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Date: 21st July, 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in the Committee Room A, Town Hall, Nuneaton on Wednesday, 29th July, 2015 at **6.00 p.m.**

Public Consultation will commence at 6.00 p.m.

Please note that meetings may be recorded for future broadcast.

Yours faithfully,

ALAN FRANKS

Managing Director

To: Members of Cabinet

Councillor D. Harvey	(Finance and Civic Affairs (Leader))
Councillor J.A. Jackson	(Housing and Communities (Deputy Leader))
Councillor D. Aldington	(Planning and Development)
Councillor I.K. Lloyd	(Arts and Leisure)
Councillor G. Pomfrett	(Central Services)
Councillor N.J.P. Phillips	(Health and Environment)

AGENDA

PART I

PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. EVACUATION PROCEDURE

A fire drill is not expected, so if the alarm sounds please evacuate the building quickly and calmly. Please use the stairs and do not use the lifts. Once out of the building, please gather outside the Yorkshire Bank on the opposite side of the road.

Exit by the door by which you entered the room or by the fire exits which are clearly indicated by the standard green fire exit signs.

If you need any assistance in evacuating the building, please make yourself known to a member of staff.

Please also make sure all your mobile phones are turned off or set to silent.

I would also advise you that all or part of the meeting may be recorded for future broadcast.

2. APOLOGIES - To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

Note: Following the adoption of the new Code of Conduct, Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their personal interests at the commencement of the relevant item (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary or a Deemed Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, the Member must withdraw from the room.

Where a Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest but has received a dispensation from Standards Committee, that Member may vote and/or speak on the matter (as the case may be) and must disclose the existence of the dispensation and any restrictions placed on it at the time the interest is declared.

Where a Member has a Deemed Disclosable Interest as defined in the Code of Conduct, the Member may address the meeting as a member of the public as set out in the Code.

Note: Council Procedure Rules require Members with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests to withdraw from the meeting unless a dispensation allows them to remain to vote and/or speak on the business giving rise to the interest.

Where a Member has a Deemed Disclosable Interest, the Council's Code of Conduct permits public speaking on the item, after which the Member is required by Council Procedure Rules to withdraw from the meeting.

4. MINUTES - To confirm the minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on the 17th June, 2015, (attached) **(Page 5)**
5. PUBLIC CONSULTATION - **Members of the public will be given the opportunity to speak on specific agenda items if notice has been received.**
6. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF – LOCAL DISCOUNT SCHEME PILOT PROGRESS REPORT – Joint report of the Director - Finance and Procurement and Regeneration and the Director - Public Protection **(Page 12)**
7. STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT – END OF YEAR - Report of the Governance and Recreation Officer attached. **(Page 26)**
8. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS –
Asset Management and Council Leases Review – Report of the Economic and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 18th June, 2015. **(Page 35)**
9. ANY OTHER ITEMS which in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances (which must be specified).
10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS
RECOMMENDED that under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items, it being likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

PART II – EXEMPT ITEMS

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS -
Review of Grounds Maintenance Service – Report of the Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 25th June, 2015. **(Page 45)**

CORPORATE PLAN AIMS AND PRIORITIES

- Aim 1**
- To improve the quality of life and social justice for residents so it is much closer to that enjoyed by the rest of Warwickshire.
- Priority 1**
- To provide a choice of housing to meet the needs of the residents of the Borough.
- Priority 2**
- To create a healthy, diverse and robust economy which provides employment opportunities for local people.
- Priority 3**
- To work in partnership to improve health and reduce health inequalities for residents in the Borough.
- Priority 4**
- To develop a confident, cohesive and diverse community.
- Aim 2**
- To work in partnership to reduce the level of crime and disorder so that the community is and feels safer.
- Priority 1**
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour by working in partnership and provide diversionary activities to engage with youngsters.
- Priority 2**
- Environmental improvements and support for selective CCTV to reduce fear of crime.
- Priority 3**
- Use of the Council's enforcement powers to support community safety initiatives.
- Aim 3**
- To provide a pleasant environment for those living, working and visiting the Borough.
- Priority 1**
- To create a greener and cleaner environment.
- Priority 2**
- To lead in environmental issues addressing climate change and protection of the environment.
- Aim 4**
- To provide quality services which represent value for money.
- Priority 1**
- To continue to improve the performance and quality of key services.
- Priority 2**
- To improve access arrangements for all Council services and the way that those who use them are treated.
- Priority 3**
- To use value for money procedures to test the way all services are delivered.

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th June, 2015

A meeting of the Cabinet was held at the Town Hall, Nuneaton, on Wednesday, 17th June, 2015.

Present

Councillor D. Harvey	(Finance and Civic Affairs (Leader))
Councillor J.A. Jackson	(Housing (Deputy Leader))
Councillor D. Aldington	(Planning and Development)
Councillor I.K. Lloyd	(Arts and Leisure)
Councillor N.J.P. Phillips	(Health and Environment)
Councillor G.D. Pomfrett	(Central Services)

CB6 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 20th May, 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair.

CB7 **Declarations of Interest**

(a) Councillor J.A. Jackson declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any relevant item by reason of her husband's employment with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and Sport and Leisure Management for which she has received dispensation to speak and vote on matters that do not relate specifically to his contract of employment or the unit in which he is employed.

Councillor Jackson also declared an Other Interest in any relevant item by reason of her being a Member of Warwickshire County Council.

CB8 **Review of Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

The report of the Director – Finance and Procurement asking Cabinet to review the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme which was first implemented in April, 2013 and proposing minor amendments to the scheme for 2016/17 was considered.

RESOLVED that

(a) Cabinet notes the current position with the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme and approves the proposals at paragraph 5 of the report for the 2016/17 scheme; and

- (b) subject to (a) above, delegated authority be given to the Director - Finance and Procurement to carry out any public consultation required.

Speakers:

Mrs. M. Kondakor

Options:

To approve the recommendations
To not approve the recommendations

Reasons:

To ensure a LCTS scheme is adopted by 31st January, 2016.

CB9 **Nuneaton and Bedworth Statement of Community Involvement**

The report of the Director – Regeneration and Public Protection seeking Cabinet’s approval to undertake an 8 week public consultation on a revised draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

RESOLVED that

- (a) Cabinet approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) at Appendix A of the report for the purpose of public consultation;
- (b) consultation be undertaken in line with the proposals outlined in section 4; and
- (c) the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development be given delegated authority to make any necessary minor amendments to the draft SCI in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development prior to the consultation starting.

Speakers:

Mrs. M. Kondakor

Options

Accept the recommendations
Accept the recommendations with amendment

Reasons:

To enable stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft revised SCI prior to adoption.

CB10 **New Nuneaton and Bedworth Off Street Parking Places Order 2015**

The report of the Director – Assets and Street Services asking Cabinet to consider the objections and comments that have been received to the proposed Nuneaton and Bedworth Off Street Parking Places Order 2015 and, subject to that consideration, to recommend approval of the making of that Order was considered.

RESOLVED that

- (a) the objections and comments presented at Appendix 2 to the report be dealt with as set out in the report and the respondents be notified accordingly; and
- (b) the Nuneaton and Bedworth Off Street Parking Places Order 2015 be approved and made in the form as attached at Appendix 1 to the report for implementation with effect from 1st August, 2015 or as soon as practicable possible thereafter.

Speakers:

Mrs. M. Kondakor

Options:

To implement the Nuneaton and Bedworth Off Street Parking Places Order, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, with effect from 1st August, 2015 or as soon as practicably possible thereafter.

To amend the Nuneaton and Bedworth Off Street Parking Places Order, attached as Appendix 1 and implement with effect from 1st August, 2015 or as soon as practicably possible thereafter.

To not approve a new Nuneaton and Bedworth Off Street Parking Places Order.

Reasons:

To facilitate the introduction of a Pay and Display scheme at the Miners' Welfare Park in Bedworth; the introduction of parking restrictions that will enable enforcement on the Riversley Park access road and revising Article 21 in the Off Street Parking Places Order (No. 3) 2013.

CB11 Acquisition and Operation of a Mobile Climbing Tower

The report of the Director – Governance and Recreation updating Cabinet on the consideration for the purchase of a mobile climbing tower for physical activity and engagement in hard to reach areas was considered.

RESOLVED that

- (a) the acquisition and operation of a mobile climbing tower be approved; and
- (b) subject to (a) above, the Capital Programme for 2015/16 be updated to include an additional £39,500 and the revised Capital Programme be recommended to Council for approval.

Speakers:

Mrs. M. Kondakor

Options:

To approve the recommendation
To not approve the recommendation

Reasons:

In September, 2012 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council drafted its Sport, Active Recreation and Well-Being Strategy, highlighting the need to increase physical activity and participation levels within the borough, supporting the improvement of health and well-being and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council objectives around health. The strategy also highlighted the need to work in and around local “Community Hubs” outside of traditional leisure facility infrastructures, including parks and recreation areas.

The mobile climbing tower offers the opportunity to engage in local community settings, providing a physical activity pursuit whilst also engaging with residents on “their patch” providing an opportunity to discuss health and well-being and small steps to improve their lifestyle.

CB12 General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme Outturn – 2014 – 2015

The report of the Director – Finance and Procurement:

- (a) presenting the final outturn position for 2014/15 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets and seeking approval of the Earmarked reserve balances as at 31st March, 2015;
- (b) reporting on the 2014/15 Capital Programme spend and sources of financing for the General Fund and HRA; and
- (c) seeking approval of the updated Capital Programme for 2015/16, taking into account the slippage from 2014/15

was considered.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the outturn position for 2014/15 for the General Fund, HRA and Capital Programmes be noted;
- (b) the earmarked reserve balances (as detailed in section 4 onwards and Appendix B be approved; and
- (c) the updated General Fund and HRA Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators for 2015/16, as tabled, incorporating the additional budget for the purchase of the Climbing Tower, be recommended to Council for approval.

Speaker:

Mrs. K.A. Kondakor

Options:

To accept the report or request further information on the outturn position.

Reasons:

The Council must achieve a balanced budget each year.

CB13 Extension to the Part-Time Taxi Rank and Taxi Marshal Service

Having considered the report submitted to Licensing Committee at its Meeting on the 1st June, 2015 and the recommendations of that committee to Cabinet, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the Taxi Rank on Newdegate Street, Nuneaton and the Taxi Marshal Scheme be extended until 8th January, 2016;
- (b) a further interim evaluation report be submitted in October, 2015;

- (c) this Council works with the Nuneaton and Bedworth Safer Communities Partnership (NABSCOP) to identify any additional Financial resources required; and
- (c) a mechanism to gauge the number of people using the Taxi Marshal service be established.

Options:

To extend the Taxi Rank on Newdegate Street, Nuneaton and the Taxi Marshal Scheme until 8th January, 2016.

To not extend the Scheme.

Reasons:

In order to supervise safe queuing of taxis and assisting the public in gaining quick and efficient access to those taxis.

CB14 Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Panels Scrutiny Panels

There were no recommendations from the Overview and

CB15 Exclusion of the Public And Press

RESOLVED that under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, it being likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CB16 Acquisition of Land at Bermuda Industrial Estate

The joint report of the Directors – Assets and Street Services, Finance and Procurement and Housing and Communities recommending that the Borough Council acquires land at Bermuda Industrial Estate was considered.

RESOLVED that

- (a) the acquisition of land at Bermuda Industrial Estate be approved;
- (b) subject to (a) above, the General Fund Capital Programme for 2015/16 be updated to include the cost of acquisition and the revised Capital Programme be recommended to Council for approval;

- (c) subject to (a) and (b) above, revised Prudential Indicators, attached at Appendix 3 to the report, be recommended to Council for approval;
- (d) subject to (a) and (c) above, delegated authority be given to the Head of Estates & Town Centres in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Civic Affairs, to dispose of St. Mary's Road depot as a housing development site;
- (e) the resolutions made by Cabinet in respect of all of the above be marked not for call in on the grounds of urgency as outlined in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of the report;
- (f) it be noted that this report was brought to Cabinet as an urgent, key decision with the consent of the Chair of the Economic and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel: and
- (g) in order to meet the acquisition timetable, the Managing Director be given delegated authority to approve the financial arrangements for the acquisition pursuant to Part 4C.4 of the Council's Constitution on the basis that the conditions of sale stipulate a short timescale for the completion of the purchase and a full report be provided to the next meeting of Council.

Options:

To approve the recommendations in Section 2 of the report.

To not approve the recommendations in Section 2 of the report.

Reasons:

To allow the Borough Council to move to a more operationally and strategically appropriate depot location, thereby allowing St. Mary's Road Depot to be vacated and housing development on the whole of the St. Mary's Road depot site to be facilitated.

Chair

PUBLICATION DATE: 22nd June, 2015

DECISIONS COME INTO FORCE: 30th June, 2015

CABINET

Report Summary Sheet

Date:	29th July 2015
Subject:	Discretionary Rate Relief – Local Discount Scheme End of Pilot Report
Portfolio:	Finance and Civic Affairs (Councillor D. Harvey)
From:	Director – Finance and Procurement
Summary:	The report updates Cabinet at the end of the pilot Local Discount - Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme.
Recommendations:	<p>That the outcome of the pilot local discount scheme be noted.</p> <p>That the Local Discount scheme as per Appendix A be adopted as Council policy.</p> <p>That the Director - Finance and Procurement be given delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Civic Affairs to make minor amendments to the policy.</p> <p>That the Director – Finance and Procurement be given delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Civic Affairs to agree how the policy will be promoted</p>
Reasons:	The Council is encouraging greater economic growth in the Borough, to incentivise the creation of local jobs and to increase the business rates income to support the provision of General Fund services.
Options:	To accept the report, request further information on the pilot scheme or approve

the Local Discount scheme as council policy.

Subject to call-in:	Yes
Forward plan:	Yes
Corporate priorities:	Aim 1, priority 2 and Aim 4
Relevant statutes or policy:	Section 69 of the Localism Act from 2011 amends Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act which allows councils to implement their own local discount schemes to encourage economic growth within their areas.

Equal Opportunity Implications:	None
Human Resources Implications:	None
Financial Implications:	The aim of the policy is to increase the overall business rates income collectible, or as a minimum be break-even
Health Inequalities Implications:	None
Risk Management Implications:	The Council must manage its risks and a full analysis is undertaken of each application, with clawback for any discounts, if conditions are not met.
Environmental Implications:	None
Section 17 Implications:	None
Legal Implications:	The authority must achieve a balanced budget each year

Contact Details:	Simone Hines (Director – Finance and Procurement) 024 7637 6182 Ian Powell (Director – Regeneration and Public Policy) 024 7637 6396
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NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to : Cabinet – 29th July 2015

From : Director – Finance and Procurement and
Director – Regeneration and Public Policy

Subject : Discretionary Rate Relief – Local Discount Scheme Pilot
Progress Report

Portfolio : Finance and Civic Affairs (Councillor D Harvey)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update Cabinet at the end of the pilot business rates local discount scheme, which was launched in November 2013 for an 18-month period

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the outcome of the pilot local discount scheme be noted
- 2.2 That the Local Discount scheme as per Appendix A be adopted as Council policy
- 2.3 That the Director - Finance and Procurement be given delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Civic Affairs to make minor amendments to the policy.
- 2.4 That the Director – Finance and Procurement be given delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Civic Affairs to agree how the policy will be promoted.

3. Background

- 3.1 As part of its role in administering and collecting National Non Domestic Rates (also referred to as Business Rates), the Council has a number of discretionary powers to grant relief from paying business rates.

- 3.2 Prior to April 2013 these powers were largely limited to charitable organisations or registered community amateur sports clubs, businesses suffering hardship or empty properties. Section 69 of the Localism Act from 2011 amends Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act to give Council's a wider power to determine local discounts for business rates.
- 3.3 Alongside this, major changes to local government finance from April 2013 mean that income from business rates more directly impacts on the Council's financial position. District councils now retain 40% of all business rates income collected, with 10% going to Warwickshire County Council and 50% to central government. This means that local authorities have a greater incentive to increase their business rates income but also a greater risk from any decline. Business rates can be very volatile, particularly due to the uncertainty surrounding appeals, over which the council has no direct control.
- 3.4 In November 2013 Cabinet approved a pilot policy for awarding discretionary discounts under the new Section 47 powers. The overall aim of the policy is to attract and retain business growth in the Borough and create jobs for local people that will also have unquantifiable indirect financial benefits, such as rent income from Council commercial premises, vibrancy of town centres and reduced cost of benefit payments. A copy of the policy is included at Appendix A.
- 3.5 A review of the policy was undertaken at the 12 month stage and reported to Cabinet in December 2014. It was agreed to continue with the policy for the duration of the pilot period.

4. Outcome of the Pilot scheme at the end of June 2015

- 4.1 The scheme has been promoted through our existing business networks, including the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small businesses and the newly established Growth Hub (part of the Coventry and Warwickshire City Deal project). Businesses have been signposted to our policy by these organisations as appropriate. The scheme has only been modestly publicised, which will account for the relatively low number of initial applications, but awareness of the scheme has grown over the pilot period within our business community.
- 4.2 As at the end of June, 51 businesses expressed an interest or applied for a discount under the scheme. The table below illustrates the breakdown of these enquiries:

	2013	2014	2015 as at the end of June	Comments
Total Expressions of interest in scheme	14	28	9	
Total applications received	8	16	6	
Total applications awarded	4	3	1	All awards are subject to specific conditions for each applicant and subject to the claw-back provisions
Applications pending	0	1	5	Further information required either from the applicant or the Valuation Office
Applications declined	4	12	0	Mainly due to policy aims not being met i.e. the creation of local jobs and higher return on investment
Of those applications declined – number of alternative reliefs granted	1	6	0	Other discounts have often been offered including small business rates and retail relief schemes in addition to signposting to other organisations which may be able to provide non-financial support

4.3 Applications under the scheme have been received from all sectors of business including a number of small and medium sized businesses that are new start-ups or relocating to the area. They include a significant number from the manufacturing, retail and service sectors.

4.4 A total of 8 Local discount scheme awards have been made during the pilot period. Two businesses have not yet been able to fulfil the conditions under the scheme, thus, 6 successful awards have been

made to businesses at the time of writing. These awards have helped facilitate and secure an additional 78 jobs in the Borough through their relocation, start-up and expansion plans. This also means that there could be potential for many more jobs from these businesses through the support given under the scheme. The total value of awards over the 3 year period is £109k, but should also result in increased business rates income to the council of approximately £200k over the 3 year period.

- 4.5 Whilst the awarding of just 6 successful local discounts appears to suggest only limited success of the scheme, 7 businesses were awarded other relevant discounts to reduce their business rates bill. This demonstrates an equally important side effect of the scheme, whereby the awareness of other available business rates reliefs has been raised with many local businesses, assisting them to reduce their business rates costs. These alternative reliefs include Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR), retail relief and reoccupation relief. Of the 16 closed applications shown in the table above, 7 are due to alternative support of this kind being offered, totalling some £35k. These alternative schemes are funded by central government so the review process for each applicant under the local discount scheme always also considers the eligibility criteria for these national awards before making an award under the local discount scheme.
- 4.6 Applications received under the scheme are considered by a small group of officers from Finance and Procurement and Regeneration and Public Protection before a recommendation is made to the Director – Finance and Procurement. The process is often time consuming due to the considerable amount of information that has to be taken into account when reviewing an application, but some adjustment to the application form should help to streamline this process for both the council and businesses.

5. Proposals for enhancing the scheme:

- 5.1 The pilot scheme has identified a number of proposals for enhancing the scheme. These are not significant alterations from the existing policy, but will provide greater clarity and understanding for businesses in terms of the process and the required information and conditions relating to the successful award of a discount. Other adjustments for example relating to the application form and signposting to other relevant discounts will ensure that the process is less time consuming for staff and businesses wishing to make an application.
- 5.2 Further work will need to be undertaken to refine these operational issues relating to the scheme, including the degree to which it

should be promoted locally through partner organisations. The panel will continue to work through these issues and it is envisaged that these will be agreed with the Director – Finance and Procurement under her delegated powers.

- 5.3 A number of proposals for enhancing the operation of the scheme are immediately suggested and include the following:
- Revise the policy document to include that a normal maximum total award is equivalent to 40% of the business rates as this is the percentage retained by NBBC under the changes in business rates introduced in 2013. This will help manage businesses expectations and avoid unnecessary confusion or disappointment.
 - Revise the policy document to include that an application will only be considered or an award made if a business is up to date with their business rates account.
 - Revise the application form to include a checklist of required information and evidence in support of the application, and to include some additional basic information in respect of the business eg its size to allow more accurate performance monitoring of applications and awards under the scheme.
 - Prepare a simple flow chart to assist businesses to decide more easily what reliefs might be available to them for business rates, which might avoid them making timely applications when they are not appropriate.

The suggested changes to the wording of the policy in respect of the above are shown at appendix A as tracked changes to the original policy document.

6. Conclusion:

- 6.1 The pilot scheme has provided direct assistance to 8 businesses, but this has also resulted in an additional 7 businesses being granted financial support from alternative national business rates discounts thus further encouraging economic growth in the Borough.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the scheme is adopted as full council policy, with the minor suggested changes to the policy, with delegated authority being given to the Director – Finance and Procurement to agree any further minor adjustments to the scheme and its operation, to enable greater transparency and clarity for local businesses wishing to apply under the scheme.

Simone Hines
Ian Powell

Discretionary Rate Relief – Local Discount Policy

1.) Introduction

The Council has discretionary powers to award relief from payment of Non- Domestic Rates in a range of circumstances. Prior to April 2013 this was limited to businesses suffering hardship, charitable organisations and empty properties. The Government funds 50% of the cost of these awards. The Council has a separate Discretionary Rate Relief Policy to cover these circumstances.

Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 has been amended by the Localism Act 2011 to give Council's the power to give a locally determined discretionary discount on business rates even where the existing criteria does not apply . The discount may be awarded to any property or business of the Councils choosing.

Any discounts awarded under Section 47 must be funded wholly by the Borough Council. Therefore any decisions under this policy must be taken with regard to value for money and the impact on the local taxpayer.

There is a financial implication to awarding discounts under Section 47 as the Council has to fund all awards without Government support, thereby having a direct impact on taxpayers of the Borough.

This is a pilot scheme which will run for 18 months and be reviewed at 6-monthly intervals. The Council reserves the right to withdraw the scheme at any time.

2.) Policy Aim

The Policy for awarding local discounts has the following overall aim, which each decision will have regard to:

- To incentivise the creation of jobs for local people where there is a return on investment from higher future rates income.

To be eligible a proposal will have to deliver both elements of the aim. If an application only achieves one it falls outside this policy but can still be considered individually.

There is no maximum award level under the scheme, as long as both policy aims are delivered and state aid limits are adhered to. However, under the current business rates pooling arrangements, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council retains 40% of the business rates income it collects and as such awards will generally be no greater than this.

3.) Principles for awarding Local Discounts

Each application will be considered on its individual merits against the overall aim set out above. The scheme is discretionary and the applicant does not have a statutory right to payment.

To be considered for an award under this policy the applicant must be either:

- A new business starting up in the area
- A business relocating to the area
- An existing business expansion within the area

In addition:

- A minimum lease period of 3 years will be required
- A statement of intention to operate the business in the Borough for five years or more will be required

In addition, the terms of the discount will be:

- Each discount will be awarded for a maximum of 3 years
- Each discount will be no more than £130,000 over the 3 years, in line with State Aid criteria.
- A return on investment within 3 years will be required (via business rates)
- The discount will not be awarded until the business has all the required permissions, licences, and other provisions in place and has begun lawfully trading.

4.) Application and Decision Process

An application form for a Section 47 Local Discount can be found on our website or by emailing econdev@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk.

The application form must be completed fully and all relevant information provided as per the checklist before an application can be considered.

In considering an application for a local discount, the applicants may be asked to provide certain additional information. This may include, but not limited to:

- Last two years accounts

- Business Plan
- Evidence of at least 3 year occupation of premises

All decisions will be made by the Director – Finance and Procurement.

Applications and any subsequent awards will only be considered if the applicants business rates account is up to date and remains so.

The Council will aim to make a decision regarding the application within four weeks of receiving the application and all supporting evidence considered necessary to enable the application to be considered.

Deleted: ¶

5.) Payment of a Local Discount

Any Local Discount awarded will be paid by crediting the Business Rate account to which it applies and on the basis that any specific conditions outlined in the offer letter have been complied with.

Deleted: .

Before any award can be applied to a business rates account, an organisation will have to sign a State Aid declaration to confirm that they have not breached the State Aid criteria.

6.) Right to Appeal

There is no statutory right to appeal against a decision under Section 47, other than Judicial Review. An applicant may make a request for the decision maker to review a decision but only where either;

1. Additional information that is relevant to the application and that was not available at the time the decision was made becomes available, or
2. There are good grounds to believe the application or supporting information was not interpreted correctly at the time the decision was taken

A request for a review must be made within four weeks of notification of the decision and must set out the reasons for the request and any supporting information.

Cases will be reviewed by the Portfolio Holder or Leader/Deputy Leader

7.) Clawback Provision

The Council shall be under no obligation to pay the Local Discount if any of the Clawback Events and Termination Events listed in Appendix A occurs.

The Council may at the Council's absolute discretion if (in the Council's opinion) any of the Clawback Events or Termination Events listed in Appendix A occurs:

- a.** Suspend the payment of the Local Discount under this Policy for such period as the Council shall determine;
- b.** Vary the Local Discount payable under this Policy, in which case the payment of funding shall thereafter be made in accordance with the written variation notified to the Applicant;
- c.** terminate any agreement to pay the Local Discount under this Policy whereupon the Council shall cease to be under any obligation to provide any further Local Discount to the Applicant and (in addition) the Council may require the Applicant to repay the whole or any part of the Local Discount previously paid to the Applicant and the Applicant agrees that upon receipt of written notice requiring repayment the Applicant shall repay the sums required within 30 days of receipt of such notice.

Notwithstanding the provisions of Clauses a. and b above, in the event that an applicant relocates the business for which the Local Discount is payable to a location outside of the Borough, within a period of five years from the date of the decision to award the Local Discount, the Council shall be entitled to recover some or all of the Local Discount on the following basis:

- a.** The relocation occurs before 3 calendar years have expired beginning with the date of the decision, 100% of the Local Discount shall be recoverable, at the Council's discretion;
- b.** The relocation occurs after 3 years and before 4 calendar years have expired beginning with the date of the decision, a maximum of 50% of the Local Discount shall be recoverable, at the Council's discretion;
- c.** The relocation occurs after 4 years and before 5 calendar years have expired beginning with the date of the decision, a maximum of 25% of the Local Discount shall be recoverable, at the Council's discretion.

APPENDIX A

CLAWBACK AND TERMINATION EVENTS

The following Clawback and Termination Events apply to this Policy:

1. There is any change in the Applicant's legal status and such a change is likely to adversely affect the Local Discount; or
2. Any claim and/or report submitted by the Applicant does not properly comply with the requirements detailed in this Policy; or
3. Any information supplied by the Applicant under or in connection with the Local Discount proves to be materially incorrect or misleading; or
4. The Applicant does not comply with or observe any condition of this Policy; or
5. The assistance exceeds European Community State Aid limits to the extent that any Local Discount paid should not have been paid or if a decision of the European Commission or of the European Court of Justice requires payment to be withheld or recovered; or
6. There is an unsatisfactory report from the auditors. This will be the case if the auditors refer to a fundamental uncertainty, a disagreement or a limitation to their opinion, or if the auditors are unable to form an opinion; or if they report that the statement of grant does not give a true and fair view; or
7. There is evidence of irregularity, impropriety or negligence; or
8. If
 - a. the Applicant, being an individual becomes bankrupt, has a receiving order or administration order made against it, makes any composition or arrangement for the benefit of creditors, makes any conveyance or assignment for the benefit of creditors or purports to do so, or is the subject of an application under the Insolvency Act 1986 (or superseding legislation) for the sequestration of the Applicant's estate or of a trust on behalf of the Applicant's creditors; or
 - b. the Applicant, being an unincorporated body is dissolved; or
 - c. the Applicant, being an incorporated body passes a resolution that the Applicant should be wound up, is ordered by the High Court to be wound up, has an administrator

appointed by order of the Court, has an administrative receiver appointed, or being a company is struck from the register at Companies House.

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT SUMMARY APRIL 2015 (data at the end of March 2015)

1. Finance and Resources						
	Good Performance	January	February	Current Month - March	Trend	Comment # = see commentary
Revenue Forecast Outturn (surplus)/deficit	£0 -(£150k)	(359)	(344)			Final out-turn not available in time for this report.
HRA Revenue Outturn	£0 -(£250k)	305	125			Final out-turn not available in time for this report.
GF Capital Programme Spend	0	(1,660)	0			Final out-turn not available in time for this report.
HRA Capital Programme Spend	0	(6,495)	0			Final out-turn not available in time for this report.
Sundry Debt Collection *	Improvement	82.51% (91%)	90.05% (93%)	90.05% (94.50%)		Profiled measure shown in brackets.
Council Tax Collection *	97.06% - 100%	95.26% (95.68 - 98%)	96.33% (96.45 - 99%)	97.23% (97.06 - 100%)		Trend is the correlation to the profiled monthly measure compared to the previous month. Profiled measure shown in brackets.
Business Rates Collection *	98.12% - 100%	92.99% (92.61 - 93.50%)	95.67% (93.71 - 94.05%)	98.12% (98.12 - 100%)		Trend is the correlation to the profiled monthly measure compared to the previous month. Profiled measure shown in brackets.

2. People and Service Delivery						
	Good Performance	Current Month - January	February	Current Month - March	Trend	Comment # = see commentary
Customer feedback by channel (overall) *	Top quartile above 56% Top 10 councils 73 - 86%					"Govmetric" contract has now ceased. A new system will be developed in 2015-16.
NI 192 – Percentage of total waste recycled and composted *	52.00%					One month in arrears of other indicators. Profiled measure shown in brackets. January and February data not yet available.
CCTV – Number of incidents captured that lead to, or assist in police arrests *	Not applicable	321	371			Information not available.

3. Processes						
	Good Performance	January	February	Current Month - March	Trend	Comment # = see commentary
CELPI 14 - Working days lost to sickness absence *	7.79 days	7.59	8.32	8.94		#
Personal Development Reviews (annual) *	100%			88%		Update shown is at the end of March 2015. End of October 2014 was also 88%.

4. Prospects for Improvement						
	Good Performance	2nd, 2014/15	3rd, 2014/15	Current Quarter- 4th, 2014/15	Trend	Comment # = see commentary
Quarterly Corporate Plan Delivery Plan monitoring process *	80%	81%	76%	63%		#

* = NOT exception reporting. Exception reporting is deviation between actual occurrence and expectation which warrants management investigation.

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE REPORT SUMMARY APRIL 2015 (data at the end of March 2015)

Exception Reporting (deviation between actual occurrence and expectation which warrants management investigation)						
	Good Performance	January	February	March	Trend	Comment # = see commentary
FINANCE AND RESOURCES HLPI 14 – Rent collection	97.50%	96.66%	96.58%	96.54%		Continue to pursue DHP payments.
PEOPLE AND SERVICE DELIVERY CFLPI 11 - Housing Benefit processing of new claims (Lean measure)	20 days (LG Inform average)	25 days	24.69 days	24.57 days		
PEOPLE AND SERVICE DELIVERY CFLPI 12 - Housing Benefit Processing of changes of circumstances claims (Lean Measure)	11 days (DWP national average)	19.07 days	18.62 days	17.30 days		
PEOPLE AND SERVICE DELIVERY PULPI 21b – Standard of Grounds Maintenance work (informal areas)	65 - 75%	58%	58%	59%		65% was the month result for February.
PROCESSES Monthly Health and Safety Assessment	80%	72%	72%	72%		#

Month: April 2015 (Data at the end March 2015)

Commentary for Strategic Performance Report

People and Service Delivery

March complaints by subject:

Service Area	No. Received	No. Completed Or acknowledged in 10 days	No. Completed outside 10 days	No. Waiting to be accepted
Housing	23	16	6	1
Waste Management	26	14	12	0
Council Property	1	1	0	0
Customer Services	2	2	0	0
Economic Development	1	0	1	0
Environmental Protection	3	3	0	0
Legal	1	1	0	0
Planning and Building Control	1	0	1	0
Leisure and Culture	6	5	1	0
Finance	3	2	1	0
TOTAL	67	44	22	1

44/67 = 65.70%.

Freedom of Information (FOI) Monthly Summary

47 FOIs. Date of report 14th April 2015.

Please note that all FOI's are automatically acknowledged.

30 responses sent (3 outside 20 days).

10 say Accept or reassign (5 outside 20 days).

7 say Respond or assign tasks (all still within 20 days).

Website Development

Transactional development on-going.

Processes

Health and Safety

Legionella, Contractor Monitoring and Cleansing are all below target. Contractor Monitoring and Cleansing are below target due to resource issues within Assets & Street Services (the Director is looking to resolve these at the earliest opportunity).

Month: April 2015 (Data at the end March 2015)**Commentary for Strategic Performance Report****Processes (continued)****Absence Management**

“Red” (below target) as the result for March 2015 was **0.82** days/FTE (**0.73** days/FTE last month). The full year result 2014/15 is **8.94*** days/FTE against the target of **7.79** days/FTE. By comparison, the full year result for 2013/14 was **8.66** days/FTE.

Summary for the month:

Service Unit	No. of FTE	FTE Short Term Days Lost	FTE Long Term Days Lost	Total FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Long term days lost per FTE	Year to Date Days Lost per FTE
Directorate	2.9	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.55
Assets and Street Services	154.34	70.78	91.51	162.29	1.05	0.59	10.79
Business Improvement	51.91	8.41	36.86	45.27	0.87	0.71	11.54
Finance and Procurement	66.28	34.35	20	54.35	0.82	0.30	6.50
Governance and Recreation	47.23	23.43	0	23.43	0.50	0.00	4.23
Housing and Communities	224.82	90.53	91.12	181.65	0.81	0.41	9.21
Regeneration and Public Protection	53	8.65	17.84	26.49	0.50	0.34	9.81
Total	600.48	236.15	257.33	493.48	0.82	0.43	9.16*

FTE = Full Time Equivalent **Note:** Directorate includes trade union reps.

* = End of year result adjusted to reflect start and end of year actual FTE data as follows:

Start FTE	570.21
End FTE	600.48
Average FTE	585.345

Total FTE Days lost	5235.42
<u>Days lost per FTE based on average FTE</u>	<u>8.94</u>

Month: April 2015 (Data at the end March 2015)

Commentary for Strategic Performance Report

Processes (continued)

Strategic Risk register

1. The total number of 'live' strategic risks is 25.
2. Of these, the number of Gross Red risks (the "controllable significant risks") is 20.
3. The number of these "controllable significant risks" considered as "satisfactorily managed" (Net Amber or Net Green) is 18.
4. Therefore 90% (18) of the "controllable significant risks" (20) are deemed "satisfactorily managed".
5. Hence the 'traffic light' report position is Green.

Notes:

- (i) Currently there are no strategic risks deemed to be "outside the Council's control because of external factors".
- (ii) All risks in the register have been reviewed within the last 12 months. However one is due for review by 8/1/2015 and will be picked up in the forthcoming quarter. Risks reviewed this quarter will be highlighted in the "Date of Last Review" column of the register when finalised / approved.
- (iii) As the Red / Amber/ Green colours in the matrix don't distinguish well when printed in black & white, they're shown as grey & white with a colour code alongside.
- (iv) No risks have been added or deleted since the last quarterly report.
- (v) The current "not satisfactorily managed" Gross Red ("significant") risks are:
 - R29 (Planning by Appeal),
 - R27 (Affordable Housing).
- (vi) The following appendices are included:
 - Appendix 1: Abbreviations.
 - Appendix 2: Reasons why the above 'Gross Red' Risks are 'Net Red'.
 - Appendix 3: Risk Score Descriptors (Likelihood).
 - Appendix 4: Risk Score Descriptors (Impact).

Month: April 2015 (Data at the end March 2015)

Commentary for Strategic Performance Report

Processes (continued)

Personal Development Reviews

Summary at the end of March 2015:

Assets and Street Services	117/149 (79%)
Business Improvement	69/72 (96%)
Governance and Recreation	47/48 (98%)
Finance and Procurement	64/65 (98%)
Housing and Communities	206/244 (86%)
Regeneration and Public Protection	50/53 (94%)

Total = 556/631 (88%)

Month: April 2015 (Data at the end March 2015)

Commentary for Strategic Performance Report

Prospects for Improvement

Corporate Plan Delivery Plan (CPDP)

At the end of 2014/15 the overall result is **63%** as 40 of 63 actions are “Green” (**76%** at the end of the last quarter).

Of the 23 remaining actions; 14 were classed as “Red” and 9 “Amber” (compared to 9 “Red” and 6 “Amber” at the end of the last quarter).

Breakdown of 14 “Red” actions:

CPDP REF.	OWNER	DESCRIPTION
Aim 1, Priority 1 (5)	Dawn Dawson (Ian Powell)	Investment Partner Status – discuss with HCA and apply for funding
	Dawn Dawson (Ian Powell)	Produce Borough Plan – enable delivery of mix of housing type
	Dawn Dawson	Collate HRA land ownership data
	Dawn Dawson	Grants for removal of hazards, review of Housing Assistance and Renewal Policy and working with partners regarding home repair and top-up loans
	Dawn Dawson	No funding to allow stock condition survey
Aim 1, Priority 2 (1)	Ian Powell	Produce Borough Plan – to enable economic growth.
Aim 1, Priority 3 (1)	Dawn Dawson (Ian Powell)	Produce Borough Plan – that promotes healthy lifestyles

Month: April 2015 (Data at the end March 2015)

Commentary for Strategic Performance Report

Prospects for Improvement (continued)

Breakdown of 14 “Red” actions (continued):

CPDP REF.	OWNER	DESCRIPTION
Aim 2 , Priority 1 (1)	Dawn Dawson (Ian Powell)	Anti-social behaviour -review policies following introduction of new legislation
Aim 3, Priority 1 (2)	Brent Davis (Ian Powell)	Produce Borough Plan – protection of open spaces / landscape character.
	Brent Davis	Produce Borough Plan – green infrastructure.
Aim 3, Priority 2 (1)	Brent Davis	Increase average / minimum SAP rating for housing stock (procure asset database with SAP module).
Aim 4, Priority 1 (1)	Phil Richardson (Ian Powell), Dawn Dawson)	Lean reviews relating to dangerous structures and Estate Management.
Aim 4, Priority 2 (2)	Chris Tydeman	Process review relating to improving customer satisfaction – no lean review facilitator
	Chris Tydeman	Mobile solutions relating to avoidable contact– no lean review facilitator

NOTE: Aim 4, Priority 3 – “E-Buy” actions overall green despite being unable to implement Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) due to a lack of funding (“Red”).

Month: April 2015 (Data at the end March 2015)

Commentary for Strategic Performance Report

Prospects for Improvement (continued)

Corporate Plan Delivery Plan (CPDP)

Breakdown of 9 “Amber” actions:

CPDP REF.	OWNER	DESCRIPTION
Aim 1, Priority 1 (1)	Dawn Dawson	Support services for vulnerable groups.
Aim 1, Priority 2 (2)	Ian Powell	Strategic plan for town centres through the Borough Plan (Vicarage Street development and crossing between, All Saints Square and Tesco).
	Ian Powell	Economic Growth Strategy aligned with the Borough Plan.
Aim 2, Priority 2 (1)	Brent Davis	Addressing environmental concerns in the Borough (fly-tipping and littering).
Aim 3, Priority 1 (2)	Brent Davis	Review of street cleansing practices.
	Brent Davis	Agree Grounds Maintenance specification.
Aim 3, Priority 2 (1)	Brent Davis	Recycling rates.
Aim 4, Priority 1 (1)	Phil Richardson (Brent Davis / Ian Powell)	Information management owners / procedures (Governance and Recreation / Assets and Street Services / Regeneration and Public Protection).
Aim 4, Priority 3 (1)	Simone Donaghy (Brent Davis)	Depot relocation including vehicle fleet management arrangements.

CABINET

O&S Recommendation Sheet

Date: 29th July 2015

Subject: Asset Management and Council Leases Review

Portfolio: Cllr D Harvey – Finance & Civic Affairs

Aim: Aim 4 Priority 3

From: Economic and Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Summary: The Economic and Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel requested that a Select Committee be set up to investigate the possible use of vacant Council property and land held on the Asset Register and also to consider the Leases that the Council hold on its properties. The aim of the review was to identify where income could be increased or generated through the sale or letting of property or land in the Council's portfolio.

Concerns had been raised that some Council property was being left vacant for some considerable time and therefore losing income, that some buildings in the borough whilst not having a financial value could provide much needed accommodation for community and other groups.

The review highlights the need for the Council's assets to be properly managed in a strategic manner as well as at an operational level. Taking ownership and responsibility for the wellbeing and good order of the assets it holds on behalf of the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth is an important duty, as is maximising the income from lettings and sales.

If in the process this can also result in creating greater community use and increased social value from the property portfolio then the review will have achieved, in part, its purpose.

The Economic and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel received the report and agreed the recommendations at its meeting on 18th June 2015. It therefore requests that Cabinet consider the report and approves the recommendations made.

Recommendations:

- a) The Asset Register in the public domain be made fit for purpose.
- b) The Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan are reviewed and brought up to date as soon as possible.
- c) Managers responsible for land and property within their remit to ensure that consideration is given to other possible uses and/or disposal and these be forwarded to the Asset Management Group for consideration in a timely manner.
- d) Where there is little or no requirement for property in its current use consideration should be given to its use by community or other groups and advice on accessing funding given.
- e) Use of the Council's Communities and Sports Development Teams to assist community and sports groups in identifying suitable available facilities.
- f) Use of the Council's Communications Department, Website and In-touch should be used to advertise and promote vacant property opportunities available for let or sale.
- g) The Overview Joint Scrutiny Commission consider whether there is a requirement for Select Committees to have more flexibility around the timeframe of reviews, based on the requirement of the review identified by the scoping document.

Reasons: To identify where income for the Council could be increased or generated through the sale or letting of property or land in the Council's portfolio, improve the information available on the Council's assets and give access to vacant property to community groups where appropriate.

Equal opportunity implications: None from this report

Human resources implications: None as a result of this report but there maybe staffing resource issues which need to be considered to improve service delivery.

Financial implications: None as a result of this report but further resources may be required to improve service delivery.

Health Inequalities Implications: None as a result of this report

Section 17 - Crime and Disorder Implications: None as a result of this report

Risk management implications: None as a result of this report but there is a risk to the Council's assets if a robust property management strategy with a sufficient maintenance programme is not in place to prevent deterioration.

Environmental implications: None as a result of this report

Legal implications: None

Contact details: Principal Democratic Service Officer (O&S)
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Tel 024 76 376563

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to: Cabinet
Date: 29th July 2015
From: Economic & Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Subject: Asset Management and Council Leases Review
Portfolio: Finance and Civic Affairs (Councillor Harvey)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of the work undertaken by the Asset Register and Council Leases Select Committee on behalf of the Economic & Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel and agree the recommendations contained therein.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Cabinet consider the evidence provided in the report and agree the recommendations below:-
- a) The Asset Register in the public domain be made fit for purpose.
 - b) The Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan are reviewed and brought up to date as soon as possible.
 - c) Managers responsible for land and property within their remit to ensure that consideration is given to other possible uses and/or disposal and these be forwarded to the Asset Management Group for consideration in a timely manner.
 - d) Where there is little or no requirement for property in its current use consideration should be given to its use by community or other groups and advice on accessing funding given.
 - e) Use of the Council's Communities and Sports Development Teams to assist community and sports groups in identifying suitable available facilities.

- f) Use of the Councils Communications Department, Website and In-touch should be used to advertise and promote vacant property opportunities available for let or sale.

- g) An items for further investigation by scrutiny on Pavilions, Changing Rooms and Graveyard Chapels, be agreed for the Panel's work programme. Together with a further item in relation to Council Owned Land and Leases.

- h) The Overview Joint Scrutiny Commission consider whether there is a requirement for Select Committees to have more flexibility around the timeframe of reviews, based on the requirement of the review identified by the scoping document.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Economic & Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel requested that a Select Committee be set up to investigate the possible use of vacant Council property and land held on the Asset Register and also to consider the Leases that the Council hold on its properties. The aim of the review was to identify where income could be increased or generated through the sale or letting of property or land in the Council's portfolio.

- 3.2 Concerns had been raised that some Council property was being left vacant for some considerable time and therefore losing income, that some buildings in the borough whilst not having a financial value could provide much needed accommodation for community and other groups.

- 3.3 The working group included Cllr C Watkins (Chair), Cllr S Margrave, Cllr K Kondakor, Cllr R Tromans and Deborah Palmer (co-optee). The first meeting was held on 16 February 2015. The scope for the review is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.4 It should be mentioned at the outset of the report however that the timeframe for this Select Committee had always been very tight. It was therefore not possible to consider the Council Leases or Council owned land. This review therefore centred around the property assets. The issues in relation to Land and Leases should be the subject of a future work programme item if required by the Panel.

4. Information

- 4.1 The committee requested information in relation to the Council's assets based initially on the Asset Register available on the Council's website. This register identified some of the assets held by the Council and there is a duty under the Transparency Code that this is published on

the Council's website. This register does not include assets worth less than £10,000.

- 4.2 There is a defined criteria used (CIPFA Classification Framework) to categorise the assets:-
- Investment property
 - Community Asset
 - Operational
 - Non Operational
 - Other Land and Buildings
- 4.3 The document for the website however, did not provide Members or the public with much clarity or information about the assets held. In fact at the time of doing the review the Asset Register was either showing incorrect data or not being displayed on the website at all.
- 4.4 The committee were concerned that whilst the Council is fulfilling its duty to make the Asset Register available to the public it was not doing so in a meaningful and transparent way.
- 4.5 The ability for Members of the Select Committee to access any meaningful data during the review was difficult. Officers provided the data that the committee asked for but it was not done in such a way as to assist the committee meaningfully in its deliberations.
- 4.6 The Members invited several different officers to the meetings however, it was often suggested that the officers not present were the ones that the committee needed to be there.
- 4.7 The Committee therefore had concerns that the management of the Council's assets had become fragmented over time following restructures and this had resulted in no one person having an overview of the whole portfolio. Officers worked in different directorates with different Portfolio Holders responsible. There appeared therefore to be no real ownership of the Council's assets.
- 4.8 At the outset of the review the committee were given a copy of the Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan. The document was several years out of date and the Action Plan was no longer being updated. However, the document structure and the proposals it made regarding the management of the assets appeared to be sound. The Members therefore recommend that these documents are reviewed urgently and brought back into use.
- 4.9 During the discussion that took place officers raised concerns in relation to the resources available to manage the Council's assets effectively both in budgetary terms and in staffing. The result was that much of the work being done in regard to maintenance and so on was reactive. This meant that properties that had little or no use were

becoming increasingly run down. This has implications on the future lettings and sale incomes and ultimately the value of the Council's assets. (See Picture 1 Below)



Picture 1 – Haunchwood Rd Pavillion

- 4.10 The reduction in staff within the relevant teams has meant that often, it is the larger, more prominent, more valuable assets that get the priority attention and there is little time available to consider the wider view and smaller assets.
- 4.11 However, whilst on their own these assets may not be a priority, the committee felt that as a whole they added up to a sizeable value. Their value to the Council was not just in the physical aspect but many of the buildings were not being fully used. Therefore the Council was spending money on utilities, repairs, cleansing but without maximising its return either in financial or community value.
- 4.12 Members suggested that in order to encourage and promote the empty or under used properties that the Council owns, consideration should be given to the use of the Council's Communications team to advertise such properties through In-Touch and social media.
- 4.13 The committee were also keen to promote the assets to local groups as many struggled to find suitable facilities for their activities. These

smaller assets should be identified and promoted on the website and through the Communities and Leisure Development teams who come into contact with local community and sports groups. These Council Officers could also assist by putting groups into contact with voluntary bodies such as WCAVA who may assist them in obtaining funds.

- 4.14 The results would be a positive advantage not only to the groups themselves but also to the Council. Where properties are empty and susceptible to vandalism and disrepair, enabling such groups to use the properties could mean them accessing grants and funding that would result in improved buildings at no additional cost to the Council. As well as increasing community use and social value. (See picture 2 below)



Picture 2 – Bucks Hill Cemetery Chapel

- 4.15 Examples of properties that may be being under used are the pavilions and changing rooms. There maybe a possibility that some of these could be accessed by community groups during the week when they would otherwise be empty. It is therefore recommended that a further piece of work is done on this matter to ascertain the frequency and amount they are used, how much the Council is paying to maintain them and how much income is being received. Also to consider whether, on a spend to save basis any alterations could be made to improve usage. (See Picture 3 below)



Picture 2 – Pauls Land Pavillion

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The review has been a frustrating one for both the officers and the Select Committee, the information has been hard to access easily resulting in recommendations that, whilst showing a way forward for Asset Management, do not identify any savings for the Council which had been the intention.
- 5.2 That said the recommendations will see improvement in the information available to the public through the website and through the promotion of property availability by various Council departments.
- 5.3 The review highlights the need for the Council's assets to be properly managed in a strategic manner as well at an operational level. Taking ownership and responsibility for the wellbeing and good order of the assets it holds on behalf of the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth is an important duty, as is maximising the income from lettings and sales.
- 5.4 If in the process this can also result in creating greater community use and increased social value from the property portfolio then the review will have achieved, in part, its purpose.
- 5.5 Finally, the Select Committee would like to thank the officers for their attendance and input at the meetings.

Cllr John Glass
Chair – Economic & Corporate
Overview & Scrutiny Panel

SCRUTINY REVIEW: SCOPE

REVIEW TITLE: Asset Management Register & Council Leases

AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

To review the Asset Management Register and identify areas for improvement.
To raise income through disposal and/or rental.
To increase the social benefit

WHAT WILL BE INCLUDED

The initial part of the review will commence with empty properties and business units.
Encourage and promote the use of these buildings to community groups.
Rent review of long term Council Leases to identify areas of increased income.
Identify areas of redundant land that could be redeveloped.
Consider savings on Business Rates for empty Council properties.

WHAT WILL BE EXCLUDED (at this stage)

HRA & Housing Property/Land
Markets/IT/Vehicles/Other Land

KEY TASKS * * including consideration of Gershon efficiency savings

Identify what the Council owns
Identify those properties that can be rented/sold/demolished/re-utilised by including consideration of the empty properties condition and feasibility for future use.

STAKEHOLDERS, OUTSIDE AGENCIES, OTHER ORGANISATIONS *

Brent Davies – Asset Management
Les Snowdon – Estates Management inc Surveyor/Valuer
Lesley King – Asset Register/Finance
Jo Loveday – Asset Management
Paul Daly – Parks & Cemeteries

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Is an impact needs assessment required? No

LINKS/OVERLAPS TO OTHER REVIEWS:

The Asset Management Strategy, Plan and Action Plan is overdue for review. It is understood that this has been stalled due to the current progression of Agile Working. It is hoped that this work will feed into that Strategy at a future date.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

REPORT REQUIREMENTS (Officer information)