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Introduction & Purpose

- 1.1 Asset Management plays an integral part in the forward planning process for local government. It has been developed to ensure that councils and other organisations meet their business needs and social responsibilities now and in the future. Against a background of austerity measures and reduced funding from central government, which place increased pressure on local government finances, Asset Management is viewed as a key component to maintain quality services, reduce borrowing and finance capital projects.
- 1.2 Slough Borough Council (SBC) recognises that the efficient management of its assets is closely tied to the successful delivery of its overall vision, aims and objectives. As a consequence of the council's significant landholding, it is in a position to influence a number of key regeneration schemes, such as the redevelopment of Britwell, that offer more than property specific benefits. The council acknowledges that the way it manages its assets will have a fundamental impact on the delivery of economic development outputs and outcomes, improved health, enhanced community cohesion, increased educational attainment and improved service delivery. It will make a significant contribution to the introduction of physical regeneration and transformational change, as well as shaping and influencing the quality of life for local people. In short, the effective management of assets is closely aligned to the achievement of the 5 priorities articulated in the Joint Wellbeing Strategy for Slough.
- 1.3 The Asset Management Plan supports the council's Corporate Plan and Capital Strategy to ensure that its assets are used in an effective and efficient manner. It identifies the location and condition of assets, establishes who owns them and makes links to strategic initiatives. It promotes a Corporate Landlord role described in sections 11.5 and 13.2 and will continue to challenge and justify why assets are being retained, whilst looking at other alternative options for asset use and service delivery to maintain and enhance front line services within a stringent budgetary framework.
- 1.4 The council's most recent Asset Management Strategy was set out in the Asset Management Plan dated 2008 and updated in 2010. This included an action plan which has moved forward over the last four years.
- 1.5 The purpose of this document is to set out the council's revised approach to asset management from 2014 to 2017. It will:
 - Provide councillors, staff and key stakeholders with a document that can support informed, transparent and consistent decisions on property assets, acquisitions and disposals.
 - Provide strategic directors and service heads with a clear and integrated approach to the management and review of operational assets from which to deliver services.
 - Create a strategic framework for the delivery of the asset management function, including prioritisation of key aims, outputs and outcomes.

- Support the council's Financial Strategy by integrating capital planning with financial planning and achieving best value to maximise the use of assets.
- Demonstrate how the council will deploy its assets to ensure that plans and programmes involving land and property compliment and assist in the delivery of other corporate strategies and policies, whilst supporting area-based plans for various localities within Slough.

1.6 This AMP does not include land, houses, buildings and fixed assets associated with the Housing Revenue Account, Education, Highways or Infrastructure assets, all of which are subject to separate plans. However, as a consequence of the inter-relationship between Asset Management and Regeneration, reference will be made to projects that involve highways infrastructure, HRA-led development and schools expansion.

1.7 The remainder of the AMP is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** places Asset Management within a strategic context.
- **Section 3** summarises the contribution that the management of assets will make to the promotion of equality and community cohesion.
- **Section 4** identifies the contribution that Asset Management makes to realising Directorate and Corporate objectives.
- **Section 5** provides a review of the council's operational and investment properties.
- **Section 6** sets out the council's approach and criteria for the Asset Challenge process.
- **Section 7** explains the council's approach to acquisitions and disposals within the context of corporate objectives.
- **Section 8** explains the circumstances when the council will consider the use of Compulsory Purchase powers to assemble land.
- **Section 9** details some of the achievements to date.
- **Section 10** highlights the close ties between Asset Management and regeneration and highlights the council's approach and priorities for regeneration.
- **Section 11** explains the governance and delivery arrangements in relation to the delivery of the AMP.
- **Section 12** summarises the approach for the identification, monitoring and control of service area risks.
- **Section 13** identifies emerging strategies, plans and issues that will evolve in 2014/15 and will shape the AMP moving forward.
- **Section 14** summarises the Key Actions for the period to 31 March 2015 and the delivery priorities that will be focussed on.
- **Section 15** identifies the proposals to monitor and evaluate performance, including a range of key performance indicators.
- **Section 16** identifies the gaps between current and planned performance.

2. Context

2.1 About Slough

Slough is a thriving multicultural town that sits at the western edge of London and covers an area of 32.5 square km. Its close proximity to Heathrow Airport and transport links account for its importance and success as a commercial centre. The town has the highest concentration of corporate headquarters in the country (outside London), including O2 and Blackberry and is the home to Slough Trading Estates Group (SEGRO), which is the largest privately owned trading estate in Europe.

The town has one of the fastest growing populations in the country. In 2011, 144,988 people lived in the town, an increase of over 16% between censuses. Slough's population is diverse with one of the highest black and minority ethnic (BME) populations outside London - 34.5%. One in five of Slough's residents are born outside the UK or Europe, more than any other local district in the South East, with 48% of school children in Slough coming from BME backgrounds. The majority of Slough's BME communities are originally from India and Pakistan with a smaller but significant black Caribbean population.

SBC became a unitary authority in 1998 and inherited significant under-investment in former County council stock. The council is a major driver of change particularly in respect of regeneration and collaborative work with partners to deliver a shared view of how to improve the quality of life in the town. The Heart of Slough project, which includes the Curve, is a prime example of the regeneration currently being undertaken in the Town Centre.

2.2 National Level

It is anticipated that local government settlements and traditional sources of funding will continue to reduce in real terms for the foreseeable future. This will continue to place greater emphasis on the need to make asset based decisions to support the requirement to safeguard key services and realise the council's strategic aims. In addition to finance, the following issues have/will have an impact on the asset management function:

- **The Transparency agenda** - This will have a significant impact on the workload for local government from April 2014. Based on recent guidance published by CIPFA, for each qualifying asset, councils must publish in one place, on an annual basis, factual data about the location and key attributes of their property estate. It is envisaged that this data will help the public hold local authorities to account and also help to drive better performance of public buildings and share community assets.
- **Asset Pathfinder Programme (APP)** – The APP was launched in 2013 with the intention of removing barriers that might otherwise prevent different parts of the public sector sharing property assets and therefore make better use of the overall public sector estate. The APP will help to identify opportunities to sell underused assets, such as office buildings, depots,

hospitals and vacant land. The scheme follows three waves of the Government's Capital and Asset Pathfinders programme, which led to around 35 authorities taking action to share buildings.

- **Changes of Use, 'office to residential' without planning** – from spring 2013, new legislation came into force that allowed a change in use without the need for developers to obtain planning permission under certain conditions. The change was introduced to provide additional housing where there is a shortfall, encourage economic growth by providing a quick and flexible solution and promote vitality in town centres.
- **Assessment criteria for school playing fields** - School playing fields are protected under the provisions of S77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which empowers the Secretary of State. The main thrust to the assessment criteria is that the sale of a playing field should be considered as an absolute last resort with local authorities having to demonstrate that they have exhausted all other sources of funding for the providing new or improved school sports facilities.
- **The Localism Act** – This Act gained Royal Assent in November 2011 and contains provisions to empower eligible community groups to bring community assets into community ownership. This Act places a requirement on local authorities to maintain and publish a list of Assets of Community Value. The same Act abolished the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system and introduced a self-financing regime.
- **Town Centre Regeneration (The Portas Review, 2011)** - In response to growing concerns about the challenges and sustainability of town centres, the government commissioned Portas Review. In addition to the recession, changes in shopping habits including online shopping and out of town shopping centres have contributed to the decline of town centres. The objective of the review was to halt the "*decline of the High Street*" in England and look at the problem of empty shops and how to prevent the growth of "*clone towns*" dominated by chain stores. The review suggested that town centres should run more like businesses and made a series of recommendations, including: improved management of High Streets with new "town teams", affordable town centre car parking, a "*Town centre first*" approach in planning, disincentives for landlords who leave shops empty, and greater inclusion of the High Street in neighbourhood planning.
- **Community Asset Transfer (CAT)** - In 2007 the government published the findings of the Quirk review, which highlighted the potential benefits of CAT. The council will review CAT proposals against the assessment criteria drawn from the Quirk Report, which stipulates that proposals should deliver community benefits commensurate with any discount below market value of the property, should be viable and must be supported by a robust business case. Any CAT proposals will be weighed against the need to generate capital receipts for reinvestment and regeneration.

2.3 Corporate Planning

SBC reviews its Corporate Plan on an annual basis to set out the organisation's political and managerial objectives. The Corporate Plan flows from the Joint Wellbeing Strategy and sets out the strategic aims, objectives and vision of the council. The current Plan demonstrates the council's understanding of how the prevailing social, economic, environmental and financial factors that influence Slough will be managed for the period to 31 March 2015.

The Corporate Plan identifies the council's key strategic priorities and explains how they will be financed. To deliver its vision, the council has set 6 corporate objectives to shape its priorities. The Asset Management function will contribute as follows:

- **Improve customer experience** - the council aims to be responsive to the needs of local people to improve overall satisfaction. This will include improved infrastructure to reduce traffic congestion and the provision of specialist accommodation to enhance the quality of life for adults with care and support needs.
- **Deliver high quality services to meet local needs** - Over the period of this AMP the council will continue to implement the Strategic School Places Programme, make the best use of social housing stock and land held in the HRA account to meet housing need across tenures and introduce new multi-use games areas (MUGA) in various localities linked to the Leisure Strategy.
- **Develop new ways of working** - including the use of Slough's Local Asset Backed Vehicle (Slough Regeneration Partnership) to bring forward major regeneration projects including the Curve – which contains a multi service library, culture and youth space and the housing-led regeneration of the former town hall site at Ledgers Road. Working with colleagues in Housing Services to explore options for creating subsidiary housing companies to offer market renting and key worker housing.
- **Deliver local and national change and improvement** - To ensure that the council responds to local and national change and meets statutory requirements, it will: invest in transport and infrastructure, use its property assets to promote economic development and seek to reduce the number of adults who receive care outside Slough by providing accommodation that will allow them to live in their own community.
- **Develop a skilled and capable workforce** - The council acknowledges the contribution that it's staff makes to the achievement of its overall objectives. The ongoing Accommodation Strategy and Asset Challenge process will seek to ensure that the portfolio of properties are fit for

purpose, are in the right location, are energy efficient and facilitate flexible working to allow SBC to deliver high quality services and retain excellent staff.

- **Achieve value for money** - Given the current economic environment for local government; this is a key challenge for the council. The council will use its assets to achieve a balance between investing in regeneration and infrastructure and maintaining front line services.

It is broadly accepted that efficient and effective Asset Management will play a key role in the council realising its overall aims and objectives.

2.4 Market Commentary

Residential - House prices across the UK have risen on average 7% in 2013 with the South East seeing even higher increases. Property prices in Slough have been recovering since mid 2012, although prices did not fall back as far as other areas across the South East. Slough remains a popular area due to its relatively low prices compared to neighbouring Boroughs, availability of work and good transport links. This popularity and the growing shortfall of properties coming onto the market has seen a significant rise in house prices in the last 6 months of 2013 (some areas of Slough have seen a 15% to 20% rise). A number of new housing developments and increased confidence in the economy may curb further increases, but the advent of Crossrail and the beginning of major town centre regeneration schemes may lead to further increases in the coming years.

Office - The current office market in Slough is focused on existing occupiers/businesses taking expansion space in buildings already occupied increasing investment and commitment to the town. There have been no new major office developments in Slough since 2010. This is a reflection on the stagnant economy and the current availability of approximately 1.2m sq ft of surplus office space.

Industrial - Take up has fallen across the South East as grade A stock availability has reduced. Slough has weathered any reduction in prime rents with rent per sq ft remaining at £10.50. The percentage of available stock is below the average South East availability rate. This desire for grade A stock is demonstrated by SEGRO's regeneration of Slough Trading Estate with major work planned around its own headquarters, the refurbishment of other major head office buildings (O2) and the clearing of older stock in readiness for a 'Build-to-Suit' programme.

Retail - The retail sector in Slough continues to struggle with the vacancy rate showing a 5.5% increase in 2012 to 16.4%. This is higher than both the national and regional average of 14.2% and 13% respectively, although there are indications of recovery with average retail rents in Slough having risen by 17% during the period June 2012 to June 2013.

2.5 The council's Estate

The council owns and occupies a varied asset portfolio ranging from office accommodation to a rural holding (Lavender Farm). The following statistics provide an indication of the scale of the council's asset base excluding HRA housing but including the HRA commercial portfolio:

- The remaining portfolio totals over 300 assets.
- Interests in land plots numbers over 60.
- All representing a current value of £233,600,000, of which £83m is Educational.
- Total annual income generated from the councils investment portfolio is in excess of £400,000.

Whilst property assets are a valuable resource and offer opportunities, they can also be a risk and liability that require ongoing maintenance and should therefore be managed as efficiently and effectively as possible through a robust asset management framework.

2.6 Asset Management Plan

The AMP is part of a suite of planning documents that articulates the council's vision and objectives and ensures that the council's priorities fit with those outlined in the Wellbeing Strategy. It ties into the council's short, medium and long-term objectives and ensures that operational assets, investment assets and capital disposals are managed within a cohesive framework that delivers positive outcomes. The AMP is closely linked to the council's medium to long-term financial strategy and its capital programme.

The AMP was last updated in 2010 and is now subject to review. The revised plan will take account of corporate objectives linked to key housing regeneration sites including Ledgers Road, Wexham Nursery and Trelawney Avenue, the introduction of modern community and/or health care facilities, improving the skills of local people and creating a vibrant town centre.

2.7 Key Aims & Objectives

The AMP will seek to deliver on 7 Key Aims that will have a cross-cutting effect on the council's Finance Strategy, Capital Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and the Human Resources Strategy (e.g. flexible working), as follows:

Key Aim One - Introduction of a proactive approach to Estate Management.

Key Aim Two - To efficiently manage the disposal of surplus assets.

Key Aim Three – Make a significant contribution to delivering transformational change.

Key Aim Four – Use the council's assets to promote economic development and growth.

Key Aim Five – To hold a rationalised portfolio that is in the right location, is fit for purpose and reduces ongoing revenue costs.

Key Aim Six – To introduce a culture of continuous improvement.

Key Aim seven – To manage and deliver the emerging Strategic School Places Plan 2013-21.

Section 14 provides a more detailed explanation of the Key Aims and summarises the actions that will be undertaken in the period to April 2017. Each Key Aim is supported by a series of specific objectives, which are measurable via the associated Operational Plan.

2.8 Asset Management Operational Plan

The AMP is intended to provide a high level strategic document that sets out a framework under which the use of the council's assets and approach to future deployment is confirmed. It is supported by a detailed Operational Plan which illustrates what will be done, by when and by whom. The Operational Plan includes specific targets will be used as a means of measuring performance against the seven Key Aims described above.

The Operational Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with the review of the AMP and will confirm how and when staff members from the Asset Management team and other departments will make a contribution, describes the range of actions required and the timescales to realise individual, departmental and corporate objectives.

3. Equal Opportunities

The council will promote Equalities and Diversity through:

- Ensuring that the design, delivery and commissioning of service is fair, equitable and accessible.
- Promote equal life chances for all by optimising the use of assets in the communities we serve.
- Ensuring that our public buildings are accessible and welcoming to all sections of the community.

The implementation of the AMP will ensure that new capital projects or major refurbishments comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The council will undertake Equality Impact Assessments and ensure that new projects are totally accessible to all members of the community and enhance community cohesion.

4. What is Asset Management in Slough?

4.1 The Royal institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) define Asset Management as the process that aligns business and property asset strategies, ensuring optimisation of an organisation's property assets in a way which best supports its key business goals and objectives. This definition provides a broad explanation of the financial, technical and managerial tasks that fall under the remit of asset management – but how does this fit with the application of asset management in Slough?

4.2 Asset Management is recognised as a key element of the council's overall drive to optimise best value and is an integral part of the council's overall forward planning process. Asset Management:

- Supports the Corporate Plan and ensures that the council's assets are used in an effective and efficient manner. It identifies the location and condition of assets, classifies their fitness for purpose and identifies future uses.
- Is an essential element of business planning and good financial management. As a consequence of its capital disposal role, it is closely aligned to the budget setting process and has a direct impact on levels of borrowing and the ability of the council to maintain essential services against a background of reduced funding from central government.
- Underpins and supports the council's regeneration priorities. Staff from Asset Management will work closely with internal departments, Slough Regeneration Partnership and other strategic partners to identify regeneration sites, manage acquisitions/disposals and resolve site specific constraints with a view to maximising the financial and social value of land owned by SBC.
- Has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the council's investment assets to increase the financial rate of return to the council. This involves efficient estate management to minimise void periods and the development of effective and proactive procedures to manage tenancies and lease renewals.
- Will help to deliver the desired outputs and outcomes of the council's ongoing Accommodation Strategy. This focuses on the medium to longer-term and involves challenging current perceptions on whether existing offices and/or community facilities are in the right location to meet future demand, are the correct size to provide flexible space to meet future need/work practices, are energy efficient and could secure a greater return through an alternative use or disposal.
- Supports the delivery of the emerging Strategic School Places Plan 2013-21 by assessing the value of sites for competing needs, providing key data in the prioritisation of sites for expansion.

- Facilitates partnership working with other public sector bodies to make efficiency savings through an integrated asset management strategy. This rationalisation of public sector assets will improve efficiency and release land to meet future need and demand.

5. Property Analysis

General

5.1 SBC owns a large and varied portfolio of property and land assets. It comprises a substantial investment (commercial) portfolio together with service delivery (operational) and surplus assets with a total book value of £233,600,000 (excluding the HRA commercial portfolio, which is managed externally). The range of assets is recorded in the council's Fixed Asset Register, which is used to record the gross and net book value of assets. The assets are re-valued on a cyclical basis in accordance with the relevant current and future guidelines issued by CIPFA, the RICS and the IFRS, together with other appropriate accounting standards.

Investment assets

5.2 Investment (commercial) assets are held for the purpose of generating rental income and/or capital appreciation. The council's investment portfolio includes 62 units such as light industrial units and retail premises. In addition, 'minor' interests, for example wayleaves, easements and licenses contribute to the council's annual revenue stream of circa £400,000.

Type	Number	Market Value
Industrial units	46	£520,000
Retail	5	£765,000
Others	11	£3,300,000
Total	62	£4,584,000

Operational Assets

5.3 Operational (service delivery) assets are held, occupied, used or contracted to be used on behalf of the council to provide services, whether statutory, discretionary or to meet the corporate objectives of the council. They include offices, leisure centres, crematoriums, waste stations, car parks and public open spaces.

Asset Categorisation

- 5.4 The council's operational asset portfolio currently falls under 4 broad categories. These were updated as follows in July/August 2013 to take account of the views expressed by designated directorate portfolio holders. Excluding the HRA portfolio, the breakdown is as follows:

Category		Number	Asset Value
A	Assets that are likely to stay operational	210	£177,000,000
B	Assets that could stay operational with potential for co-location	16	£11,000,000
C	Assets that are expensive to run, are not fit for purpose and/or have a potential for a capital receipt	62	£40,000,000
D	Assets that are vacant and surplus and considered for disposal	30	£5,600,000
Total		318	£233,600,000

- 5.5 The majority of the above values are on the basis of a depreciated replacement cost (DRC). This methodology is typically used as an entry onto the balance sheet as a device for charging occupiers for the benefit of the occupation; as a consequence it should not be regarded as obtainable in the open market. CIPFA defines DRC as *“a method of valuation which provides the current cost of replacing an asset with the modern equivalent asset less deductions for all physical deterioration and all relevant forms of obsolescence”*.

6. Asset Challenge

6.1 The council's operational portfolio needs to be evaluated against a common set of criteria to provide baseline information to identify the condition and suitability of assets and potential opportunities. This is known as the Asset Challenge process. The Asset Challenge process will take account of:

- The extent to which new working practices within the council are giving rise to changes in accommodation requirements – this might include home-working, outsourcing or increased partnership working,
- Internal drivers for each department that will change the approach to service delivery in future years. These need to be identified by Service Directors and fed into the Asset Challenge process/Accommodation Strategy,
- The requirements of the capital programme, and
- The needs and expectations of staff, residents, service users and partners.

6.2 In accordance with a desire to streamline public services, the Asset Challenge process will be extended to include the assets of public sector partner organisations.

Stage One

6.3 In July/August 2013 a more systematic approach was undertaken through the first stage of the Asset Challenge process. The aim of this exercise was to categorise assets in line with approved criteria as a first step towards identifying the disposal programme for 2014/17.

6.4 Service departments participated in the process in terms of assessing asset and accommodation requirements and confirming the category of each asset held within their portfolio. This was extended to a strategic review of category C and D assets in October 2013 in order to take the process of declaring property surplus forward where assets are identified as being potentially surplus.

Stage Two - Rationalisation

6.5 A process will commence in 2014 which includes the provision of data and Asset Challenge information to prioritise divestment of the council's category A and B properties that have been identified as being of poor strategic value and condition.

6.6 This longer-term approach will involve challenging all existing assets and an options appraisal judged against the value and contribution that assets can make to service delivery and corporate objectives. There are 5 potential recommendations that will arise from this process:

- **Fit for Purpose** - these should be retained and maintained through a programme of planned and reactive maintenance, or
- **Enhanced Utilisation** – These should be retained, however utilisation should be re-considered to improve the financial and/or service delivery performance (for example through shared services), or
- **Major Investment** – The future direction of the building needs to be determined as major works are required, or
- **Vision Property** – These assets should be retained, undertaking minimum maintenance pending investigation of the development potential of the site. The asset should be disposed when its potential can be maximised, or
- **Surplus** - Dispose of the asset immediately, in accordance with the Disposal, Acquisition and Investment Policy.

Stage Three - Collaboration

- 6.7 SBC has an excellent relationship with strategic partners and recognises the need to enhance this relationship to realise opportunities. This will continue in the period of the plan and will include the collection of property data from local public, statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations with the aim of establishing an Integrated Area Asset Management Plan to ensure more effective use of combined assets.
- 6.8 Moving forward, this collaborative approach will become the norm to ensure that services are more accessible for customers and increase operational efficiencies.

7. Disposals and Acquisitions

General

- 7.1 SBC is committed to using its corporate property assets in a manner that realises their optimum benefit to the council and the local community and represents value for money. The council will consequently only seek to dispose of an asset declared surplus by service departments via the Asset Challenge process where it:
- Will provide land to support corporate strategies,
 - Will secure capital earmarked to support specific planned projects or support other core priorities,
 - Can no longer accommodate the delivery of services in an economically or environmentally sustainable manner,
 - Constitutes a significant future risk to the council, e.g. through accrued liabilities,
 - Is no longer required for delivery of a partnership programme, or
 - Offers no real potential for long-term realisable capital appreciation.
- 7.2 Properties that have/will be declared surplus will be subject to a report to the Capital Strategy Board, Corporate Management Team and Cabinet in order to recommend either an alternative use for an asset or a capital receipt to support the capital programme. The report will provide a description of the asset, the current ownership, the current and anticipated use, the link to corporate objectives and the anticipated capital receipt. Where the report recommends disposal, it will include a recommendation on:
- The approach to alternative development where this is appropriate. Whether there would be sufficient merit to warrant applying for planning permission before disposal, and
 - The method of disposal and anticipated time taken to dispose together with any significant holding costs/risk.
- 7.3 To maximise efficiency, assets deemed surplus by service departments will either be reused or disposed of in a timely manner. Pending disposal, interim use of property on a 'tenancy at will' basis such as Wentworth Road shops and Trelawney Avenue former GP Surgery will be used to avoid vacant management costs and generate a modest income stream as well as the avoidance of business rates and anti-social behaviour issues.

Sales Achieved During Previous Plan

- 7.4 In the period from April 2010, the council has disposed of assets to the value £12,762,250, cumulative sales are as follows:

Year	Total Disposal Price pa	Total Valuation pa	Total Surplus pa
2010/11	£3,391,250	£2,665,000	£726,250
2011/12	£ 1,029,500	£737,300	£292,200
2012/13	£1,659,000	£1,348,000	£311,000
2013/14	£6,682,500	£5,805,000	£877,500
Total	£12,762,250	£10,555,300	£2,206,950

Disposals previously approved

- 7.5 The properties listed below have previously been declared surplus. The properties at Windsor Road, Layburn Crescent and High Street have been marketed by Asset Management and are currently under offer:

Asset	Comment
Land at 139 Windsor Road Slough	Secured prices in excess of valuation with anticipated completion during March 2014.
44 Layburn Crescent Colnbrook	Secured prices in excess of valuation with anticipated completion during March 2014.
50 High Street Chalvey	Secured prices in excess of valuation with anticipated completion during March 2014. ⁽¹⁾
Elliman Avenue	Decision to retain asset and revert to Category A asset.

(1) Net proceeds to be shared with Chalvey Working Mens Club)

Following the Asset Management Strategy Day held in October 2013, it was agreed that Elliman Avenue would be retained by the General Fund with a view to developing SBC properties for rent on this site.

Disposals Programme 2014-2017

- 7.6 In the period of this plan, Cabinet will receive reports from the Head of Asset Management on assets that are considered to be surplus to requirement and recommended for disposal in accordance with 7.1 above.

Strategic Land Acquisition

- 7.7 All acquisitions, whether planned, opportunistic or via the use of Compulsory Purchase, will be made in accordance with the council's revised Disposal, Investment and Acquisition Policy (appendix One), which describes the process by which land and property are acquired by SBC, the powers used and the arrangements followed to ensure acquisitions support the council's corporate priorities.
- 7.8 Land and property acquisition will typically occur when:
- **A need is identified** for the acquisition of a specific asset in response to an approved strategy, programme or capital project, or
 - **An opportunity arises** to purchase an asset where the council would secure an operational, financial or strategic benefit, or
 - **A council scheme is identified**, for example a Highways-led regeneration project that effectively 'blight' areas or land and/or properties.
- 7.9 Other than where minor land acquisitions are undertaken under delegated powers, all land and property acquisitions must be approved by the Capital Strategy Board, Corporate Management Team and Cabinet.

8. Use of Compulsory Purchase Powers

Introduction

- 8.1 The council aims to maintain the transformation of Slough through an ambitious regeneration programme that will see the introduction of new housing, infrastructure, community hubs, schools, leisure developments and modern healthcare facilities. This will require the redevelopment of large areas of land, some of which is out of the ownership of the council.
- 8.2 Whilst the council has and will continue to negotiate with third party owners to acquire land required for regeneration, it also requires sufficient flexibility to use alternative approaches to realise its strategic objectives. In the event that negotiations by private treaty prove unsuccessful, the council will use Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers as a fall back position to guarantee the delivery of land where it can be demonstrated that the use of such powers is in the public interest.

Examples where powers may be used

- 8.3 Whilst it is not possible to list all circumstances under which the council may use its compulsory purchase powers, some examples listed below are areas which are currently relevant to the council's priorities and objectives:
- **Education** – the council will be able to utilise powers to acquire land and property to construct or enlarge existing or new school facilities.
 - **Housing** – sites identified in the Local Plan or Local Development Framework which owners are not bringing forward for redevelopment or are in disrepair but which would make a significant contribution to the provision of affordable housing in the district. Reasons for these not being brought forward may be concerns regarding viability as the result of proportion of affordable housing, complex ownerships or simply unwilling vendors.
 - **Economic Development** - sites identified in the Local Plan or Local Development Framework which owners are not bringing forward but which would make a significant contribution to the delivery of Economic Development in the district. Reasons for these not being brought forward may be concerns regarding viability, complex ownerships or simply unwilling vendors.
 - **Regeneration** – The council will be entitled to utilise its powers of acquisition if it thinks that acquiring land will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement of land in the event that a development is likely to contribute to achieving the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area.

- **Vacant or underused sites** - where vacant or underused, so adversely affecting the amenity of an area, and there is little evidence that a landowner is pursuing appropriate development options, or where land within, or adjacent to, development which is designed to meet a corporate priority but is inhibited by ransom strips or multi/complex ownership.

8.4 The use of CPO powers will be in accordance with the council's CPO Policy (Appendix Two).

9. Recent Performance

9.1 The Asset Management Service Plan 2012/13 identified a range of strategic priorities, established a range of service outcomes and performance measures tied to each priority and provided timescales for each strategic priority. Whilst this provides a degree of performance monitoring information, none of the priorities identified were relevant to 2013/14.

9.2 The following targets were achieved in 2013:

Planned outcome	Performance
Delivery of the Curve, a new community and leisure space, by Spring/Summer 2015.	The building contract is exchanged and enabling works are ongoing to facilitate a construction start on 13 January 2014.
Completion of community facilities and start of major regeneration programme in Britwell.	<p>This major regeneration programme is a partnership between SBC, Countryside and Catalyst Housing Association (CHA) that will tackle the social, physical and economic and environmental regeneration of Britwell.</p> <p>In April 2013, The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visited Britwell and formally opened the new £2.5m Community Hub. The new community facility provides a range of services and activities and includes a library, meeting rooms/hall hire, Mycouncil, kitchen/catering facilities, a community garden and an adult learning suite. Countryside went on site in November 2013 and will include a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties to provide 101 new homes for sale, 101 homes for CHA and 54 affordable homes for SBC. In addition to housing, the programme will include new retail provision and environmental regeneration and has an overall value of circa £55m and will be completed within 3 years.</p>

9.3 In addition to the above, the Asset Management service area has gone through considerable change in personnel since 1 April 2013 and is still the subject of an ongoing restructure. Despite this level of transition, the section has realised a number of significant achievements, including:

- Disposed of the Castleview access to Bellway, raising a capital receipt of circa £5.1m.
- Disposed of the retail units and houses at Parlaunt Road for circa £1.4m, compared to an external valuation of £0.55m that reflected the cost of refurbishment and essential repairs.
- Completed the conversion and refurbishment of the former Town Hall building to create a new school site and fully upgraded CCTV Control and Monitoring Centre.
- Completed the new Foundation block at Montem Primary School (£1.3), completed the new classroom block at St Anthony's RC Primary School (£0.7m), and completed the expansion of Priory Primary School (£1.4m).
- Agreed and implemented a new School's Modernisation programme, value £4m.

10. Future Regeneration Projects

Introduction

10.1 Regeneration is viewed as one of the key priorities for the council. The council's regeneration priorities reflect the main regeneration challenges that lie ahead for Slough and the ways in which the council can take forward regeneration activity that will contribute to the overall development of Slough's economy and society. They focus on:

- The continued revitalisation of the town centre,
- Securing the sustainable development of strategic locations and infrastructure; regenerating communities,
- Providing a mix of quality owner occupied, private rented and social rented housing in appropriate locations to meet the needs of the whole community,
- Facilitating the development and improvement of educational facilities,
- Maintaining and Improving access to recreational facilities,
- Improving employability and developing skills, and
- Enhancing the environment and creating a positive image for Slough.

10.2 The regeneration priorities are clearly linked to the aims and objectives set out in the AMP and Economic Development Strategy. It will identify forthcoming projects and associated challenges and provide an update of the current economic context. It will highlight recent achievements in regeneration that the council has delivered or contributed to. The policy will be used across the council to develop projects and plan services.

10.3 One of the main drivers for transformational change will be the Slough Regeneration Partnership (SRP), which is a joint venture between SBC and Morgan Sindall Investments Limited, with the objective of delivering the council's strategic regeneration objectives

Slough Regeneration Partnership

10.5 SRP became operational in March 2013. This followed a competitive process that commenced in 2011 in which the council sought a private sector partner to help bring forward its regeneration priorities via the Local Asset Backed vehicle (LABV) model. The concept of the LABV is to bring together local government assets and private sector entrepreneurial flair to form a mutually beneficial partnership. The council will contribute land and the private sector partner will provide development finance (equal to the value of the land), skills and expertise.

10.6 The role of the LABV is to offer a long-term approach to regeneration. Through the joint venture, SBC will seek to exploit economies of scale, lever significant development investment into the town and maximise the value and community benefit of its assets to 'unlock' their value.

10.7 Having originally considered a list of 39 sites, the SRP Business Plan was updated following a strategy day in November 2013 and now focuses on 5 residential and 2 community *priority* projects. In the period to 2018, the partnership will concentrate on the following projects:

Project	Description
The Curve	This community project, which will provide new library, conference and performance space is currently on site and will be completed by autumn 2015.
Ledgers Road	This 69 unit development will accommodate a mix of housing for sale and affordable accommodation. It is anticipated that planning permission will be submitted in 2014.
Wexham Nursery	This former horticultural nursery site will accommodate a mix of housing for sale, shared ownership and rented accommodation. An indicative proposal from SRP shows capacity for a 114 unit development over the 2/3 phases. It is anticipated that planning permission will be submitted in 2014.
Haymill	The new college is currently under construction and will be ready for occupancy from January 2014, allowing the former school to be shut down by 31 March 2014. The former Haymill Community Centre to be shut down by 31 March 2014. The building will be demolished in 2014, freeing up the land for redevelopment.
Montem Leisure Centre	This is the location of the existing leisure facilities and has potential for a 140 unit residential development. The housing-led development of this site is linked to an ongoing

	options appraisal tied into the Leisure Strategy.
The Centre	This site currently comprises office space and conference centre with an adjacent nursery site and is a potential site for a community project that will involve the relocation of the Leisure and Ice Centres. The alternative use is for a circa 80 unit mixed residential site providing low density family accommodation.
Castleview	2 hectares of land has been secured as part of a section 106 agreement with Bellway Homes. The land has been earmarked as the site for a new Free School being established by the Slough Association of Secondary Heads (SASH).

10.8 The following *future* projects were also identified in November 2013:

Project	Description
Slough Basin	Potential for a mixed use development including residential and retail.
Mercian Recreation	An opportunity for a small housing development
Maria Cowland Hall	An opportunity for a small residential housing development and/or a community facility.
The Orchard	Potential residential development site for circa 10 units, possibly more subject to planning.
Lavender farm	This is an out of borough site located beside the Grand Union Canal and has potential for residential use.
Weekes Drive	This is a potential residential development site to provide up to 113 new homes for rent, sale and shared ownership.
Slough Library	This is a potential mixed use site in a prominent town centre location that could include a hotel, commercial and residential accommodation. SRP is currently in dialogue with the HCA about how the asset will be brought into SRP for development after SBC moves into the Curve by Autumn 2015.

Housing Services - Led Regeneration

10.9 Section 13.5 of this plan refers to the potential for Housing Services -led regeneration to provide a mix of housing to meet local demand. During the lifetime of the AMP, several projects will be pursued including:

Project	Description
Gurney House	This site is subject to an ongoing options appraisal and has the potential for a high quality 10 unit development on the site of a former care home.
Trelawney Avenue	This is linked to a Local Regeneration Strategy looking at the demolition of a former public house and options to introduce affordable housing and a community hub. The feasibility of introducing an integrated health facility within the hub is being explored.
Belfast Avenue	Feasibility study ongoing to establish potential use for Adult Social Care housing and /or relocation of facilities from the

	Centre site. This site offers a potential to provide specialist accommodation for adults with learning difficulties currently receiving out of borough care.
Brook Path	A feasibility study is ongoing to explore the potential for introducing specialist accommodation on this site
Eschle Court	This prominent corner site has planning permission and is a potential HRA-led development.
Rochford Gardens	This is the former location of a hostel and community centre that have now been demolished and is the subject of an ongoing feasibility study. A scheme proposal is being developed for specialist housing.
Farnham Road	A potential office to residential conversion that will provide 40 units for sale and rent, with potential for ground floor specialist housing.

The complete list of HRA sites includes a further 23 smaller sites each of which are capable of delivering 1 or 2 new homes.

The absence of developable land in Slough dictates that future HRA lead developments are likely to be focussed upon the eight existing supported housing complexes which may offer the potential to be remodelled to create extra-care facilities and additional general needs housing. The funding for the HRA –led programme will come from a mixture of s106 receipts, Right to Buy receipts and revenue from annual rental income; combined with an element of borrowing. The prioritisation of projects will be based on robust options appraisals to ensure a balance between general needs and specialist housing to meet corporate objectives. The finance strategy for the will be included in the HRA Business Plan.

11. Governance, Roles & Responsibility

11.1 council

At the highest level the 41 elected councillors of SBC have overall responsibility for asset management and they have delegated responsibility for this function to a group of 8 councillors who make up the council's Cabinet.

11.2 Role of Cabinet

Cabinet make a number of key decisions in respect of asset management including the consideration and approval of the AMP and Capital Strategy and decisions on the disposal and acquisition of properties to realise wider corporate objectives.

11.3 Role of the Leader

The Leader of the council is the Cabinet member with responsibility for Asset Management. Effective management at this level is critical for the success of asset management and by providing strategic leadership and scrutiny of the property portfolio.

11.4 The Role of the Section 151 Officer

The role of the Section 151 officer is 'to make arrangements for the proper administration of the council's financial affairs' this includes acquisitions and disposals. This function is carried out by the Assistant Director, Finance and Audit.

There may be times where best value in financial terms conflicts with best social or community value. If the difference between the market value and sales value is greater than £2m, the Section 151 Officer will consult the Secretary of State to seek approval to accept less than best financial value. The council's starting point is to always ensure that the council maximises receipts to ensure the best value to the local taxpayer. The Section 151 Officer will ensure that the council complies with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 ensuring risks related to all contracts and transactions have been assessed and that the recommendations made to members for approval are based on sound judgements and in accordance with best practice. The Section 151 Officer will ensure that the council's financial accountability is sound, transparent and adequately audited.

11.5 The Role of the Corporate Landlord

This role will be undertaken by the Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration. The Corporate Landlord will act as strategic leader for all property related issues to ensure that the council's buildings and land are well managed and provide maximum returns. It is proposed that all future reports to Cabinet and CMT will include a requirement to identify property related

implications and that the Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration will be required to sign-off any identified issues prior to the dissemination of reports.

11.6 Role of Capital Strategy Board

Proposals for property disposal, acquisition or investment are submitted to the Capital Strategy Board for consideration. The Capital Strategy Board (CSB) framework is well embedded as the body that provides oversight of the preparation and implementation of the AMP and capital programme. The Board meets on a monthly basis and has representatives from each service department. It is chaired by the Assistant Director of Finance (who is also the Section 151 officer). The CSB provides a structure for managing and administering the council's Asset Management planning role, and

- Prioritises / re-prioritises the capital disposal programme,
- Evaluates business cases for major projects and strategic acquisitions to ensure that key decisions on investment, infrastructure and wider regeneration reflect corporate objectives prior to approval by Cabinet,
- Evaluates business cases for school expansion or modernisation projects; and
- Monitors progress, with a particular focus on financial control and management.

The CSB acts as an advisory board to the Corporate Management Team, provides support to project boards and reports to Cabinet as appropriate.

11.7 Asset Management Section

The day-to-day management of the council's asset base is undertaken by the Asset Management section. The role of the section is to ensure the council is making the best possible use of its assets to ensure delivery is maximised. It does this by conducting the following tasks:

- Maintaining a central list of assets in conjunction with the Finance section.
- Managing acquisitions and disposals.
- Managing the council's operational and investment portfolio.
- Identifying potential opportunities.
- Providing expert valuation advice.

The Asset Management team provides advice and assistance to all service departments and is seen as an enabler.

11.8 Staff involvement

In order to achieve the objectives and timescales identified within the Operational Plan, it was essential for all members of staff to be involved in and make a contribution to the planning process.

The Asset Management team participated in a Strategy Day involving colleagues from Housing, Finance, Economic Development, and Policy in October 2013 and were subsequently involved in developing a detailed Action Plan. This inclusive approach has resulted in achieving a greater understanding of the range of assets, tasks and regeneration projects that are currently ongoing/planned, identified the relative priority of each project and the input required from the Asset Management service area. It has also identified projects where the principle responsibility falls outside the scope of Asset Management and instead feeds into the revised SRP business plan or emerging HRA business plan.

Staff Responsibilities

Whilst it is acknowledged that the staffing structure for Asset Management is under review and will be subject to change in 2014, the table below summarises the roles and responsibilities of current post holders. The anticipated staff responsibilities to deliver the key aims and objectives during the period of the plan are as follows:

Post	Responsibility
Head of Asset Management	Has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the AMP, line management of all staff and ensuring the delivery of all Key Aims and objectives.
Project Officer/Senior Valuer	Contributes to the delivery of all Key Aims and objectives, with specific responsibility for the delivery of Key Aims 5 and 6 (rationalisation and continuous improvement objectives).
Investment & Regeneration Manager	Is the lead officer in the project management of the Curve and contributes to other regeneration projects as required.
Principal Asset Manager	Is the lead role in the commissioning and project management of educational related projects, which are tied into Key Aim 7. This involves managing the education capital programme and delivering the Strategic Schools Places Programme 2013-21.
Disposals Officer	Is the lead officer in the delivery of Key Aim 2. In addition to the development and management of the capital disposal programme, the DO contributes to the delivery of Regeneration and Estates Management objectives.
Project Officer	Provides support to achieve all strategic aims and has specific responsibility for the effective delivery of Estates Management objectives outlined in Key Aim 1.
Management Support Officer	This post is split between Asset Management and SRP. For AM - provides support to staff to achieve all strategic aims, with specific input into implementing procedures linked to continuous improvement in Estates Management.

Individual plans have been developed for each member of staff and integrated with their Outlook profile. The delivery priorities and personal targets will be discussed on a monthly basis at staff meetings, at individual 1-2-1 meetings with staff and will be tied into the staff appraisal process.

11.9 Stakeholder Involvement

The council acknowledges that consultation is a key element of its Community Engagement Strategy. It provides an opportunity for local residents and voluntary groups to provide feedback on and influence planned initiatives and projects. On potential housing related projects such as Trelawney Avenue, the Housing Act 1985 places a statutory responsibility on the council to consult with tenants. ,

Moving forward, the council will commence detailed discussions with its strategic partners with a view to developing an integrated asset management strategy.

12. Risk Management

12.1 Risk identification and mitigation are embedded in the council's approach to operational and strategic management and is integrated into formal reports and decisions considered by Cabinet. In this context, risk arises out of uncertainties about future events and their associated consequences, and in the likelihood of an event occurring that will have an impact on the ability to deliver operational and strategic objectives incorporated within the Asset Management Plan.

12.2 It is important that risk is identified and managed as part of the asset management process. There are different risks associated with the various stages of a project and property lifecycle. Individual risks will be identified, monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

13. Emerging Strategic Issues

13.1 Accommodation Strategy

The first phase of the Accommodation Strategy involved closing the Town Hall site and transferring the majority of staff into St Martins Place and Landmark Place. This rationalisation provided a location for Claycots Primary School (a 3 form of entry primary school in Slough's area of largest population growth) provided a site for the CCTV centre and freed up land to provide a 69 unit housing development. Following its successful completion, the council's accommodation requirements have developed in the following ways:

- At the last phase there was a requirement to close the Town Hall within the limited timescales in order to generate targeted savings. Therefore all furniture was recycled and the council did not review options for better utilising space through more efficient and modern furniture.
- It is recognised that whilst services have greatly reduced their storage requirements, there is still room for improvement. This can be enabled through a scanning project to DIP as much hard copy information as possible. This will help the council to reduce the requirement for using valuable office space for storage.
- The authority's current operating model offers limited flexibility, with services built around officers rather than the residents/customers. Future investment will redress this by upgrading facilities in community and corporate buildings to enhance flexibility, productivity and customer service.
- There is a need to replace/upgrade the ageing and failing mechanical and electrical services throughout the St Martins Place building in line with the aims and objectives of the council's medium to long term Accommodation Strategy. This work will reduce infrastructure and maintenance cost, achieve substantial energy efficiencies and remove the risk of an emergency closure of the head office site.
- The under utilisation of our Landmark Place is resulting in disproportionately high costs– however the council is tied into a medium term lease until 2020. To resolve this and meet the requirement to vacate the Centre and to create decant space whilst the council undertakes a Mechanical & Electrical upgrade at St Martin's Place, the Housing Services team will be permanently relocated. This will maximise efficiency and free up the Centre site for redevelopment.

The evolving Accommodation Strategy aims to enhance flexibility and efficiency and accessibility. Subject to bringing forward of a comprehensive IT strategy and agreeing a business case for significant levels of capital investment, St Martins Place will be remodelled to increase the number of meeting rooms, informal meeting space and hot desks, all of which will allow staff to undertake

their jobs as well as reduce revenue being spent by services through hiring external meeting space. This will be achieved through the installation of modern and efficient furniture. Community Centres will be enhanced to provide flexible space that will allow staff to hot desk between meetings. The relocation of Housing Services to Landmark Place will improve accessibility and enhance community cohesion.

Alongside this strategy, Asset Management will work with Facilities Management to launch Phase Two of the Corporate Landlord role during the Asset Challenge process, with the aim of making greater use and efficiency of corporate assets.

13.2 Corporate Landlord (Phase Two)

The Corporate Landlord Model was adopted on 4th July 2011 and included the transfer of all Community Centres and the Caretakers/Assistant Facilities Officers to Facilities Management. A second transfer for the responsibility of Youth Community Buildings and Caretaking staff took place in July 2012.

In the period of the Asset Management Plan, the council will seek to enhance the existing model. Subject to approval, Facilities Management will centrally manage all council land and building assets, with service departments making use of them for operational purposes as tenants. All aspects of building and facilities management across service departments will be reviewed by Facilities Management to avoid duplication and inefficient practice, allowing the council to generate savings related to resource costs. In accordance with the Corporate Landlord model, Facilities Management will:

- Act as an enabler for all service delivery.
- Provide a stable, fully integrated property service, with high levels of customer care and clear roles and responsibilities around the landlord/tenant relationship.
- Enable the design of attractive, functional and sustainable buildings on time and within budget.
- Provide, manage and maintain good quality facilities for Slough residents and staff, improving customer confidence and satisfaction.
- Take the lead role on safety and statutory compliance within buildings. Effectively manage all property related risks.
- Optimise available resources, including personnel, spatial management and innovation through value for money projects.
- Provide accurate and relevant data around buildings and business performance to inform stakeholders. Improve communications with all stakeholders and partner organisations.
- Ensure best value through prioritisation of maintenance spend, backed by effective procurement arrangements.

The adoption of this approach will ensure that buildings are viewed as a corporate resource. It will contribute to the optimisation of occupancy levels, improve suitability and condition, identify future investment needs, improve efficiency, reduce CO2 emissions/ generate energy savings, ensure

compliance with leases and ensure internal and external occupational agreements are in place and service charge contributions recovered proactively.

The establishment of a corporate 5-10 year office accommodation strategy will ensure that retained buildings are maintained in accordance with an agreed strategy. Inefficient/poorly performing buildings will be identified via the Asset Challenge process, leading to rationalisation, the generation of a capital receipts and service improvements.

13.3 Economic Development Plan

The council adopted the four-year Economic Development Strategic Plan (2014 - 2018) in January 2014. This document sets out the proposed interventions and commitments which will represent the first phase towards achieving the Borough's economic development vision to make Slough an economically vibrant and entrepreneurial town where businesses and residents can grow and fulfil their potential - making Slough a great place to live.

The council is negotiating the renewal for the headlease for 31 light industrial units at Plymouth Road and actively considering the introduction of a new approach to the management of the units that would promote economic development and growth.

In accordance with the Economic Development Strategy, the council may acquire and/or re-categorise existing assets and operate them as business incubator units. This type of facility allows SMEs and start-ups to develop and grow their businesses. They provide direct access to hands-on intensive business support to assist businesses to grow faster. They provide a nurturing and supportive environment for new businesses during the critical stages of starting up. The role of business incubators is to:

- Serve as a '*launch pad*' and sustainable growth path for young and small businesses,
- Increase the chance that a start-up will succeed, and
- Shorten the time and reduce the cost of establishing and growing a business.

Business incubators have the potential to support and nurture the next generation of growth SMEs in Slough. There is no single formula for incubators units. The model for Slough will link these units to the Business Growth Hub of City Deal which provides business support. There will be no additional cost to the council to provide business support services as funding for Berkshire has already been secured through City Deal. The Hub would operate through a digital platform from the centre of Berkshire, targeted at innovative and creative growing businesses as well as new start ups, which will be complemented by local face to face 'touch points'. It would provide opportunities for businesses to meet and discuss needs and programme

solutions, access networking events and local incubator centres, as well as providing a local point of contact.

13.4 Review of Parks and Open Space

This emerging strategy will be developed in 2014/15 and will set standards and priorities for action for the quantity, quality and accessibility of parks and open space and buildings on that land. It is anticipated that the strategy will be self-financing. Development of parks and allotments buildings and associated land will be done where it improves public facilities and has a positive financial benefit. There will be a focus on maintaining and improving the most significant parks and open spaces that benefit the wider community.

Changes that bring buildings into community use will be prioritised, but the business case for each must enable costs to be recovered within 5-6 years. Legal issues and condition surveys will be resolved to prioritise sites for development and disposal.

The objectives and outcomes of the Parks and Open Space Strategy will be closely linked to the objectives of the Leisure Strategy. Priorities will be based on an audit of the assets and learning from public consultation done in late 2013. They will include proposals to help more people make more use of parks for leisure activities, including cycleways.

13.5 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan

From 1 April 2012, the Localism Bill abolished the HRA subsidy system and introduced a self-financing regime. Under the previous system the Government determined the level of funding required by each authority to run its housing service and as a consequence more than a quarter of the rent received from Slough tenants was returned to the treasury each year. Since only limited rental income was retained, SBC had only limited control of long-term financial planning and there was little incentive to make investment decisions. Under the new system, SBC can make decisions on how and in what it wishes to invest rental income, provided that the expenditure funded by this revenue source falls within HRA 'ring fencing' and the legislative framework provided by Schedule 4 of the 1989 Local Government & Housing Act and Part 2 of the 1985 Housing Act.

The HRA needs to spend annual retained 'Right to Buy' (RTB) receipts over a 3 year programme or the funds revert to central government. There is currently £1.3m retained RTB receipts from 2012/13 and £1.1m from the first quarter of 2013/14. These retained RTB receipts need to be spent on replacement affordable housing and must only contribute 30% of the funding of the replacement affordable housing costs. To spend the £2.4m retained RTB receipts, a total of £8m needs to be spent on replacement affordable/social housing. The HRA will therefore need to find an additional £5.6m of funding to utilise the £2.4m retained RTB receipts; land does not count as part of the 70% 'match funding'.

In parallel to this AMP, a HRA Business plan is being developed that will consider the most prudent methods of investment to meet the financial and social needs of the council. The HRA could potentially finance:

- Rented accommodation at either social or affordable rents
- Shared Ownership
- Acquisition and conversions from office to residential accommodation
- Development of Specialist Housing accommodation facilitating residents receiving support packages from elsewhere within the council or from third part providers.

The HRA can invest in ancillary facilities such as shops, community centres or health facilities; however any such expenditure/projects must support the social infrastructure and be complimentary to local housing and link to the HRA Business plan. Where the investment is not in social housing, (for example financing a health facility) the net present value of the investment needs to be paid back within 15 years. It should be noted that the amount of HRA capital, or s106 monies, not linked to affordable/replacement housing is limited. Where facilities are rented or leased to third parties they must be at market rates and subsidised by tenants. The regeneration of Trelawney Avenue and redevelopment of Rochford Gardens are two examples of potentially broader HRA investment.

The Localism Act has also provided local authorities with greater flexibilities and freedoms such that it can now act as a landlord within the private rented sector. Through this provision, it is possible for the council to establish a subsidiary company to let properties at market rents thereby delivering a revenue income stream to assist the council's financial position and introduce the ability to dispose of the asset at an optimum point, when the market fully recovers.

This innovative approach will be considered by SBC in 2014/15. The objectives of the company could potentially include:

- Providing high quality properties for rent or sale in locations that improve choice and meet the needs, demands and aspirations of prospective tenants,
- Exploring the potential for a programme of land acquisitions. Office to residential conversions and site developments within the local authority area to maximise the business opportunities and profitability of the company,
- Integrating the commercial activities of the company with house building, environmental and regeneration activities undertaken by SBC and its strategic partners,
- Complementing the council's Regeneration and Asset Management Strategies to improve the physical environment of the town,

- Helping to promote Slough as a high quality area/destination, and
- Promoting an organisational culture that balances business acumen and entrepreneurial flair with the requirement to operate within the policies adopted by SBC.

Individual scheme design will take into account local demographics, construction and site limitations as well as an assessment of local housing need such that the size and type of new homes meets the identified needs of local people as evidenced by the housing waiting list.

It is not possible to be overly prescriptive in terms of housing need and external changes can very quickly influence demand. An example of this is the government's welfare reforms which introduced the spare room subsidy cap or bedroom tax. In the last ten years demand has dictated that the council delivers larger family units of 3, 4 and 5 bedrooms whereas now there is a greater demand for households wishing to downsize and release 'spare' bedrooms which they are no longer receiving benefit for. Accordingly the council is now looking to build smaller units which in turn deliver vacant family homes in due course.

13.6 Strategic School Places Strategy

The combination of a rapid growth in birth rate and inward migration is placing an increasing demand on schools places. Based on existing information, the latest projections indicate that up to 15 forms of entry at primary school level and 38 forms of entry for secondary school level will be required by 2022. In addition, a corresponding increase in Special Educational Needs (SEN) childcare and nursery provision is required. The provision of new school places sits alongside a number of competing priorities for land in Slough, including new family housing, modern accessible healthcare facilities and green space.

In the period of the AMP, the Schools Places Strategy will emerge to deliver a long-term programme to provide additional high quality facilities to meet demand and support improved educational attainment. The strategy will focus on delivering the council's corporate objective and statutory responsibilities by:

- Preparing a list of projects based on agreed priorities that can be accelerated or slowed according to actual demand, to maximise the benefit to Slough residents.
- Carrying out a comprehensive review of all sites for creating new schools, school expansions or annexes.
- Utilising Free Schools as one solution for providing new places, encouraging local solutions where possible.
- Prioritising whole new schools, with expansions and annexes on hold ready to be used at short notice if required.
- Making the best use of available funding and resources.
- Ensuring equality of opportunity for Slough students.

Asset Management will play a key role in the development of the strategy and the identification of suitable sites. Where required, the council will use CPO powers to assemble suitable sites.

13.7 Leisure

The recently adopted Leisure Strategy and Physical Activity and Sports Strategy clearly define and prioritise the need for Slough residents to become more active and adopt healthier lifestyles. Historically Slough has some of the lowest participation rates by adults in sport and physical activity in the country, which also impacts on the high levels of health inequalities across the town.

The indoor leisure offer in the town is provided through schools and community organisations, and private companies as well as by the borough council. This offer includes swimming pools, sports halls, exercise studios, gyms, ice and ten pin bowling. Subsequently Slough is well served for leisure provision however some of the council's own facilities are dated and in need of serious investment.

A decision will be taken in 2014 on options for the re-provision of the town's major leisure facilities including Montem Leisure Centre and Slough Ice Arena based on the Montem Lane site. In addition to any new leisure facility is an opportunity to consider, subject to affordability and business cases, broader community and regeneration outcomes that will deliver broader social and regeneration benefits to the community. Opportunities will also be pursued to encourage schools and other community facilities outside the council's control to be opened to public use. Asset management will play a major role in taking this work forward.

13.8 Libraries and Community Facilities

The work highlighted within the Community Centres Strategy 2012 is well underway, including a programme to rationalise the number of community centres across the borough and developing multifunctional venues whilst addressing the centres in poor condition. The strategy was jointly prepared by the service provider and Asset Management and will closely link to this plan.

The key purpose of the strategy is to have fewer community centres, but better quality provision in key locations. A key challenge recognised early on in delivering the strategy was managing the aspirations of the local community and Members within the available resources and opportunities which are available.

Community ownership and management of assets is not new - although arguably only in recent years momentum behind community asset transfer has gathered pace. This is an area which requires further development. The council will need to ensure any business cases for potential asset transfers provide appropriate levels of financial security for the council and benefits the wider community.

The libraries network was reviewed in 2009 as part of the Library Services Review. The strategy provided for 3 satellite libraries, which are now in place at Chalvey, Colnbrook and Wexham Road. Libraries are being updated to operate as community hubs hosting a variety of complementary customer services, including My council, rooms for hire, advice and guidance, learning classes.

The main library will be included as part of the Curve from 2015, a hub encompassing learning, performance, advice and guidance, meeting rooms, exhibition space and café. The Britwell Centre and Chalvey Community Centre model local community based facilities which include libraries as part of the offer.

13.9 Health

Slough's health and wellbeing needs are documented in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. These needs include; above average rates of early deaths due to coronary heart disease, a high rate of new cases of diabetes, the fifth highest birth rate in the UK, high levels of child poverty and a high rate of population churn exacerbated by the lack of suitable housing for those with large families. At the same time, access to GP practices is rated as very poor. As a result, many residents use Accident & Emergency services as the first port of call.

The Joint Wellbeing Strategy and Corporate Plan confirm that working in partnership to improve the health of local residents and accessibility of services is a strategic priority.

In 2014/15, work will commence on a Collaborative Asset Management Strategy between SBC, Slough Clinical Commissioning Group, GPs and NHS England to identify a list of potential sites in Slough to accommodate new healthcare facilities that will make a positive impact on areas/wards, ensure equality of access to primary care and narrow the inequalities gap in health and wellbeing outcomes.

13.10 Transparency Agenda

In a drive to reduce cost and protect front line services, central government has introduced a revised code of practice for local authorities to make data more transparent for taxpayers to analyse how their council works and where money is being spent. As a consequence, Slough Borough Council (SBC) will be required to publish data in an accessible and reusable format in keeping with the Transparency Agenda. Since effective strategic asset management is delivered by local authorities using factual data about the property estate, it is proposed that public data should include the location of public land and building assets, and any key attribute information that is normally recorded. .

The introduction of the Transparency Agenda will have a significant impact on the workload for Asset Management. From April 2014, for each qualifying asset, SBC will be required to publish the following in one place:

- A unique property reference number,
- A unique asset ID,
- The name of the building/land or both,
- Street number, name, town and postcode,
- Easting and Northing, and
- Confirmation of freehold or leasehold.

14. Summary of Key Actions

The council has gained considerable momentum in its drive to undertake the physical, social and economic regeneration of Slough.

As part of an ongoing and ambitious Asset Management Strategy, the following Key Actions will be undertaken during the period of the plan and reviewed on an annual basis:

Key aim one– Introduction of a proactive approach to Estate Management

This aim will involve efficiently managing the council's estate to maximise the commercial return in line with market conditions. It will include reducing arrears, minimising void loss, ensuring that all council property occupied by third parties is on the basis of a formal lease and ensuring that lease renewals are identified and managed in a timely way:

- Develop revised procedures to reduce rent arrears and ensure that payment plans are in place and adhered to.
- Implement a new local management system to record key information including a diary for key property action dates.
- Ensure that all occupancy is on a suitable lease agreement and all terms maintained.

Key aim two– To efficiently manage the disposal of surplus assets

This key aim will involve optimising the financial return to the council and is closely tied to the medium to long-term financial plan. Asset Management will prioritise the disposal of non-income generating and/or revenue demanding assets that no longer contribute to service delivery and have the potential to support the requirements of the council's capital programme. However, the council cannot simply maximise the value of receipts from assets. It must also consider the extent to which the value of its assets could be used to deliver other corporate objectives such as additional levels of specialist and affordable general needs housing. This will be achieved through a robust property review process:

- Manage the disposal of assets approved by Cabinet and provide a monthly update report to the Capital Strategy Board.
- Review the disposals programme annually as part of the business planning and budget process.
- Ensure that any disposals with claw-back are recorded appropriately.

Key aim three– Make a significant contribution to delivering transformational change

To manage assets in a way that encourages regeneration and complements the HRA business plan, the Slough Regeneration Partnership (SRP) business plan and Heart of Slough strategy and other strategies, including closer working with NHS England and Slough Clinical Commissioning Group to redress health inequalities. This will include ensuring that all site constraints associated with SRP projects are identified and resolved in line with the development programme and will include project managing ongoing projects in Britwell, Chalvey and Kedermister to provide new housing and community facilities:

- Support Housing Services to develop a business case and 5 year strategy for the development of the housing-led regeneration sites at Upton Road (former Gurney House), Trelawney Avenue, Belfast Avenue, Eschele Court, Rochford Gardens and Farnham Road.
- Support the development of SRP sites by providing professional advice, undertaking development appraisals, identifying constraints and resolving estates' issues linked to the development of Ledgers Road, Wexham Nursery and other sites identified in the updated SRP business plan.
- Work in partnership with the council's transport section to assemble land required at Bath Road for the Slough to Heathrow rapid corridor project.
- Provide assistance and develop options for the sites associated with the proposed Leisure Strategy, including the Centre and Montem sites.
- Project manage the development of various sites that form part of the Chalvey Regeneration Strategy and take necessary action to bring forward the regeneration of stalled development sites.
- Commence public consultation on options for the redevelopment of Trelawney Avenue and work with strategic partners to realise corporate objectives.
- Commission a feasibility study to identify the future use of the Thames Valley University site and Slough Central library.
- Work in partnership with strategic partners to develop an integrated asset management plan for the delivery of new health care facilities that will improve accessibility to primary services.
- Consider strategic acquisitions which maximise development potential in priority regeneration areas to facilitate town centre regeneration, HRA led Housing programme and SRP.
- Undertake development appraisals linked to the assessment of appropriate s106 contributions.
- Work in partnership with Bucks New University to re-introduce a university into Slough.

Key aim four – Use the council’s assets to promote economic development and growth

By working closely with the council’s Economic Development section and making linkages to the Economic Development Strategy, Asset Management will use the council’s asset base and develop a new approach to service delivery. This cohesive approach will help to promote, sustain and grow business in Slough and create a place where people want to live, work, stop, shop and do business. This aim includes the proposed introduction of business incubator units.

- Work in partnership with the council’s Transport section to assemble land at Bath Road required for the rapid corridor project.
- Review the future use of the industrial units at Plymouth Road to introduce economic development based outcomes.
- Explore the potential to acquire assets that could be remodelled to provide business incubation units, including flexible office space.
- Develop the relationship with SEGRO to retain key businesses within Slough.

Key aim five– To hold a rationalised portfolio that is in the right location, is fit for purpose and reduces ongoing revenue costs

This aim is tied in to the Corporate Landlord role and the emerging Accommodation Strategy and will include undertaking annual performance reviews. Asset Management will introduce a formal Asset Challenge process to promote sharing of premises between departments to modernise services, improve access, increase efficiency and deliver value for money. This aim will also include the development of a longer-term strategy with other public sector/ voluntary organisations to plan for the co-location of services where appropriate. This process will free up poorly performing assets and is closely linked to Key Aim two and will identify assets for future disposal:

- Work collaboratively with Facilities Management to develop and implement Stage Two of the Corporate Landlord model, with an emphasis in identifying poorly performing assets.
- Carry out asset challenges to rationalise the council’s and other public sector partner’s administration buildings with a view to property sharing.
- Provide professional advice and undertake options appraisals linked to the ongoing review of park buildings.
- Work with NHS partners to develop GP consortiums and introduce modern health care facilities in Slough in locations that support areas in greatest need.

Key aim six – To introduce a culture of continuous improvement

This aim will focus on introducing a culture of continuous improvement in strategic, operational and financial management. It will include: introducing clear designation of responsibility and accountability, enhanced reporting requirements, improved policies and procedures, an enhanced risk management process and undertaking performance reviews. To improve access to information to interested parties and comply with the Transparency Agenda, this aim will focus on providing and maintaining key property information online within the period of the plan.

At a corporate level, this aim will include encouraging service departments to maximise effectiveness and is therefore closely tied to Key Aim five:

- Develop a new suite of RICS compliant Asset Management policies and associated procedures that reflect best practice.
- Review all operational assets to assess sustainability and suitability.
- Identify new income-generating and investment opportunities and make recommendations where appropriate.
- Review progress of the current plan and its approach to asset management to reflect priorities and best practice.
- Develop and implement a revised Action Plan for 2015/16 that incorporates the emerging issues described in Section 15.
- Continue to work with neighbouring local authorities to introduce economies of scale in working processes including asset valuation, best business practices and partnership agreements.
- Investigate and seek to implement new development appraisal and asset management software to support the assessment of s106 contributions, site acquisitions, development appraisals and ongoing partnerships.
- Comply with the Transparency Agenda (related to Assets) by providing web based accessible information to all stakeholders.

Key aim seven – To manage and deliver the Strategic School Places Plan 2013-21

To manage the limited availability of sites to deliver the competing priorities for the council particularly where both new schools and new housing are required.

The continuing growth in the pupil population over the next 8 years creates an ongoing demand for sites for accommodating a significant expansion of the existing school estate. By preparing a long term strategic plan for school places, sites can be prioritised to optimise their benefit to Slough and can attract income to Slough through the Free Schools programme:

- Finalise, consult and publish the Strategic School Places Plan 2013-21.

- Complete primary expansion projects at Cippenham Primary, Ryvers Primary, Castleview Primary and Godolphin Junior.
- Complete 90% of the current School's Modernisation Programme.
- Have started on site for the next wave of primary expansion projects expected to include the Claycots Town Hall, St Mary's CE Primary and James Elliman Primary.
- Facilitate the opening of new primary and secondary Free Schools including Langley Academy, SASH and Lynch Hill. Where these do not open on schedule or where shortfalls are forecast new expansion projects will be brought forward to ensure the provision of places meets demand.

15. Monitoring & Evaluating Performance

15.1 In order to monitor and evaluate performance in the period to 31 March 2015, the following performance indicators have been identified:

Ref	Indicator	Description	Target 2014/15
1	Capital Disposals	% of capital receipt received against target values.	90%
2	Revenue Income	Rent collected as a % of total rent due. Service Charges collected as a % of total Service Charges due.	80%
3	Void Management	% of income lost as a % of gross income.	10%
4	Lease Renewal and Granting of New Leases	% of leases that are renewed within agreed timescales.	80%
5	Rent Reviews	% of leases that are reviewed within agreed timescales.	80%
6	Asset Challenge	% of council land and property assets that are categorised following asset challenge and have an action plan in place.	100%
7	Project Management	a) % of projects that complete within agreed budget envelope b) % of projects that fall within +/- 5% of the estimated targeted timescale, expressed as a % of the total number of projects to be completed in the relevant financial year.	90% 90%

15.2 A suite of asset specific indicators will be developed and implemented to coincide with the next phase of the Asset Challenge process. These will focus on asset performance and will consider running costs, building condition, energy efficiency and utilisation. These indicators will help to inform decisions on fitness for purpose and asset rationalisation.

15.3 Performance indicators will be monitored on a quarterly basis at Asset Management Team meetings and reported on an annual basis to the Capital Strategy Board.

16. Gap Analysis

16.1 Gap Analysis is the process through which the council will compare its actual performance in relation to Asset Management practice to its expected performance to determine whether it is meeting expectations and using its resources effectively. The gap is the distance between current practice/status and desired outcomes. The analysis will allow the council to compare itself to those Asset Management practices that are considered reasonable and relevant to SBC to establish best appropriate practice.

16.2 The council's existing AMP was approved in 2008 and was subject to a marginal review in 2010. Whilst various outputs have been achieved, it has not effectively delivered on its aspiration to introduce a strategic approach to asset management. The introduction of the AMP 2014/17 will help to identify gaps in the way land and building assets are managed, with relevant actions implemented, as follows:

- An integrated approach is required across the council in relation to the use, acquisition and disposal of land and buildings. The emergence of the Corporate Landlord role will ensure that future decision-making is clearer and better integrated with corporate objectives. This will be facilitated by the requirement for the Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration to sign-off all reports with a land or property implication – however this needs to be kept under review.
- There is a requirement to achieve a greater understanding of the performance of existing operational assets in terms of their fitness for purpose and energy efficiency. This will be addressed through the introduction of a robust set of KPI's and the Asset Challenge process.
- There is potential for co-location of services, which will be addressed through the Asset Challenge process.
- There is requirement to develop more effective relationships with public sector partner organisations in order to develop an Integrated Asset Management Plan for Slough.
- At an estate management level, improvements need to be introduced in relation to the management of arrears, bad debt and void management. Greater emphasis has been placed on these issues, including revised KPI's, a robust Operational Plan identifying performance targets and the development of a local management system.
- The AMP was last reviewed in 2010. The council should review the AMP and the associated Operational Plan annually to ensure that its objectives are being achieved.