

SLOUGH *Changing Views*

RATIONALISATION OF COUNCIL ASSETS WORKSTREAM

Lead – Stephen Gibson, Head of Asset Management

Introduction

Across the public sector there is a natural tendency for organisations to re-use existing buildings even as their needs change. Because of this, assets often serve the needs of the past rather than the future. Money continues to be spent maintaining buildings that are no longer fit for purpose.

This work stream links to the ongoing Asset Challenge. It aims to challenge existing perceptions about where and how the Council provides services, reduce inefficiency and maximise the value of assets. Asset Challenge allows Council departments to gain a better understanding of its current and future property needs. This improved understanding will help the Council to make informed decisions about any asset rationalisation opportunities identified.

Within this work stream consideration will be given to the practicalities of relocating services from the Centre of town where there is a financial and strategic value to do so.

Definitions

A high level ‘strategic fit’ exercise provides an insight into assets that are performing well, and those that are underperforming – whether through underuse, high operational cost, or high opportunity cost. Strategic fit focuses attention on assets where rationalisation opportunities are most likely to be found and deliver the desired outcomes of the 5 Year Plan.

Strategy

Strategic asset management means having clarity about why assets are held, how well they are performing, what property is *really* needed to operate efficient services and what will be needed to move SBC from where it is now to where it needs to be in the future. This approach will identify shortcomings in existing use. It will confirm where rationalisation is most urgently needed and highlight the potential financial return. Flowing from this potential rationalisation will be identified which can then be explored in greater detail through options analysis and/or feasibility studies.

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Quick Wins

Potential quick wins include:

- The relocation of the Drug & Alcohol Awareness Team (DAAT) from Maple house.
- The relocation of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) from Connaught House.

Key Actions

Within this work stream, Asset Management will:

- Undertake an analysis of SBC services operated within the town centre.
- Arrange individual meetings with Service Leads to provide a strategic overview and identify opportunities for collaborative working (between the Council and other public bodies – realising One Public Estate objectives).
- Identify and free-up surplus properties that can be used for regeneration purposes.
- Assist with the relocation of council services to the town Centre where this fits with the wider Asset Challenge strategy

Outcomes

The proposed actions will help to deliver the Five Year Plan's outcomes by:

- Transforming cultures and working practices to identify the potential to share assets, without compromising the working environment and the customer experience.
- Challenge perceptions and modernise the way the Councils delivers services.
- Reduce the Council's Property costs.
- Assist with rationalisation and inform the asset disposal strategy.
- Identify acquisition and investment opportunities.

Resource

The Head of Asset Management will lead this workstream with support from the Principal Asset Manager.

Funding

Costs associated with the relocation of services.