



Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Cabinet

Tuesday, 10 November 2020

Acquisitions and Disposals Policy

Report of the Executive Manager - Transformation

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Business and Transformation, Councillor A Edyvean

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. Cabinet supported the Council's new Asset Management Strategy 2020 – 2025 at the meeting of 10 March 2020. The Strategy was then approved by full Council on 16 July 2020. The Strategy sets out how the Council's land and building portfolio is aligned to the Council's corporate objectives, with the Asset Management Plan (AMP) setting out how this is carried out: ensuring the diverse portfolio is fit for purpose, effectively managed and supports service delivery. As part of the AMP, the Council buys and sells land and building assets and the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy 2020 – 2025 at Appendix A sets out the parameters of these transactions.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy 2020 – 2025.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

It is good practice for the Council to have a current Acquisitions and Disposals Policy to provide transparency in these transactions.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. The Policy sets out the key principles in considering the purchase or sale of an asset, which includes: the contribution in meeting the Council's objectives; asset review, including financial appraisal; the best practice in determining the most appropriate method of acquisition or disposal; and the legislation the Council must follow.
- 4.2. Sales of property can range from a sliver of grass verge to allow a resident to extend their garden to a significant building no longer required to deliver services. The Policy defines assets that are surplus or under used and the process for disposal. In considering an asset for disposal, it is reviewed against

some key criteria, including: asset performance; meeting service needs; legal; financial; and local considerations – such as the community value an asset contributes and the environmental cost or value it has.

- 4.3. Whatever the asset, it will have an appropriate method of disposal (such as informal tender or auction), and authorisation process as set out in the constitution: where the sale has a value of less than £25,000 this could be delegated to the Chief Executive or Executive Manager. Where the value is greater than £25,000 this will be a Cabinet decision.
- 4.4. For acquisitions, the Policy outlines the circumstances in which an asset may be purchased, this could be: as part of the Asset Investment Strategy; for affordable homes; as part of the Empty Homes Strategy; and assets that support the Corporate Strategy, service delivery and regeneration.
- 4.5. Similarly to sales, the Policy sets out the review criteria to be considered prior to acquisition and the authorisation process: where the purchase has a value of less than £25,000 or falls within the criteria set out in the Asset Investment Strategy, Affordable Homes and Empty Homes Strategy (which have already been approved by Cabinet) approval is delegated jointly to the Leader/Portfolio Holders and the Chief Executive/Executive Managers. All other purchases above the value of £25,000 will be reported to Cabinet.
- 4.6. Throughout the process, appropriate stakeholder engagement and consultation will form part of the review and decision making.
- 4.7. The Acquisition and Disposal Policy is an important tool in ensuring the property portfolio is fit for purpose, with the right assets in the right place, supporting service delivery and the Corporate Objectives.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

The alternative is not to have an agreed Acquisitions and Disposal Policy, which is not good practice in providing transparency in these transactions.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

Ineffective management of the Council's property portfolio negatively impacts on service delivery for residents, income generation, maintenance/management costs, business support and growth, partner working and regeneration. This Policy, which sits within the Asset Management Strategy, provides transparency in management of the property portfolio, specific to the sale and purchase of land and buildings, to ensure it is fit for purpose.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications of the report. Any property disposal would be reported as part of the Council's current governance arrangements and financial reporting.

7.2. Legal Implications

All acquisitions and disposals will be subject to due diligence. All transfers will be subject to legal review and completion.

7.3. Equalities Implications

The Policy aims to be fully inclusive, providing clear guidelines by which the Council acquires and disposes of its land and building assets.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

The Strategy provides a framework to ensure effective management of the Council's assets, which includes making sure assets are appropriate for their environment and managed effectively.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Residents directly benefit from the effective management of a well maintained and efficient portfolio to enable effective service delivery to residents.
Efficient Services	As with Quality of Life, having well placed assets with their effective management enables services to be delivered to a high standard across the borough.
Sustainable Growth	Managing assets in the right place, effective partnership working and providing a support system for local business.
The Environment	Ensuring sustainable design in new assets and working to reduce the impact of existing assets on the environment.

9. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy 2020 – 2025.

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Background papers available for Inspection:	Asset Management Strategy 2020 – 2025 Empty Homes Strategy 2019 – 2024 Asset Investment Strategy
List of appendices:	Acquisitions and Disposal Policy 2020 – 2025