

# Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) 2024-2027

## Woking Borough Council

Shaping the *future*  
of our borough



## **Contents;**

### **Executive Summary**

**1.0 Introduction**

**2.0 Working Property Services**

**3.0 Asset Management 2024-2027**

**4.0 SAMP; Measuring Performance**

### **Appendices**

**Appendix 1; Property Asset Challenge Process**

**Appendix 2; Asset management Policy Objectives;**

**Appendix 3; Working for All**

## **Executive Summary;**

Woking Borough Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) documents how the authority will approach the management of its property assets over the period from 2024 to 2027.

The SAMP provides the framework within which the Council will conduct an ongoing assessment of the use and occupation of its property assets and a structure to achieve both efficiencies and maximise financial returns. The SAMP will also provide a basis for challenging and reviewing the reasons for continuing to hold assets.

This document will ensure that the principles outline herein are reflected in all relevant business decision making throughout the authority to address both our statutory requirements and to enable effective land management decisions based on a sound asset management footing.

Woking Borough Council continues to face challenges from the pressure upon local government finance and the SAMP recognises that effective and efficient use of our property assets is at the heart of ensuring that property resources are efficiently focused on the drive for improvement and efficiency. The authority recognises that this may require difficult decisions to be made as part of the wider transformation policy.

An important priority for the Council is to revise its approach to property ownership and to identify opportunities to raise both income and capital receipts from the disposal of surplus properties within the context of supporting current/future council expenditure/debt.

The continuing and evolving application of the principles set out within this document will ensure that the authorities property portfolios are managed in a manner which will support both the Council's financial priorities and operational needs.

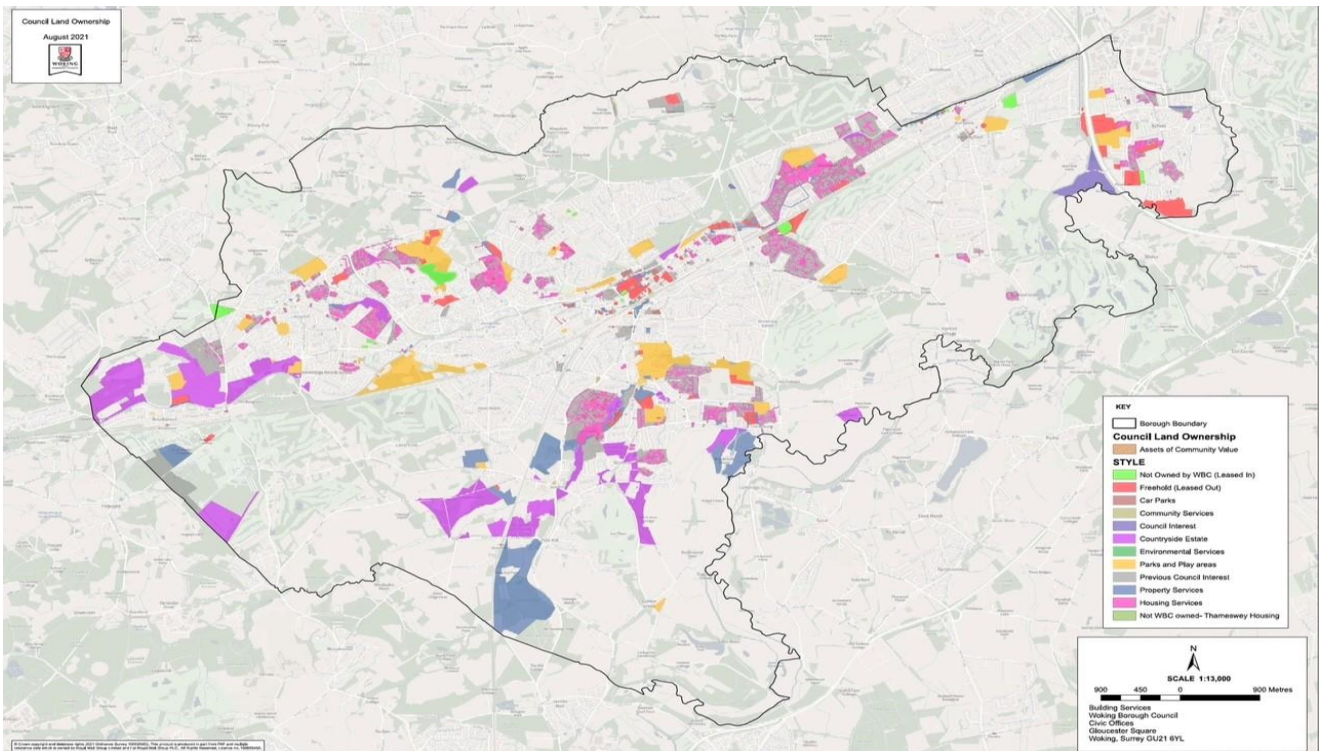
The target objectives of the SAMP therefore are to;

1. Set out the corporate framework for the management of property assets.
2. Highlight the corporate priorities and context.
3. Set out the strategic approach.
4. Identify the strategic target outcomes and appropriate actions under the SAMP.

## 1.0 Introduction;

**1.1 Woking** ; Woking is a modern and vibrant community forming one of 11 boroughs and districts within Surrey. Woking Borough Council (WBC) provides services to some 43,000 homes and in 2021 Woking topped Lambert Smith Hampton's UK Vitality Index as the country's best performing location assessed against indicators which included, economy, business, health and the environment.

**1.2 Woking the place** – Located approximately 22 miles (35 kilometres) to the south-west of Central London some 60% of the land by area (6,357 hectares) is designated as green belt. The third most densely populated borough in Surrey, the main economic and urban centres are Woking, West Byfleet and Knaphill, with residential hubs in Byfleet, Goldsworth Park, Horsell, Kingfield Old Woking, Sheerwater, St Johns and Westfield.

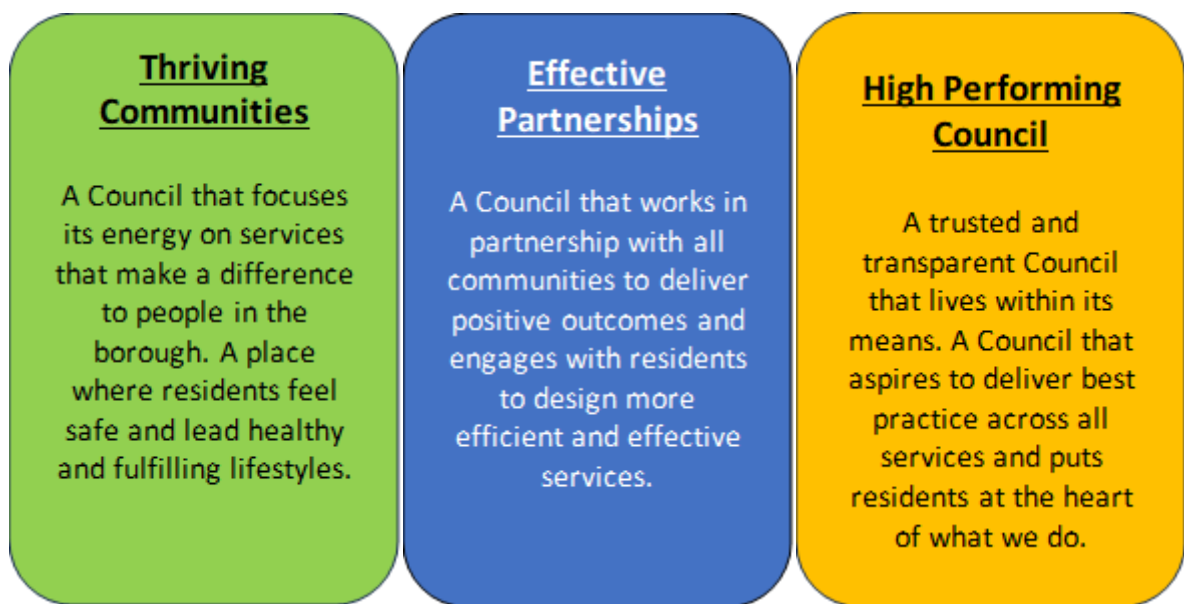


**Plan 1: Woking Borough Council – Property asset ownership**

**1.3 Woking people** – The resident population amounts to approximately 100,000 people and compared with the remainder of Surrey, the WBC population is relatively young, with the second highest proportion of under 16s and the second lowest of under 65s. In line with national trends, however, the population is ageing and the over 65s is expected to increase by 20% during the next 10 years.

**1.4 Woking economy** – With excellent transport links and its close proximity to London, Woking is an important regional hub with growth potential. Over eighty four percent of the working age population is economically active, above national and regional averages and the second highest in Surrey.

**1.5 Woking for all strategy;** The Woking for All strategy commits the local authority to a set of strategic objectives that give a clear direction to residents, businesses, partner organisations and council staff, based around three themes as follows;



Underpinning these community-based themes is the concept of a 'high performing council' which seeks to ensure the council delivers the best outcomes from its funds and activities including the property portfolios. The core vision is encapsulated within the ethos of a financially and environmentally sustainable Council delivering services that residents value in every part of the borough.

**1.6 The Strategic Asset Management Plan;** WBC's Strategic Asset Management Plan 2023 – 2028 (SAMP) sets out how the borough will use its diverse Property Asset Base to support the delivery of services to Woking's residents and businesses, whilst at the same time recognising the specific challenges that we face in the context of the current financial conditions.

As a public body we recognise the importance of effective strategic property asset planning in achieving service delivery whilst we strive to maintain the borough as a place which provides a safe, economically vibrant environment with an excellent quality of life, where people can choose to live, work and stay and which will positively contribute to the wider Surrey region.

The SAMP will provide a consistent framework for all our future property asset related decisions, with a particular focus on ensuring our prioritised decision making is within the available Capital and Revenue resources, as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

The SAMP is a living document which will be reviewed and updated at appropriate intervals to ensure overall compliance with relevant national policy and best practice. This will provide both our residents and businesses with confidence that we are using our property assets to provide high quality, safe and engaging environments, through innovative ways of working that are value for money and by transparent and effective public stewardship. The SAMP, however, equally needs to take into account the current financial position in which the authority is currently situated and the context within which it will need to operate - as detailed below.

**1.7 Context Overview:** WBC is in a challenging financial position. This is due to historical commercial and regeneration investments leading to unsustainable levels of borrowing. In the past, insufficient provision was made by WBC to repay the accumulated debt. The level of service previously provided by the Council was dependent on the use of reserves and commercial income which are no longer available. The position has been compounded by national factors including the past impact of Covid-19, the energy crisis, historically high inflation and shifting yields within the commercial investment market. These issues, combined with local factors, including reducing commercial income from parking and commercial rents and changing life and workstyles, have resulted in a long-term change to the council's revenue.

**1.8 Actions;** As a result WBC needs to:

- Significantly reconfigure services to operate within the resources available
- Rationalise the assets held to reduce the debt WBC holds and make sufficient provision for the repayment of debt
- Consider the future of commercial ventures, particularly Victoria Square Woking Ltd and the Thamesway group of companies, in a way that best protects the public purse
- Ensure all the steps are in place to deliver sound commercial governance and financial management and to deliver the scale of organisational change required.

**1.9 Statutory Notice;** On 25 May 2023, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities exercised powers under the Local Government Act 1999 to intervene in WBC. The intervention included the appointment of Commissioners who have been given authority over certain functions including property asset management.

The Secretary of State's intention is that the powers provided to the commissioners be used to ensure that the council takes the necessary steps to achieve the best possible outcomes for Woking residents and the public purse. The exercise of these functions should enable the commissioners to ensure that the council has made sufficient improvement within the next five years to be able to comply with its best value duty on a sustainable basis.

**1.10 Section 114;** On 7 June 2023, the Section 151 Officer issued WBC with a Section 114 Notice in response to the unprecedented financial challenges facing WBC. The notice was required because the council's expenditure was likely to exceed the financial resources available, and therefore it could no longer balance its budget for the remainder of the financial year and subsequent years.

The council faces an extremely serious financial shortfall owing principally to its historic investment strategy that has resulted in unaffordable borrowing, inadequate steps to repay that borrowing and high values of irrecoverable loans. The scale of the deficit is unprecedented and requires both immediate and ongoing concerted action by officers and councillors over a number of years to return WBC to a path of financial and operational sustainability and recovery.

The SAMP will be required to work alongside the Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP) to ensure that the future asset strategy seeks to release the authority from unaffordable commitments where feasible whilst protecting the public purse and optimising the value of existing assets.

**1.11 Improvement and Recovery Plan ;** In line with the Secretary of State's Directions, and in recognition of the scale of the task faced, WBC has developed an IRP around five key themes, each focused on a strategic aim.

1. Financial recovery; Sustainable budget management, making difficult decisions whilst delivering against strategic council priorities and safeguarding future capacity
2. Commercial; Release WBC from unaffordable commitments, whilst protecting the public purse and optimising the value of existing assets.
3. Governance and assurance; Ensure risk is managed and decisions are based on data and evidence and fully scrutinised.

4. Organisation and Service redesign; Deliver a smaller, data driven organisation, where staff feel empowered and digitally confident and are delivering on key priorities.

5. Housing Improvement ; Ensure the service is compliant with housing regulatory standards and deliver an efficient, reliable and modern service that meets statutory requirements and supports strong neighbourhoods and communities for our residents.

**1.12 Exceptional Financial Support** ; In January 2024 The Leader of the Council applied to the then Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities for exceptional financial support to assist the authority in setting a balanced budget for the years 2023/24 and 2024/25. Supported by the Commissioners the Secretary of State provided capitalisation directions subject to certain conditions.

The Council has been charged with the necessity to demonstrate that it will adhere to the Improvement and Recovery Plan (1.11 Above) and any directions that may be issued in the future relating to the current intervention process.

A key element of this process is the imperative for WBC to minimise the current debt through a number of actions allied to the Asset Portfolios including a programme of property asset disposals.

Consequently the Council is required in relation to the property portfolios to ;

- Follow the Improvement and Recovery Plan to the satisfaction of the Commissioners to identify financial savings and to deliver council services within the resources available.
- Prepare a robust asset disposal plan to the satisfaction of the Commissioners and Central Government to include a detailed assessment of options/assets to secure an appropriate managed exit from commercial arrangements whilst delivering optimal value for the public purse.
- To follow a debt reduction plan linked to the options appraisals and agreed asset disposal plan.



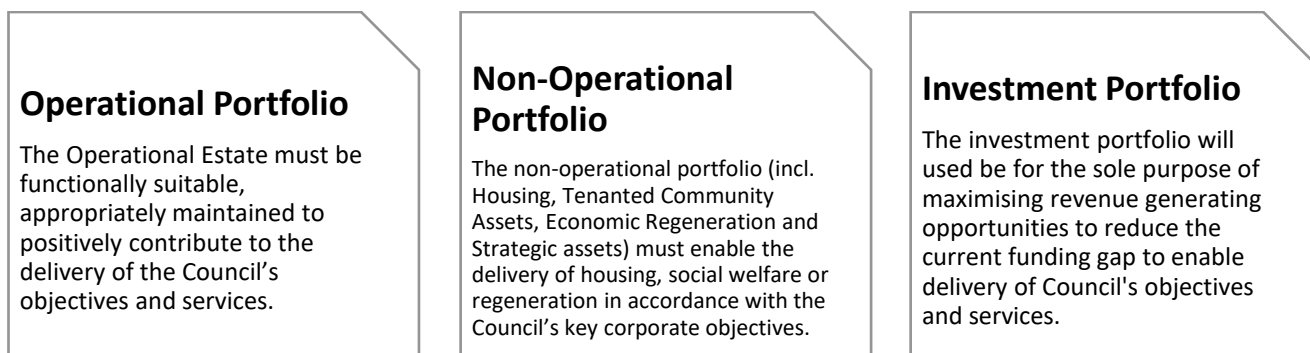
## 2.0 Woking Property Services

**2.1 The role of property;** Property Services has overall responsibility for the day-to-day governance and operation of Woking's diverse Property Asset Base. The services that the department provides includes;

- a. Building Services
- b. Facilities Management
- c. Engineering Services
- d. Strategic Asset Management
- e. Estates Management
- f. Management of external Managing Agents.
- g. Capital Projects

**2.2 Management of core asset base;** The day-to-day management of the Council's asset base is undertaken by Property Services to ensure the best use of the Council's assets, governed by actions and behaviours as set out within the SAMP.

**2.3 Woking property portfolios;** The property assets are now divided between three Property Asset Categories (as identified by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)) as follows:



(Note; Whilst properties held within the Housing Revenue Account and by Thameswey/VSWL (Victoria Square Woking Ltd) are excluded from the direct scope of the SAMP, the investment portfolio is under constant review and may result in transfers of properties from those portfolios predominantly into the investment portfolio.)

**2.4 Woking and it's property assets** The property asset portfolios are used directly or indirectly to support and enable the delivery of the Corporate Vision through the Corporate and Service Delivery, Strategies, Plans and Objectives. An overview of the Property Assets is shown below by use/asset type as of March 2024, excluding the HRA and non-operational portfolios.

**Woking Borough Council's Property Assets -March 2024.**

Property Tenure:	Freehold
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Row Labels	Count of Property Status
COMMERCIAL	75
COMMUNITY	46
LAND	80
LEISURE	25
OPERATIONAL	13
RESIDENTIAL (NON HRA)	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>251</b>

**2.5 Property data management and use of technology;** Robust and reliable property asset related data is essential to enable informed and effective decision making regarding strategic asset management issues and to enable the effective and timely day to day operation of our Property Assets.

To support this aim, and to secure a single source of accurate reliable data within a corporate property asset database, (that is in turn fully integrated with with the Corporate GIS and Local Land and Property Gazetteer , Financial Management Systems and other Corporate Property related Databases ) a new system has been acquired.

The MRI QUBE Property Management system is being populated with the Council's property. Records for the operational and Investment portfolios (see 2.3) and it is anticipated the database will be available as the department's internal knowledge base and record system prior to December 2024.

**2.6 Corporate Property Asset Database** ; The database will provide the source for all property related records to enable the WBC property teams to:

1. Effectively manage its Corporate Property related responsibilities.
2. To meet statutory duties including for example Health & Safety.
3. To assist in delivering effective Asset Management Planning enabling efficient service delivery, joint working and financial planning
4. Identify Capital/Revenue/Regeneration and saving opportunities.
5. Undertake data sharing with Contractors/Managing Agents
6. Reduce operational costs including planned running costs and reactive repairs & maintenance.

**2.7. Statutory management of the property asset estate** ; The Council has a duty to manage and assess the impact of statutory regulations on its assets in relation to asbestos, accessibility, fixed wiring, Legionella, workplace and fire regulation compliance. To ensure that the asset portfolio is compliant with statutory requirements, regular inspections, reviews and certification of property is undertaken through the combined Facilities Management (FM) and Hard Facilities Management (PPM) teams, as shown below.

## **2.8 Facilities Management (FM)**

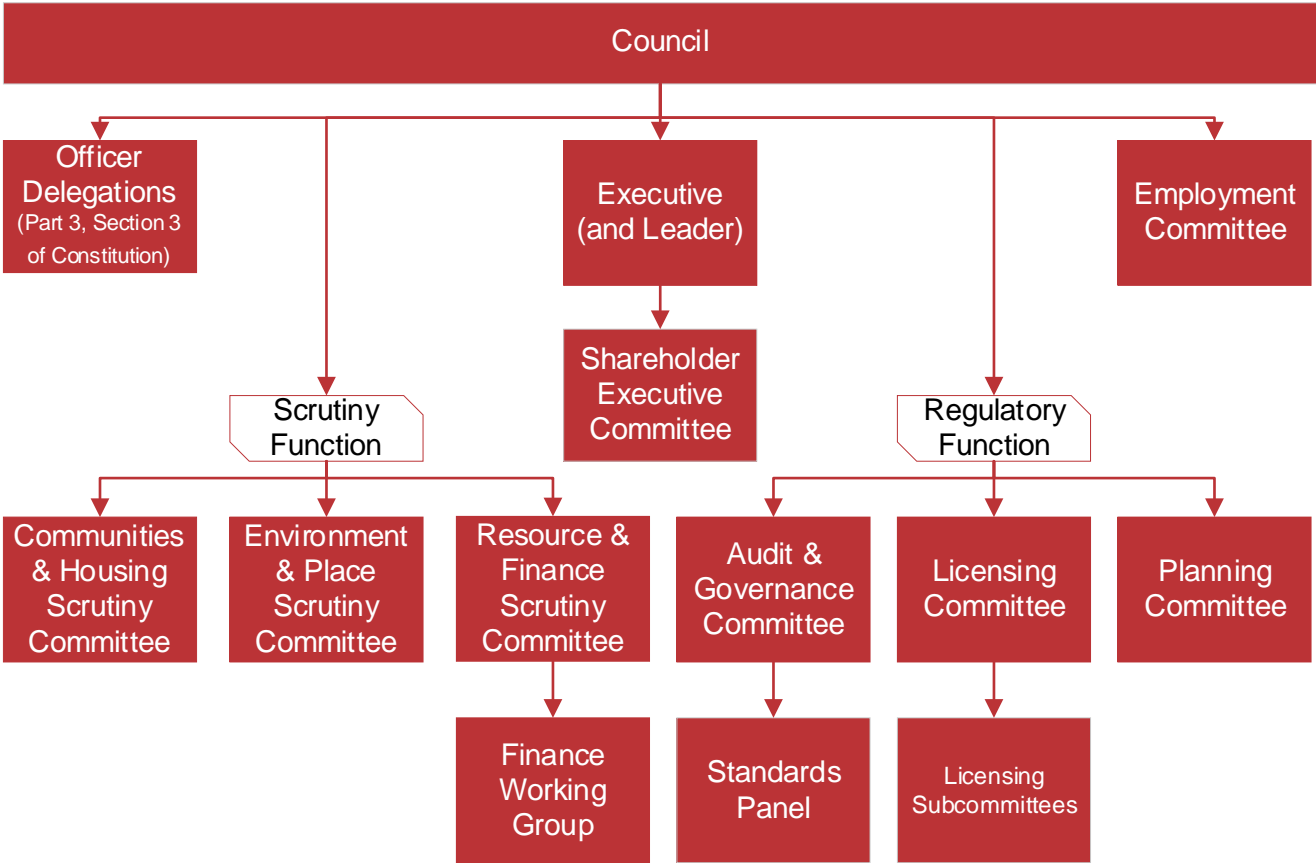
- Data – Annual Maintenance Costs
- Building Compliance
- Property Budgets
- Operational FM Estate Management
- Investment FM Estate Management

## **2.9 Reactive, statutory and PPM (hard facilities management)**

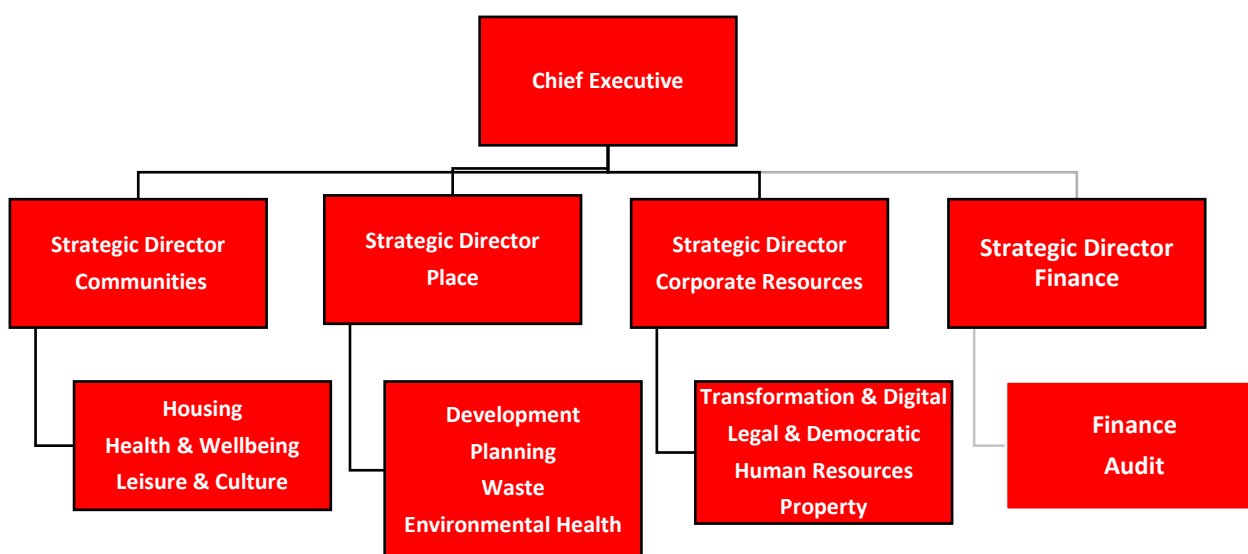
- Building Compliance - Reactive, Statutory and Planned
- Preventative Maintenance.
- Data - Capital Expenditure

**2.10 Governance;** The ongoing management and operation of the WBC property portfolios are a key function of the authorities' activities and an essential element of its service provision within the borough. Consequently The Executive Committee has overall responsibility for Property Asset Management.

WBC's Committee Structure, is shown below;



**2.11 Members and Officers;** Officers of the council advise elected Members on policy formation and implementation as well as carrying out our strategic and day to day operational service delivery including property management and the functions set out within the SAMP. The Senior Officer structure is as shown below.



**2.12 Internal Governance;** All decisions regarding the operational and investment portfolios are overseen by the Property and Strategic Oversight Group and the Commercial Governance Board. These operate as the internal checks and controls to ensure that all estate management decisions are both policy compliant and in the best interests of the authority and its stakeholders.

### 3.0 Asset Management ; 2024 - 2027

**3.1 Introduction;** The overriding objective of the SAMP is to enable the effective use of Property Assets, to support and enable the delivery of the Priority Outcomes identified in the Woking for all Strategy ( see 1.5) and to meet the objectives of the Improvement and Recovery plan. The SAMP therefore needs to reflect the property asset elements of these priority outcomes and to ensure alignment and consistency in our decision making to achieve the best overall use of our Property Assets whilst protecting the public purse.

**3.2 Corporate Vision;** Strategic Asset Management is the process of aligning Property Assets with the Corporate Vision and Objectives of the Council. The Council's Corporate Objectives set a clear direction of travel which cascades down through the organisation into service planning, which should be accommodated by a functional, well-maintained estate. Asset Management is an iterative, ongoing process rather than a one-time exercise. The Strategic Asset Management Plan therefore will be used as a 'living document,' creating a foundation for the management of the Council's portfolio.

**3.3. Whole life approach;** Within this Corporate Strategic Asset Management Plan, Property Assets are perceived from a 'Whole Life Perspective' whereby the entire asset life is considered from acquisition to operation and efficiency optimisation through to, if appropriate, disposal.

Guided by this framework, individual Asset Managers are enabled to improve and/or increase the outputs and impact of the organisation in measurable terms, as set out in this document (whether that be financial or non-financial). The Strategic Asset Management Plan sets out the approach to the management of the commercial property portfolio and how this relates to the corporate priorities of the Council. The development of an Asset Management Strategy was identified as a key recommendation in the Council's update to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as follows;

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*“A Strategic Asset Management Plan is needed for the next 5 years to demonstrate compliance with the Woking for All strategy, addressing important key principles for the Council's estate to ensure it is fit for purpose, efficient and performing well to support the services – for the good of the Borough and its residents”.*

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**3.4 Additional Actions;** The Asset Management Plan is supported by a series of actions and policies required to minimise risk associated with the Council's land and building assets. These include:

**3.5 Fit for Future Programme** – To develop the strategic finance and property expertise to ensure future capability across the Council's asset portfolio. The Council commenced a 'Fit for the Future' (FFtF) programme in 2022 to identify revenue savings needed to help bridge a significant budget shortfall in the short-term. In early 2023, the Council carried out a review of all services to identify the minimum viable provision for statutory services supported by benchmarking and Corporate Leadership Team-led panels which resulted in proposals for changes to service provision and a new vision for the organisation.

Through the summer and autumn of 2023, the Council carried out extensive consultation with staff and with residents on the proposed changes to services. The establishment reduced from 445 employees in April 2023 to 345 in April 2024, resulting in staffing savings of £2.3million per annum.

In May 2023, the Council was as noted previously subject to Government intervention, and the following month, issued a Section 114 Notice (see 1.10). As a result, the Council brought together the FFtF programme (a programme to identify service savings) and Financial Recovery Programme (actions to address the debt issues) with two key target outcomes;

- Resolve/address the previous property investment decisions.
- Transform the organisation to ensure processes, systems and skills are in place to deliver the required change.

**3.6 Asset by Asset Review** – Having established the nature of the council's holdings into three separate portfolios namely operational, non-operational and investment portfolios a detailed exercise was undertaken in late 2023 and early 2024 to identify which holdings should fall into each of those categories with a particular emphasis on the investment estate.

As a result, in March 2024, the authority identified a portfolio of 55 assets which form the investment estate. Each of those assets has undergone individual asset reviews to create a bespoke proforma. This document includes all of the relevant property data and sets out the authorities approach to the future of that asset, based on Strategic Business cases in each instance, to determine whether to retain or dispose of any individual asset. In each case the assessment is based on the relevant market conditions, timescales to prepare for disposal and the advice of external consultants where appropriate. For each asset a robust evaluation has been undertaken including financial issues risks, identifying holding costs where appropriate until disposal (i.e., capital financing costs), consideration of overhanging debt and any other issues and risks to establish disposal plans over the next three years to release appropriate assets.

**3.7 One Public Estate (OPE)** – One Public Estate (OPE) is a national programme, jointly managed by the Cabinet Office and the Local Government Association, that brings public sector organisations together. By working in partnership, local government bodies can look at how they can use land and buildings collaboratively to:

- improve public services to residents, visitors, employees and businesses
- renew and rationalise the public estate so there is a reduction in the amount of money spent on buildings
- free up land for the development of housing, commercial and employment space
- support local economic growth
- generate capital receipts and income.

**3.8 The Investment Strategy** – To ensure the investment portfolio meets the revenue generation objectives set out by the Commissioners and the Secretary of State (see 1.12) an Investment Asset Strategy was prepared in April 2024 as a review of the investment portfolio to ascertain, in consultation with the Finance Team, which assets should be either disposed of or retained over the next three to five years.

In each case the decision as to the future of any asset has been supported by the relevant proforma (see 3.6) and based on the following criteria;

1.Strategic Business cases in each instance supported by target returns based on market centric advice.

2.In each instance the decision on whether to retain or dispose of an asset is based on the relevant market conditions, timescales to prepare for disposal and the advice of external consultants where appropriate.

3.The impact on the Council's revenue budget is an essential factor to be considered as the investment estate currently generates c £16.6 m gross per annum (as of 2024) of rental income which directly funds service provision.

4. For each asset a robust evaluation is undertaken of financial issues including grant and clawback risks, identifying holding costs where appropriate until disposal (i.e., capital financing costs), consideration of overhanging debt and any other financial issues and risk.



**3.9 Corporate landlord** ; The way the Council manages its assets reflects the ethos that Property Assets should be managed as corporate resources, with stakeholder involvement so that decisions are made in the context of both the Council's priorities and SAMP objectives.

The Corporate Landlord Model assumes a transfer of the strategic management of the estate, from individual service areas into the corporate centre. The service area is treated as a corporate 'Tenant' and this enables that area to focus on the delivery of services whilst the Corporate Landlord's function is to ensure all services are adequately accommodated and to maintain and manage the relevant Property Assets.

The Corporate Landlord model recognises property assets are corporate resources which are intended solely to support the council's wider objectives and strategic priorities such as climate change/sustainability policies, community and service need, optimising property efficiencies and collaborative and efficient land uses/income/capital generation.

By centralising all estate related budgets and activities within a single department, the Council can enable greater efficiencies in terms of running costs, increase income and identify rationalisation opportunities.

In terms of expectations and results from the corporate landlord model it centralises all estate related budgets, decision making and activities within a single team – the Corporate Landlord. Service departments become tenants of the Corporate Landlord and are required to make a case for the property that they wish to deliver a service from, which allows for the Corporate Landlord to offer sufficient space – and no more space than is required – for those functions.

The Corporate Landlord approach requires service departments to;

- Adopt and support the Principles of Smarter Ways of Working.
- Occupy properties in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures including Asbestos, Legionella, Fire Safety, Health & Safety.
- Develop business/service plans to outline and inform their ongoing asset requirements
- Apply the SAMP procedures for all asset related decisions and requirements.
- Operate in a collaborative manner with the Corporate Landlord to ensure that strategic property requirements are met and aligned to the service and Council's priorities.
- Seek advice for future property requirements from the Corporate Landlord to ensure that property implications are properly reviewed and maximise any efficiencies.
- Reporting building maintenance issues in a timely manner.

**3.10; Climate change/sustainability** The way that the Council manage and operate its assets is integral to reaching its objective of being carbon neutral . In 2019, the Council declared a climate and ecological emergency which led to the development of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP). The CEAP is a living document that outlines the SMART actions that the Council need to undertake to allow them to achieve their carbon neutral objectives. To help assist the Council in how they should manage their estate and to be able to track their progress in reducing their emissions, a carbon footprint assessment has been undertaken. Annual reporting on greenhouse gas emissions will supply the data which can be used to track the Council's progress and will demonstrate whether the actions in the CEAP are on target to achieve the objective of carbon neutrality.

**3.11; Community Assets;** The Council has a Community Asset Transfer Policy which sets out the approach to how WBC will enable stakeholders and community groups to take control of suitable assets through community asset transfers. In order to keep valuable community assets open to the communities whilst extinguishing the liabilities carried by the authority, the Council adopted a CAT policy in 2023 which is being implemented over the coming years. The policy involves the transfer of Council assets to the community, which enables the community to operate assets to best meet local need and support the voluntary and community sector to meet their ambitions.

**3.12 Commercial Protocols ;** In 2023 the authority agreed governing protocols to ensure that commercial activities and the use of commercial assets are demonstrably aligned to the Council's prevailing strategic priorities. e.g.; Woking for All Strategy, the MTFS Guiding Principles 2025/25 and the Improvement and Recovery Programme. Implementation of the protocols allows the Council to demonstrate it is fulfilling its Best Value duty by having arrangements in place to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and consideration of economic, environmental, and social value impacts.

The protocols seek to ensure that ensure the Council's commercial activities and assets are aligned to its core strategic aims supported by the following enabling objectives:

- (i) That the strategic fit of commercial activities and assets is reviewed annually or whenever a significant change is proposed .
- (ii) To maintain a register of all commercial activities and assets to which this protocol applies
- (iii) To create and deliver a workplan of commercial protocol reviews for all existing commercial activities and assets
- (iv) To create a review process along with a process for addressing any non-compliance or shortfalls with the principles above

**3.13 Policy background** ;The Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) brings together all the existing strands of policy and strategy, allowing them to be developed collectively and ultimately providing the framework within which the portfolios operate. The SAMP will inform future decisions regarding the estate and in turn ensure that the Council’s wider objectives and priorities are achieved.

Given the scale, importance and diversity of the Council’s Property Asset portfolio there is a need to ensure that the property the Council owns, uses, develops and has invested in is fit for purpose, managed effectively and represents value for money.

The aim is to sustain Woking’s local economy; continue to deliver high-quality services; minimise longer-term risk and to ensure the future of Woking is sustainable by achieving its carbon neutral targets.

**3.14 Strategic asset management priorities;** Having developed the SAMP policies and priorities, there are certain actions and behaviours that the Council must adopt to support the delivery of the adopted SAMP outputs . These actions and behaviours will be reviewed on a regular basis.

strategic asset management plan : High level linkages with the corporate strategy					
Corporate strategy: Priority outcomes  SAMP Themes	Healthier Communities	Engaged Communities	Greener Communities	Prospering Communities	High Performing Council
1. Transparency		•			•
2. Sustainability	•		•	•	•
3. Corporate Resource					•
4. Functional Suitability	•		•	•	•
5. Growth & New Business		•		•	•
6. Collaboration & Engagement		•		•	•

The table below shows the linkage between the 6 Key Principles for effective Property Asset Management identified as part of the Asset Management Review and the corresponding priority outcomes of the Corporate Strategy. These are then matched against the required actions and behaviours to achieve effective best practice.

	<b>SAMP Key Principles and Corporate Strategy Priority Outcomes</b>	<b>Required SAMP Actions/Behaviours</b>
1.	<p><b>To Increase transparency &amp; information flows between the Council and the People of Woking.</b></p> <p><b>Thriving Communities</b></p> <p><b>High Performing Council</b></p>	<p>Clear corporate decision-making/ governance overseen by the Property and Capital Programme Strategic Oversight Group and the Commercial and Finance Governance Board. .</p> <p>The SAMP and associated documents are aligned to the Council’s Corporate Plan, ‘Woking for all’, the Woking Master Plan, and wider documents.</p> <p>Establish and maintain clear guidance on the Councils attitude to risk in relation to the property portfolio overseen by the Property and Capital Programme Strategic Oversight Group .</p> <p>Capital Projects are managed efficiently and effectively and prioritised to support the Council’s priorities.</p> <p>Establish clear guiding principles and key performance monitoring metrics for each of the respective Portfolios; Operational, Non-operational and Investment through specific management plans ( e.g.; Investment Asset Strategy and Proformas).</p>
2.	<p><b>Deliver Sustainability and Carbon Impact in Everything we do.</b></p> <p><b>Thriving Communities</b></p> <p><b>High Performing Council</b></p>	<p>Minimise energy, water consumption, waste and CO2 emissions and promote the use of renewable energy sources to achieve Woking's Carbon Neutral targets .</p> <p>Ensure that property is as sustainable as possible in design, construction, operation and maintenance.</p> <p>Explore and source available grants to upgrade the energy performance of existing buildings.</p> <p>To be agile and flexible when considering the use of a property and potential alternative uses.</p>

SAMP Key Principles and Corporate Strategy Priority Outcomes	Required SAMP Actions/Behaviours
<p data-bbox="148 768 177 797">3.</p> <p data-bbox="204 510 509 763"><b>Manage and maintain Property Assets efficiently and sustainably as a Corporate Resource for the benefit of the people of Woking.</b></p> <p data-bbox="204 801 389 871">Effective Partnerships</p> <p data-bbox="204 891 395 960">Thriving Communities</p> <p data-bbox="204 981 440 1050">High Performing Council</p>	<p data-bbox="539 360 1318 430">Recognition that property should be considered a corporate resource.</p> <p data-bbox="539 439 1433 508">Property budgets are managed corporately and centrally to prioritise investment where the Councils objectives can be maximised.</p> <p data-bbox="539 517 1414 586">Property will be managed efficiently, effectively and on a basis that represents value for money and within budget constraints.</p> <p data-bbox="539 595 1426 701">To actively reduce the level of responsive maintenance and engage proactively in preparing pre-planned maintenance programmes across the estate.</p> <p data-bbox="539 710 1426 779">Actively challenge the current use of assets and drive efficiencies in occupation and utilisation including appropriate asset disposals.</p> <p data-bbox="539 788 1394 857">Challenge the cost of property activities to drive performance and value for money.</p> <p data-bbox="539 866 1417 972">Securing a motivated team of professional property individuals that both public and private sector organisations want to engage and partner with.</p> <p data-bbox="539 981 1433 1086">Establish and maintain a data review process to ensure data is accurate and up to date to allow evidence-based decision making to take place.</p> <p data-bbox="539 1095 1433 1200">To streamline the management of land and buildings by accessing a fit-for-purpose asset management software package that demonstrates value for money.</p>
<p data-bbox="148 1585 177 1615">4.</p> <p data-bbox="204 1234 496 1487"><b>To provide functionally suitable Property Assets, in the right place, to meet current and future Service Delivery needs.</b></p> <p data-bbox="204 1541 395 1610">Thriving Communities</p> <p data-bbox="204 1641 389 1711">Effective Partnerships</p> <p data-bbox="204 1753 440 1823">High Performing Council</p>	<p data-bbox="539 1234 1441 1339">Engage with Public Services and Community Groups to ensure that assets are suitable, sufficient, appropriately maintained and in the most beneficial location, within budget constraints.</p> <p data-bbox="539 1348 1377 1417">Establish and manage a consistent tool to measure and monitor functional suitability across the operational portfolio.</p> <p data-bbox="539 1426 1393 1532">Work with our service areas to understand and plan for long-term requirements and to integrate service level plans into the asset management and planning process.</p> <p data-bbox="539 1541 1313 1610">Ensure property is secure, safe and complies with statutory compliance legislation.</p> <p data-bbox="539 1686 1433 1792">Seek opportunities to achieve occupancy and utilisation efficiencies by adopting new ways of working. Dispose of surplus properties and rationalise the investment estate.</p>

SAMP Key Principles and Corporate Strategy Priority Outcomes	Required SAMP Actions/Behaviours
<p>5. <b>Use Property Assets to stimulate development and growth and encourage new business to the area.</b></p> <p>Effective Partnerships</p> <p>High Performing Council</p>	<p>Identify ways of attracting external investment into the borough through joint partnerships wherever feasible.</p> <p>Use key assets to stimulate and support regeneration and inward investment.</p> <p>Cross party engagement / working groups with both public and private partners.</p> <p>Actively identify and monitor potential sites that would be attractive for development.</p>
<p>6. <b>To promote collaboration where it can provide benefits for Service Delivery and achieving the Council's identified Aims &amp; Objectives.</b></p> <p>High Performing Council</p>	<p>Ensure that property is appropriate and sufficient for service delivery and integration of wider public services (One Public Estate).</p> <p>Explore co-location opportunities with services and public / third sector partners.</p> <p>Efficient collaboration and engagement with services and departments to improve information flows and decision making.</p>

## 4.0 SAMP ; Measuring Performance;

**4.1; How we measure outcomes;** WBC is committed to ensuring that property assets are managed and operated in a manner which supports service delivery and meets the requirements of the authority as the local statutory body. The Council will assess performance therefore against key targets as follow.

**4.2; Financial Performance;** As highlighted within the opening sections of the SAMP the authority is facing significant financial pressures which necessitates a clear corporate decision-making process with regard to all property related decisions. The SAMP will ensure that;

- Property Management Budgets are managed diligently with the minimum of wastage.
- Rental incomes are maximised wherever feasible/practicable.
- Rental voids are minimised through active asset management.
- Property is managed under a corporate landlord model.

**4.3; Investment Portfolio;** The Asset Rationalisation Plan 2023/2026 sets out the approach to asset rationalisation in order to achieve the core aim of realising over a relatively short period of time the maximum beneficial capital investment return from the Commercial Investment Portfolios. The plan sets out a three-year strategy for targeted disposals to realise capital to repay debt and/or reduce future borrowing requirements.

**4.4 Maximising Returns;** As set out within s.123 of the Local Government Act the Council has wide powers over the disposal of its property assets. The overriding requirement is to obtain best value for the public purse. The oversight of the SAMP will ensure this aim is achieved by ensuring that each element of the portfolio complies with the following;

### **Operational Portfolio:**

The Operational Estate must be functionally suitable, appropriately maintained to positively contribute to the delivery of the Council's agreed current and identified future Corporate and Service Delivery Vision, Priorities, Aims and Objectives.

### **Non-Operational Portfolio:**

The non-operational portfolio (incl. Housing, Economic Regeneration and Strategic assets) must enable the delivery of housing or regeneration in accordance with the Council's agreed current and identified future Corporate and Service Delivery Vision, Priorities, Aims and Objectives.

### **Investment Portfolio:**

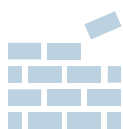
The investment portfolio will be used to maximising revenue generating opportunities to reduce the funding gap and to enable delivery of the Council's current and future Corporate and Service Delivery Vision, Priorities, Aims and Objectives.

**4.5 Operational portfolio;** Operational Property Assets are occupied either by or on behalf of the Council to provide or support service delivery to meet the identified corporate aims and objectives of the Council. These assets do not generally produce a significant income to the Council but provide benefits to those who live and work in Woking by enabling service provision or by providing green spaces contributing to the health and well-being of residents. Operational Property Assets include administrative office buildings, operational buildings situated in the community (offices, leisure and community centres) and more complex operational sites (such as depots). They are held under a variety of tenures, freehold and leasehold and seek to be;



**Functionally Suitable**

Suitable for their respective use, situated in the right place, with the right configuration for the use suitably accessible to the public, and of a quality that reflects the service they provide and how those services may be delivered in the future



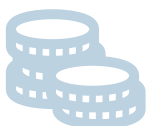
**Sufficient**

A suitable size for the intended service / function. Assets that are too small will impact negatively on the function they perform, if they are too large, they are likely to represent a disproportionate cost, and offer poor value for money



**In Appropriate Condition**

Compliant with all regulatory requirements, and properly maintained to meet the needs of those who work in them and who visit them. The assets potential future life and where viable to be managed and maintained in line with the Council's Sustainability Strategy.



**Represent Value for Money**

Maintained within budget and are cost effective compared to other options for service delivery, and in comparison to other buildings.



Compliance with Statutory Requirements is at the forefront of the Councils approach to strategic asset management including, where appropriate;

- Condition surveys – identification of premises related issues to support planned maintenance programmes.
- Fire Risk management – including fire risk assessments as required by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. •
- Water Quality (Legionella) management – including risk assessments, tank inspections, flushing and temperature monitoring services.
- Asbestos management – updating of asbestos registers

By using a consistent assessment framework, if buildings are not suitable, or in appropriate condition, or no longer serve a useful purpose then action will be taken to consider the future of the asset, whether that be subject to reinvestment/redevelopment, re-categorisation / re-purposing or disposal.

**4.6 Investment portfolio** ; One of the Council's key objectives is to secure long-term financial sustainability. The Investment Property Portfolio has a significant role in identifying revenue generating opportunities and providing a reliable source of income to enable delivery of the Council's objectives and services.

The Investment Property Portfolio comprises assets acquired and held for the purpose of generating an income and/or capital appreciation and contributing to economic development. The investment portfolio will be used to maximise revenue generating opportunities and reduce the funding gap.

The retained Investment Property Portfolio must therefore provide a net revenue return to the Council after all costs, including finance interest, operating cost, planned maintenance and sinking fund provisions. The portfolio's long-term value and performance will be maintained through appropriate life-cycle assessments and pre-planned maintenance programmes with ultimately appropriate sinking fund provision for all investment assets.

The retention or disposal of individual assets will be continually challenged and reviewed through the proforma process, which is updated quarterly, and the Investment Asset Strategy prepared in April 2024, and which will be updated annually.

**4.7 Asset review and challenge process**; The Asset Challenge is a best practice process, as recommended by the RICS and CIPFA to review assets through a continuous rolling programme, ensuring that the performance of retained assets is optimised. (see Appendix 1) . The ultimate aims of Asset Challenge are to reduce costs, identify assets to be retained for use and/or invested in or those that can be considered for an alternative use, or disposal.

**4.8 Performance measurement and monitoring ;**The ongoing rationale for holding assets will be assessed against the strategic purpose for which the asset is held. Assets deliver a mixture of front-line services, indirect service provision, support to local communities and income generation and the financial and social/ strategic performance of an asset will vary depending on the category and purpose of the asset.

When reviewing the performance of an asset therefore we will utilise the key considerations outlined below:

Asset Category	Property Performance Considerations	
	Financial	Non-Financial/Reputational
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revenue Cost</li> <li>Reactive Maintenance Cost</li> <li>FM Helpdesk Calls</li> <li>Cost of Pre-Planned Maintenance</li> <li>Financial Sustainability</li> <li>Value for Money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>H&amp;S compliance</li> <li>Functional Suitability</li> <li>Occupancy / Utilisation Rate</li> <li>Customers, visitors and the Community Satisfaction / Service Delivery</li> <li>Property Condition</li> <li>Efficiency</li> <li>Sufficiency</li> <li>Carbon Emissions</li> <li>Activities</li> <li>Membership</li> <li>Inclusivity</li> </ul>
Non-Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Regeneration</li> <li>Exit Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Engagement</li> <li>Housing Provision</li> <li>Jobs Created</li> </ul>
Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portfolio Metrics</li> <li>Market value</li> <li>Revenue / Operating Costs</li> <li>Net Income</li> <li>Net Yield (on purchase price)</li> <li>Debt Service Ratio</li> <li>Income Growth</li> <li>Capital Growth</li> <li>Capital Receipts</li> <li>Maintaining Value</li> <li>Risk Mitigation</li> <li>Exit Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building Condition</li> <li>Vacancy / Void Ratio</li> <li>Sustainability Accreditations</li> <li>Occupier Risk / D&amp;B Rating</li> <li>Inward Investment</li> <li>Social Benefits</li> </ul>

**4.10 Conclusion;** The SAMP will ensure that the principles outlined are reflected in all relevant future decision making to address both the Council's statutory requirements and to enable effective land management decisions based on sound asset management criteria.

WBC continues to face challenges from the pressure upon local government finance and the SAMP recognises that effective and efficient use of property assets is at the core of ensuring that property resources are efficiently focused on the drive for improvement and efficiency.

The authority recognises that this may require difficult decisions to be made as part of the wider transformation policy and the SAMP will support those decisions to ensure that they are based on a sound estate management approach.

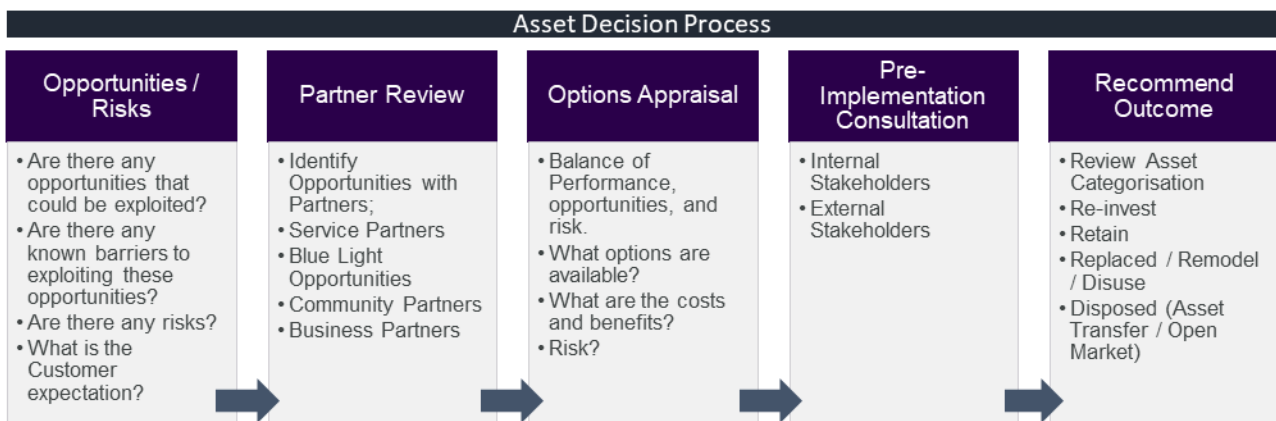
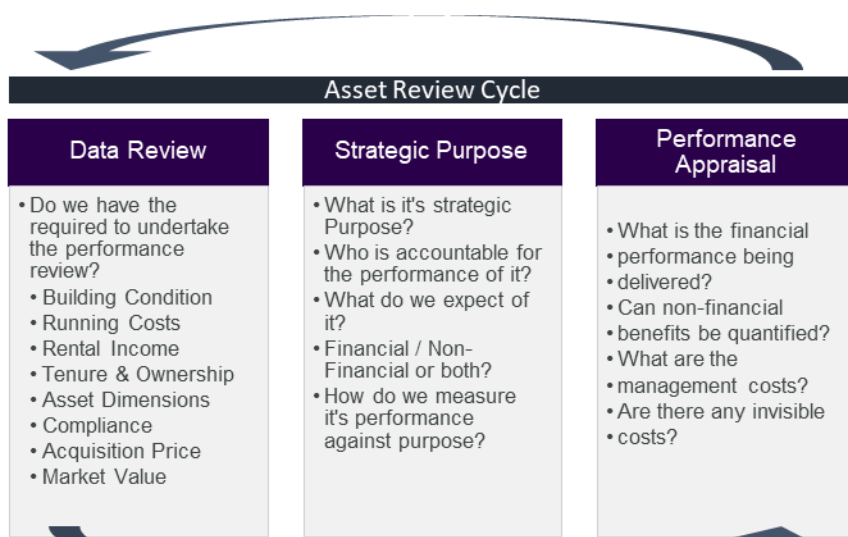
The continuing and evolving application of the principles set out within this document will ensure that the authorities property portfolios are managed in a manner which will support both the councils financial priorities and operational needs.

The Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) brings together all the existing strands of policy and strategy, allowing them to be developed collectively and ultimately providing the framework within which the portfolios operate. The SAMP will underwrite future decisions regarding the estate and in turn ensure that the Council's wider objectives and priorities are achieved.

Given the scale, importance and diversity of the Council's Property Asset portfolio there is a need to ensure that the property the Council owns, uses, develops and has invested in is fit for purpose, managed effectively and represents value for money.

The aim is to reduce debt whilst sustaining Woking's local economy; continuing to deliver high-quality services, minimise longer-term risk and to ensure the future of Woking as a thriving Borough.

# Appendix 1 ; Property Asset Challenge Process



## Appendix 2; Asset management Policy Objectives;

The Asset Management Policy key principles, as shown below for effective property asset management, sets out the cornerstones by which WBC will manage its Property Assets. These principles will stay in place for the currency of this SAMP; however, they will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they remain current.



## Appendix 3 ; Woking for all Plan

Thriving Communities	High Performing Council	Effective Partnerships
<p><b>High quality homes for all</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Invest in our Council homes to ensure they are safe and well-maintained in a way that is financially sustainable and responsive to tenants.</li> <li>➤ Working to prevent homelessness and address its root causes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Health and wellbeing for all</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Support our most vulnerable residents to access key services, as cost effectively as possible and in conjunction with partners.</li> </ul> <p><b>Safe, attractive, and greener communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote sustainability and continue to invest in green spaces and clean streets.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A culture of continuous improvement across all services and functions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop the systems, processes and culture that enables the Council to meet its Best Value duty.</li> <li>➤ Ensure effective governance to enable rounded decision-making, based on a proper understanding of options and their consequences (including financial, legal and risks) which are tested through appropriate scrutiny.</li> </ul> <p><b>A modern employer with a high performing workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Staff are developed and supported to deliver high performing and cost-effective services.</li> </ul> <p><b>A financially responsible council with sustainable and affordable plans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Effective financial management and planning.</li> <li>➤ Effective use of our estate to deliver maximum value for money and support the Council’s place-shaping responsibilities.</li> <li>➤ Effective approach to the commissioning, procurement and contract-management of organisations that supply goods and services to the Council.</li> <li>➤ Effectively manage the relationship with the Council’s wholly owned</li> </ul>	<p><b>Working with partners to deliver community priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensuring residents continue to benefit from a range of leisure, cultural, and community facilities across the Borough, including through unlocking the contribution of voluntary and community groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>A strong and sustainable economy with an enabling infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Responsible planning and development to support local place-shaping and the delivery of well-designed homes of all tenures.</li> </ul> <p><b>Informed and consulted residents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reach out and listen to our communities and act on their feedback.</li> </ul>

companies in a way that ensures the public interest is protected.

- Tackle the legacy issues confronting the Council rigorously, to best protect the public interest.