this area of work from other authorities (taking into consideration specific and individual circumstances for authorities) to be shared with the committee once this information becomes available, further to a request made through the County Council's Network.**

No benchmarking data has been identified to date however the service will continue to look for opportunities in the sector.

- vi. Consideration to be given to a press release about how successful the process of property asset disposal has been at the county council.**

It is considered more appropriate to focus on future service development and opportunities rather than historic property disposals.

- vii. Consideration be given to a survey to be provided to community groups or CICs to capture valuable feedback from groups who have gone through the process of asset transfer. Information to be provided on the new processes put in place to strengthen the asset transfer process, agreed as part of the updated Asset Management Policy, and where possible, consideration be given to how successful the previous community asset transfer policy was and the length of time it took to complete a transfer.**

The new Community Asset Policy 2023 includes a more streamlined process which takes account of learning from the previous policy which was adopted in 2016. An opportunity for customer feedback regarding their experience of the new policy can be implemented so that future learning can be captured to inform any further improvements.