Estate Rationalisation, Optimisation and Decarbonisation

Report by Director Infrastructure & Environment

Scottish Borders Council

28 March 2024

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 This report explains the approach that Scottish Borders Council intend to take in rationalising, optimising and decarbonising the Council's estate. The primary driver behind this approach is to ensure that the Council is financially and environmentally sustainable whilst supporting the delivery of key Council services.

1.2 Scottish Borders Council deliver a significant and broad range of services to communities and businesses across the region. The 2024-25 financial planning process highlighted that the Council is currently living beyond its means and needs to continue on our transformational change approach to ensure that the Council is operating within available resources. Estate rationalisation is crucial, through the process detailed in this report, in reducing the financial burden of the current property portfolio.

1.3 The Council's direct carbon emissions are largely connected to two things: utility usage in running our buildings; and in transport around the region. Rationalisation and optimisation of the Council's estate will positively contribute to reducing direct emissions, whilst also tightening the focus for where revenue and capital budgets are targeted operationally and in decarbonisation measures.

1.4 It explains a series of conclusions reached about the Council's estate following a review in 2022 relating to condition, scale, nature of space, working practices, carbon emissions and financial, social and economic sustainability:

- Much of the estate is near end of life, in poor condition or is uneconomic to fix;
- Estate is oversized;
- Digital tools can improve ways of working;
- Spaces do not reflect what services need to deliver effectively;
- There is little meaningful progress in partnership working and joined up public services;

- There is a desire for more creative use of Council assets by the community;
- Maintenance is reactive with large backlog;
- There is a lack of risk based and life cycle approach taken to planning investment;
- Education investment has been partially successful;
- The estate is financially, socially and environmentally unsustainable; and
- Service delivery can improve with cultural change

1.5 It sets out five key objectives intended to achieve the overall vision: *To operate an efficient, fit-for-purpose, sustainable estate, that is appropriately sized and located to meet the needs of our communities and their strong identities, with digitally enabled working environments that can be effectively managed and which supports the Council Plan through the delivery of truly joined up services.*

1.6 The report explains a series of actions that have already been undertaken or are in progress including:

- The establishment of the Capital Projects Programme Management Office;
- The establishment of a new Chief Officer Estates post bringing together a series of key functions;
- The commencement of a programme of condition and suitability surveys to assess building performance where objective data will be collated into a performance dashboard. This dashboard is intended to enable a more strategic approach to how we manage each building;
- Reimagining HQ as a Civic Hub to optimise use of the building; and
- A sample energy audit to help inform an efficient and productive approach to estate wide decarbonisation.

1.7 Proposals outlined within the report focus on:

- **Affordability**, right sizing the estate to be financially sustainable;
- **Rationalisation**, reducing the amount of underutilised and poor condition estate;
- **Optimisation**, maximising use and occupation of the estate; and
- **Decarbonisation**, introducing measures to reduce CO2e.

1.8 The report explains that the building performance dashboard will provide objective data informed criteria along with other factors to classify buildings as either 'Green – Retain and Maintain', 'Amber – Retain and Invest' and 'Red – Divest or Dispose'.

1.9 A rationalisation target is proposed for the next 5 years, explaining the benefits that will be realised as well as the need for all Council services to play their part in supporting the objective, contributing to right sizing the estate, both of which will contribute to targeting how we invest, where we maintain to improve the efficacy of our estate, decarbonising and reducing costs.

1.10 The report explains the role that all Council services must play in contributing to this proposal, explaining that this is a key dependency in

achieving the rationalisation target. It goes on to summarises that a communications plan will be developed to support this.

1.11 In terms of governance, the report proposes that annual reports will be presented to Executive Committee to monitor performance and progress. To supplement this, a Member Officer Working Group will be established to develop recommendations, consider steps necessary, risks, impacts and implications, and resolve any issues.

2   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **I recommend that Scottish Borders Council approve the following recommendations:**

(a)   The affordability, rationalisation, optimisation, and decarbonisation strategy described in Section 5 of the report;

(b)   The estate assessment criteria as described in 6.4 of the report;

(c)   The proposed decarbonisation hierarchy as described in 6.6 of the report;

(d)   The approach proposed to engage with communities once an asset has been identified for divestment or disposal as described in 6.8 of the report;

(e)   The target 10% (39,000m^2) reduction of the estate over a 5 year period proposed in 6.9 of the report recognising the role that all Scottish Borders Council services have a collective role in working together to realise this objective;

(f)   The review of service needs as described in 6.10 of the reports building on the ambition set out in the December 2020 report and recognising that Council services and our partners collectively influence the shape and size of the estate.

(g)   The communication plan approach as set out in 6.11 of the report.

(h)   The establishment of an Elected Member Officer Working Group as described in 6.12 of the report;

(i)   The proposed reporting approach as set out in 6.13 of the report.

(j)   The officers within the Estates team prioritise their resources and budgets to achieve the targeted reduction in floor area, and take measures to supplement resource where necessary to progress whilst maintaining business as usual activities.

3   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Council's estate is a significant asset, supporting the wide ranging services that are delivered across the region. In December 2020, Scottish Borders Council considered a proposal for Community Engagement over Future Service Delivery. That report recognised need to reshape the model of public service delivery in the Borders to improve the quality of life for its citizens, stimulate economic growth and minimise our environmental impact. It explained that the Council has and continues to invest new facilities and new ways of working which will have an impact on the Council's existing extensive property footprint over the next few years. It highlighted the opportunities provided by new technology, the experience of service delivery during Covid-19 and the need to ensure the Council's extensive estate is sustainable, providing a compelling justification of the need to modernise public service delivery and ensure our property estate is fit for purpose. The report outlined:
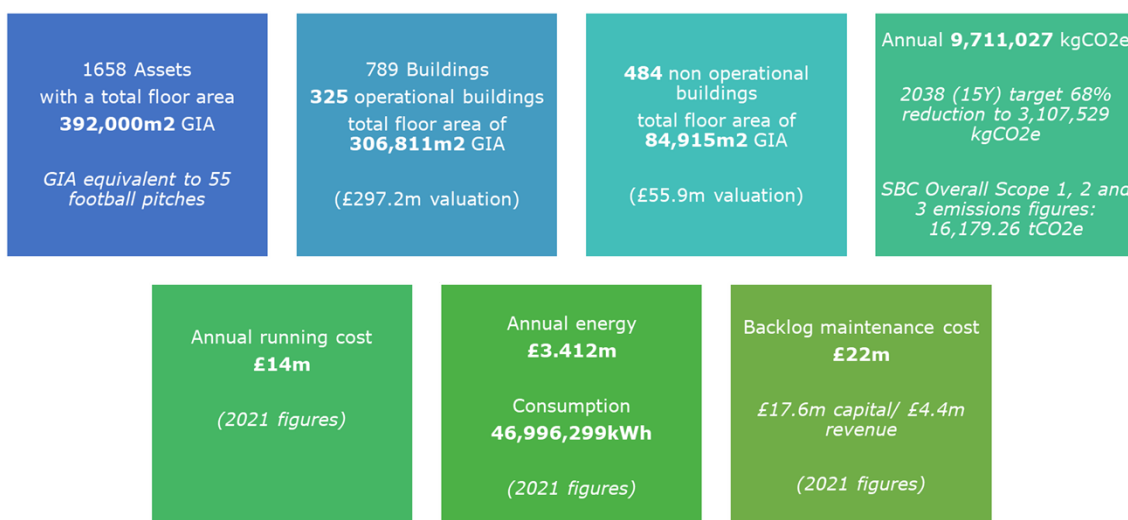
- The continuing significant investment that the Council is making in the modernisation of its services and its estate.
- The need for engagement with communities to look at how these investments can be sustained through alternative models of service delivery.
- The pressing need to look at how limited financial resources can be prioritised to continue to support these developments.

3.2   In 2022 a review of the estate was undertaken. It considered demographics, socio-economic factors, governance and regulatory frameworks, local policy context, partnerships, the impact of Covid-19, council initiatives, financial position, plans and governance. It concluded that:

- Much of the estate is near end of life, in poor condition or is uneconomic to fix;
- Estate is oversized;
- Digital tools can improve ways of working;
- Spaces do not reflect what services need to deliver effectively;
- There is little meaningful progress in partnership working and joined up public services;
- There is a desire for more creative use of Council assets by the community;
- Maintenance is reactive with large backlog;
- There is a lack of risk based and life cycle approach taken to planning investment;
- Education investment has been partially successful;
- The estate is financially, socially and environmentally unsustainable; and
- Service delivery can improve with cultural change.

3.3   The large and dispersed nature of our estate places pressure on services as it limits opportunities for focusing budgets and it stretches the Estates & Property teams. The estate has issues of functionality, condition and backlog maintenance that need to be tackled.

3.4 The siloed nature of how we work creates difficulties in managing our assets effectively. There are historical and cultural legacies that have meant that we have not always arrived at optimum estates solutions, nor ensured that they are implemented to best effect. Much of the Council estate is seen as a liability rather than an asset.

3.5 Scottish Borders Council deliver a significant and broad range of services to communities and businesses across the region. The 2024-25 financial planning process highlighted that the Council is currently living beyond its means and needs to continue on our transformational change approach to ensure that the Council is operating within available resources. Estate rationalisation is crucial, through the process detailed in this report, in reducing the financial burden of the current property portfolio.

3.6 The Council's direct carbon emissions are largely connected to two things: utility usage in running our buildings; and in transport around the region. Rationalisation and optimisation of the Council's estate will positively contribute to reducing direct emissions, whilst also tightening the focus for where revenue and capital budgets are targeted operationally and in decarbonisation measures.

3.7 Key Data:

1658 Assets with a total floor area **392,000m2** GIA GIA equivalent to 55 football pitches	789 Buildings **325** operational buildings total floor area of **306,811m2** GIA (£297.2m valuation)	**484** non operational buildings total floor area of **84,915m2** GIA (£55.9m valuation)	Annual **9,711,027** kgCO2e 2038 (15Y) target 68% reduction to 3,107,529 kgCO2e SBC Overall Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions figures: 16,179.26 tCO2e
	Annual running cost **£14m** (2021 figures)	Annual energy **£3.412m** Consumption **46,996,299kWh** (2021 figures)	Backlog maintenance cost **£22m** £17.6m capital/ £4.4m revenue (2021 figures)

* Valuation figures relate to asset valuation not market valuation.

4   ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN TO DATE

4.1 A series of actions have been undertaken since the 2022 review was undertaken.

4.2 A vision and key objectives for the Council's estate was developed following engagement with Elected Members, Council Officers and key external partners and stakeholders:

Vision
To operate an efficient, fit-for-purpose, sustainable estate, that is appropriately sized and located to meet the needs of our communities and their strong identities, with digitally enabled working environments that can

be effectively managed, and which supports the Council Plan through the delivery of truly joined up services.

Objectives

Best value estate
reconfigured to be fit for purpose, productive and optimised to service needs

Digital future
efficient, supporting hybrid working and data driven

Place and partners
aligned towards community and joined up public services

Sustainable
fit-for-the-future financially, socially and environmentally

Culture and process
strategically driven, tactically managed and collaborative through continuous improvement

4.3 The Capital Projects Programme Management Office (PMO) was established in January 2023 with the mandate to govern and control capital spend, to plan best value from council budgets. The principal purpose and benefits of the PMO function are:

- Develop a suite of data to better inform decision making for capital and revenue spend and the deployment of our limited resources;
- Develop and promote a project pipeline;
- Tighten up the briefing process and provide clear decision making criteria;
- Provide a strategic overview of interdependencies;
- Establish clear and consistent governance and controls that maintains a project brief for both revenue, capital blocks and major project spend;
- Support and upskill our team members across all services, enabling improved cross service working, collaboration and support transformation;
- Help retain intellectual property with information centrally held, shared and accessible;
- Significantly improve communications, aide transparency and ease of real time reporting.
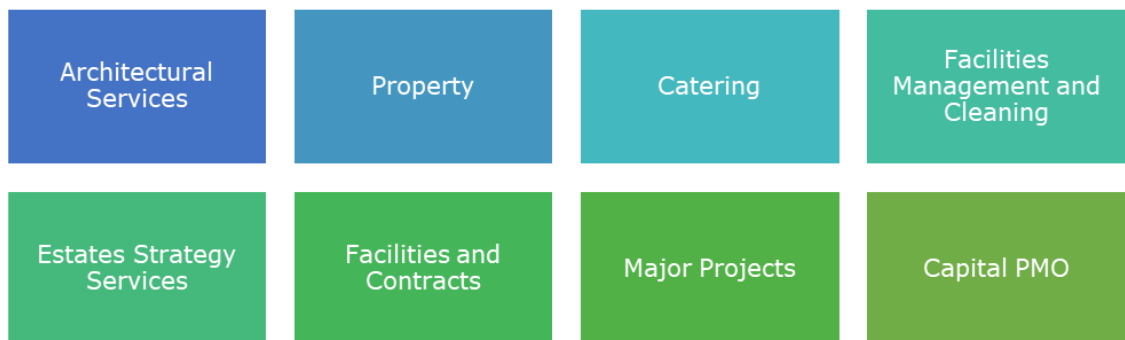
4.4 To date, the Capital Projects PMO has developed a project list for a ten-year horizon with a fivefold increase in the volume of individual project data lines that we hold on our capital projects in the Capital Investment Plan (CIP). The PMO has also promoted a focus on project alignment to Council Plan outcomes and risk profiling, all with the intent of having a prioritised and coordinated Plan orientated on need, risk and linked to strategic objectives.

4.5 A new decision making forum has been established in the form of the Strategic Estate Management Group (SEMG), a gate keeping body, which monitors and reports on the progress of all key capital projects. Chaired by the Director of Infrastructure & Environment, the SEMG has senior representation from Estates, HR, Legal, Procurement, Finance and Planning. In the context of this report, it is important to note that the SEMG scrutinises projects on their ability to contribute to a *clean green future*. This is facilitated by new impactful Project Business Case writing and Key Project Dashboard reporting authored by the PMO.

4.6 A new Chief Officer Estates role has been created, which was filled in June 2023. The primary purpose of the Chief Officer Estates is to provide a sustainable and efficient estate by:

- Improving the resilience of the estate through proactive risk management, risk based budgeting and improved compliance levels to protect health, safety and wellbeing and sustain the delivery of services.
- Leading the reduction of utility consumption and the associated CO2 emissions (CO2e) reduction as a key priority in the transition to Net Zero.
- Building a transparent proactive customer or user focused approach to planning and managing a fully coordinated service, project delivery and communications.
- Raising and continuously improving service and project delivery performance levels to raise confidence and provide demonstrable added value.

Establishing the role brought together a number of operational functions:

| Architectural Services | Property | Catering | Facilities Management and Cleaning |
| Estates Strategy Services | Facilities and Contracts | Major Projects | Capital PMO |

4.7 A Programme of Condition and Suitability Surveys of the Council's operational estate has begun, this includes the Live Borders Estate. The surveys involve visiting each building to undertake visual surveys and gather operating data from a variety of sources. This allows an overall condition assessment score to be made and to be accompanied by objective and measurable data.

4.8 Condition surveys assess building performance data, including energy and operational costs; spatial provision; general condition of building elements; energy consumption and CO2e; maintenance and operational performance.

4.9 Suitability surveys are informed through engagement with key building users and assess building performance data relating to functionality of each

of the different types of spaces and facilities within the building; accessibility; environmental conditions; and safety and security.

4.10 Data collected from these surveys is documented within a performance dashboard, with each building being given a condition and suitability score (A-D), which will enable a more strategic approach to how we manage each building.

4.11 Condition and suitability surveys of 85% the learning estate has been undertaken and surveys are now underway looking at the care estate, offices, depots and other operational assets. This programme of work commenced in the summer of 2023 and will conclude by 31 March 2025. This, however, is not a static approach and will be revisited on a continual basis to allow data to be refreshed.

4.12 The Common Good estate is excluded from this process and analysis at this time as the assets belong to the Common Good for each area. There may be an opportunity to include this in the process at a later stage, subject to resource availability and capacity.

4.13 The proposal to reimagine Scottish Borders Council Headquarters building as a Civic Hub, to optimise use of the building, increase occupancy and utilisation is progressing. Physical works are underway on-site to support the proposal. NHS Borders have already occupied a portion of the building. Live Borders have followed and recently moved into the building and discussions continue (as space allows) with other public and third sector partners with a view to working more closely, and collaboratively, pooling resources whilst helping share or reduce operational costs and maximise the return on investment that SBC has committed.

4.14 An Energy Audit Review was undertaken in June 2023. This was an exercise that sought to assess 5 different Council assets with the aim of creating a decarbonisation programme of energy conservation measures to reduce our energy costs and carbon footprint. It provided the ability to test the approach and working methods to develop an efficient and productive approach to estate wide decarbonisation.

5   PROPOSAL

5.1 To continue to respond to the issues described in Section 3 of this report, and build on the activities already undertaken, it is proposed that Scottish Borders Council progress with a focused optimisation and rationalisation strategy.

5.2 This strategy would focus on:

- Affordability, right sizing the estate to be financially sustainable;
- Rationalisation, reducing the amount of underutilised and poor condition estate;
- Optimisation, maximising use and occupation of the estate; and
- Decarbonisation, introducing measures to reduce CO2e.

5.2 The primary aim behind this approach is to ensure that the Council is financially and environmentally sustainable, supporting the delivery of key Council services.

5.3 The following benefits could be realised in progressing this strategy:

- Services are better protected (with a reduction in the estate being prioritised over reducing services);
- Reduce operational costs;
- Increase capital and revenue income to support the Council's financial sustainability;
- More concentrated and targeted investment in improving condition and functional suitability of key assets;
- Fit for purpose estate aligned to meet Service needs;
- More concentrated and targeted actions to reduce energy costs and consumption, and reduce direct carbon emissions.

6 PROPOSED APPROACH

6.1 To progress the strategy, the following measures are proposed:

6.2 Recognising the condition and suitability survey work underway and the performance dashboards that are being developed, it is proposed that each estate asset will be evaluated considering objective data and informed criteria to be classified in one of the following categories:

Retain and Maintain	Retain and Invest	Divest or Dispose
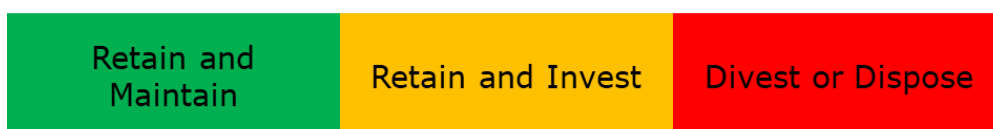
6.3 Scottish Future's Trust published their Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland, a guide for Property Asset Strategy in the Scottish Public Sector in 2022. This sought to promote a systems wide approach to support effective decision making and prioritisation around the themes:

- Enabling the transition to net zero emissions and environmental sustainability;
- Building resilient and sustainable places; and
- Driving inclusive economic growth.

The guide sets out an investment hierarchy, a common methodology to aid planning and decision making in infrastructure investment and it establishes some guiding principles that provide the framework for decision making supporting risk based budgeting. It is proposed that this approach is developed and adopted for the Council's assessment and classification of assets as described below.

6.4 In considering SFT's guidance, the data currently held and the data currently being collected, it is proposed that the following cost and benefit criteria should be used to classify the Council's estate to determine how it will be managed and identify those assets that will become surplus (divest or dispose):

COST (50%)			
Element	**Unit**	**Positive Score**	**Weight**
Operating	£/m²	Low operating costs	20%
Energy	£/kWh	Low energy costs	20%
Lifecycle maintenance	£/ p.a.	Low maintenance costs	5%
Income	£/ p.a.	High income	5%

| BENEFIT (50%)			
Description	**Unit**	**Positive Score**	**Weight**
Utilisation	%	High utilisation	10%
Condition	A-D	A/B rating	10%
Suitability	A-D	A/B rating	10%
Energy consumption	kWh/m²	Low consumption	10%
Carbon emissions	CO2e/m²	Low emissions	10%

Weightings will be relative to the highest performing assets across the Council's estate and national benchmarked data. For the Council's commercial estate, officer discretion and expertise will be necessary to consider proportionally when assessing cost/ benefit of these assets.

6.5 In assessing cost and benefit criteria, there will be other more nuanced factors that will need to be considered in implementing the strategy, these are:

- Service value – value to the sustainable operating of the service considered alongside digital tools, transformation of service delivery approaches and co-location opportunities;
- Community value – value to community whether as a Council operated facility, a Civic asset, or as an opportunity for the Community to benefit from directly;
- Legal and legislative requirements and obligations; and
- Equalities impact (through specific Integrated Impact Assessments).

These factors will need to be considered and captured for consideration within any future recommendations on an asset by asset basis.

6.6 There are a number of steps that can be taken to decarbonise built assets. Through the Energy Audit described in 4.8 above, and benchmarking against other organisations , the following decarbonisation hierarchy is proposed to inform the measures that we will take to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. This hierarchy broadly follows the principles of the waste hierarchy: Prevent; Reduce; Reuse; Recycle; Recover; and Dispose. It is proposed that this hierarchy factors into all future capital and revenue investment in the Estate from 2024/25 onwards:
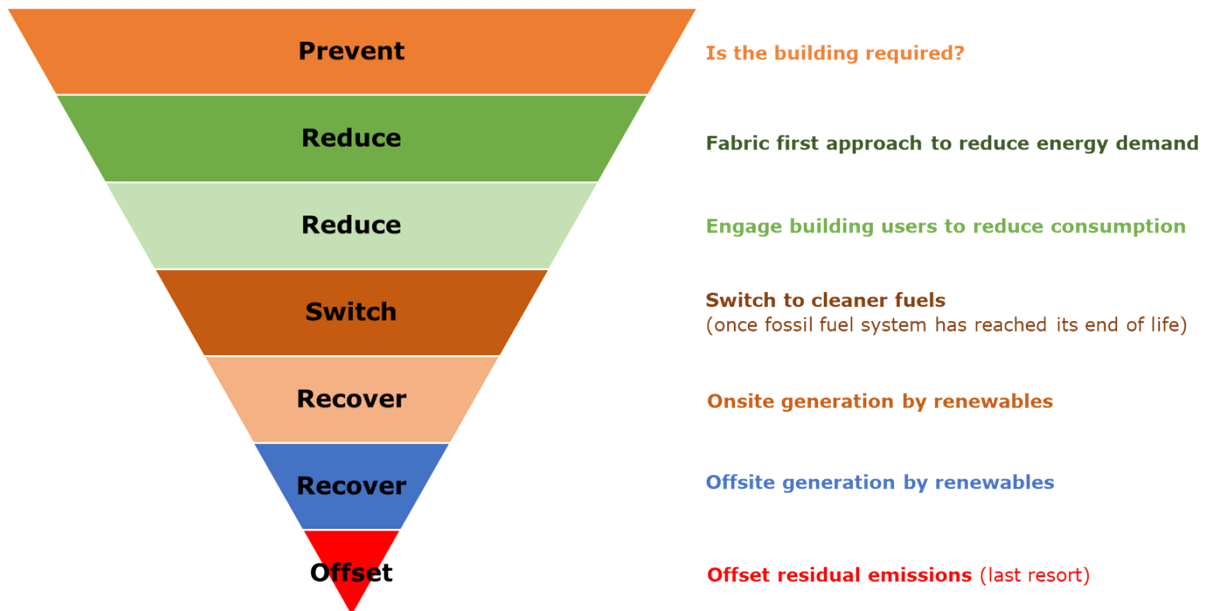
1. Prevent – assess whether the building is needed (based on the assessment criteria);
2. Reduce - fabric first interventions to reduce energy demand;
3. Reduce - cultural change by engaging with building users in changing attitudes and behaviours;
4. Reduce – energy efficiency measures that seek to monitor and optimise performance more proactively and effectively;
5. Switch – switch heating fuels to cleaner/ greener energy supply, balanced with lifespan to reduce waste;
6. Recover – on-site energy generation through renewables;
7. Recover – off-site energy generation through renewables;
8. Offset any residual emissions (measure of last resort).

6.7 In addition, before initiating any future new build projects, an objective appraisal should be carried out that assesses a range of viable options based on the cost and benefit criteria, measured against desired project outcomes.

6.8 A number of Council buildings play a significant role within communities across the Scottish Borders, particularly those that community groups use regularly or those that have a significant civic presence. For assets that fall into this category and are classified 'Red – Divest or Dispose', engagement will need to be undertaken with the relevant community.

It is proposed that engagement will take place with relevant communities through community councils, Town Teams and other relevant community organisations explaining how a determination has been reached. Following this three-month grace period, from the date of engagement, an expression of interest should be submitted by the relevant community or third party body.

Applications for ownership will be progressed through the process set out in Part 5 (Asset Transfer) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This sets how appropriately structured community bodies can request to use, lease or purchase assets owned or leased by a relevant authority. While the process is complex and can be lengthy, the staged route, and Scottish Government guidance, provide a clear and transparent way for requests to be taken forward. The Community Ownership Support Service (COSS) has developed a route map which illustrates the various states set out in the legislation and what is required of community bodies to progress. This can be accessed on the COSS website.

Once a valid request is submitted there is a six-month period that allows time for the community body to submit additional information e.g., business plan, and for the relevant authority to develop and present reports to relevant committees. It should, however, be noted that it can take at least four months for a group to establish a legal structure that meets the requirements of the Act e.g., a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), if one isn't already in place.

A high level flow chart is included in Appendix A. This shows the process and associated timescales once the relevant authority has made a decision on the application, following the initial six-month period discussed above.

Following the timescales set out in the legislation it should be expected that once a valid application has been received the process can be expected to be completed in 18 months. However, it could be longer if a review by Elected Members and appeal to Scottish Minister are requested.

Given the complex nature of the asset transfer process it is proposed that a more detailed report be brought back to Council, as part of this proposal's reporting cycle setting out the process for sale of assets to community bodies in line with Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act and detailing how we aim to support community groups and organisations through the asset transfer process.

6.9 Recognising that the size and scale of the Council's estate is significant, it is proposed that an ambitious rationalisation target of 39,000m^2/ 10% is agreed to be achieved within the next 5 years. This target will help realise the following benefits:

- Reduce health, safety and wellbeing risks caused by assets that are in poor condition or are unfit for purpose;
- Reduce long term maintenance burden, costs and liabilities, freeing up resource and budgets to focus investment in fewer more strategic assets;
- Reduce energy costs and carbon emissions;
- Realise capital receipts from sale of assets;
- Realise potential income streams from repurposed, remarketed or let surplus assets;
- Enhance community empowerment resulting from Community Asset Transfers;
- Enrich places through adaptive re-use of Council Assets; and
- Contribute to addressing regional challenges e.g. shortage of affordable homes and shortage of affordable and flexible business/ employment space.

6.10 To realise this target, it is essential that every Council service understands and works collectively towards it. With a view to enabling and achieving this target, all Council services will need to review and determine their accommodation needs to consider objective estates performance and cost data alongside opportunities for co-location, geographical presence, different and emerging ways of working, service continuity, dependencies and links to other Council and public partner services. Aligning this service review with analysis of the estate should enable the Council to make strategic decisions at the right time, enabling opportunities to be pursued quickly and as they arise, all contributing to reducing the overall size of the estate along with reducing carbon emissions.

6.11 Internal and external communication will be critical as the optimisation and rationalisation strategy is progressed, ensuring understanding and appreciation of the key drivers for this essential piece of work, the end goal and resulting benefits, as well as generating input as required. Communication and engagement with relevant stakeholders, including communities, partners, service users, employees and the wider public will be required as appropriate when proposals are identified for specific properties, including around investment and rationalisation and associated impacts. A Communications Plan will be developed and delivered in conjunction with the progression of the programme, ensuring that the right methods and communication channels are utilised to reach target audiences, and are actioned at the right time.

6.12 Establish an Elected Member Officer Working Group. This group would work to develop recommendations to Executive Committee. It will consider the steps that are necessary, any risks, impacts and implications, and resolve any issues to enable decisions made by Executive Committee to be implemented quickly, with a view to building momentum. The proposed membership of the working group is:

- Chair, Cllr Simon Mountford, Executive Member for Estate Management & Planning
- Cllr Jenny Linehan, Executive Member for Environment & Transport
- Cllr Leagh Douglas, Executive Member for Education and Lifelong Learning
- Cllr Robin Tatler, Executive Member for Communities & Equalities
- John Curry, Director Infrastructure & Environment
- Ray Cherry, Chief Officer Estates
- Jenny Fausset, Climate Change Officer
- Lesley Munro, Director of Education & Lifelong Learning/ Justin Sinclair, Chief Officer Education
- SBC Legal representative
- Kenny Harrow, Communities Officer
- Lizzie Turner, Chief Officer Finance & Procurement

6.13 To monitor progress, it is proposed that annual reports will be presented to Executive Committee, these reports will monitor performance and progress against the plan, set out further targets as progress is made, and highlight any risks or issues arising, along with mitigations or adjustments needed to respond those.

12 IMPLICATIONS

12.1 **Financial**
There are no direct costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report. The financial implications of specific proposals which arise as a result of this work will be reviewed and reported as the project progresses.

12.2 **Risk and Mitigations**
This is an ambitious programme, essential to the Council's long term financial and environmental sustainability. There will be resource implications to achieve this, primarily in the Estates Team. Initial data gathering and assessments of SBC assets is time consuming, requiring technical and professional skills. Much of this is available within the teams, but additional resource is expected to be needed to deliver the programme. Some resource can be sought from the private sector; however, it is anticipated that an expansion of in-house staffing may also be required alongside a reprioritisation of workload. This will allow this new programme of work to be delivered, will augment existing capacity to respond to "business as usual" issues as they arise and will also offer a proactive approach to succession planning across the teams. The delivery of this programme could be further enhanced by dedicated community support that links the Estates Team with the Communities & Partnerships Team's objectives / programme.

It is anticipated that the Council will see an increase in the number of asset transfer requests that are currently supported by the Communities & Partnerships Team. Given the complexity of the asset transfer legislation, and the officer time required to support community groups through the process, in addition to the back office functions provided by Estates, Legal and other relevant services e.g., Parks & Environment and Planning, consideration will need to be given to how this work will be resourced in order to provide the level of service required to progress this work. Supporting asset transfer requests could delay the target timescales that are set out in this report, the impact of this will be reported to Executive Committee as part of the reporting cycle.

All Council's services will need to undertake service reviews establishing their estate needs to support strategic decisions at the right time, enabling opportunities to be pursued quickly and as they arise. This exercise is key to realising the targets set out within the report and there is a risk that services do not undertake reviews in time, this will be mitigated through regular summary progress reports being provided to CMT and the Member Officer Working Group and actions agreed to address any delays.

12.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment**
(a) The Council has a statutory obligation to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic (age, disability, gender re-assignment, trans/transgender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race groups, religion or belief, sex-gender identity, and sexual orientation) and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not. This involves tackling prejudice and building

understanding and measures to reduce socio-economic inequalities. These assessments will be undertaken on a 'project by project' basis and a summary will be provided when reports are taken to Council committees.

12.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**
These assessments will be undertaken on a 'project by project' basis and a summary will be provided when reports are taken to Council committees.

12.5 **Climate Change**
These assessments will be undertaken on a 'project by project' basis and a summary will be provided when reports are taken to Council committees.

12.6 **Rural Proofing**
These assessments will be undertaken on a 'project by project' basis and a summary will be provided when reports are taken to Council committees.

12.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**
There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

12.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**
No proposed changes required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

13 CONSULTATION

13.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), and Corporate Communications were consulted and all comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

John Curry   Director Infrastructure & Environment

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Ray Cherry	Chief Officer Estates

Background Papers:
- Climate Change: Council Emissions and Public Reporting, Item 8, Scottish Borders Council 24 November 2022
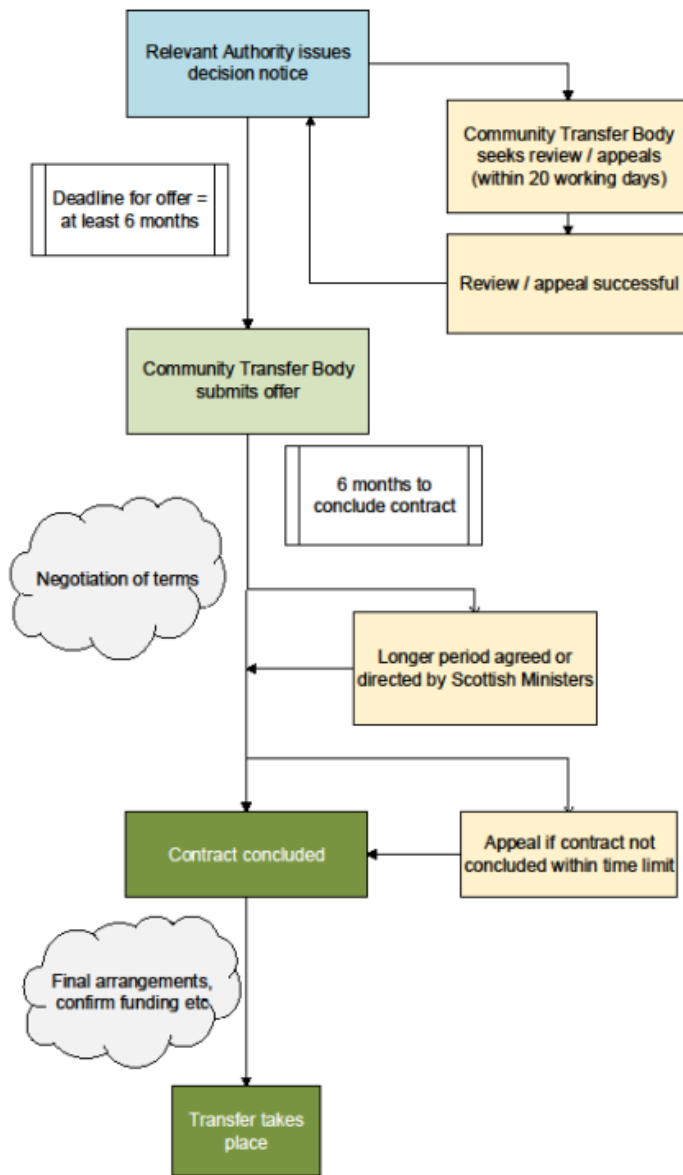- Office Premises (HQ Civic Hub), Item 2, Executive Committee 16 May 2023

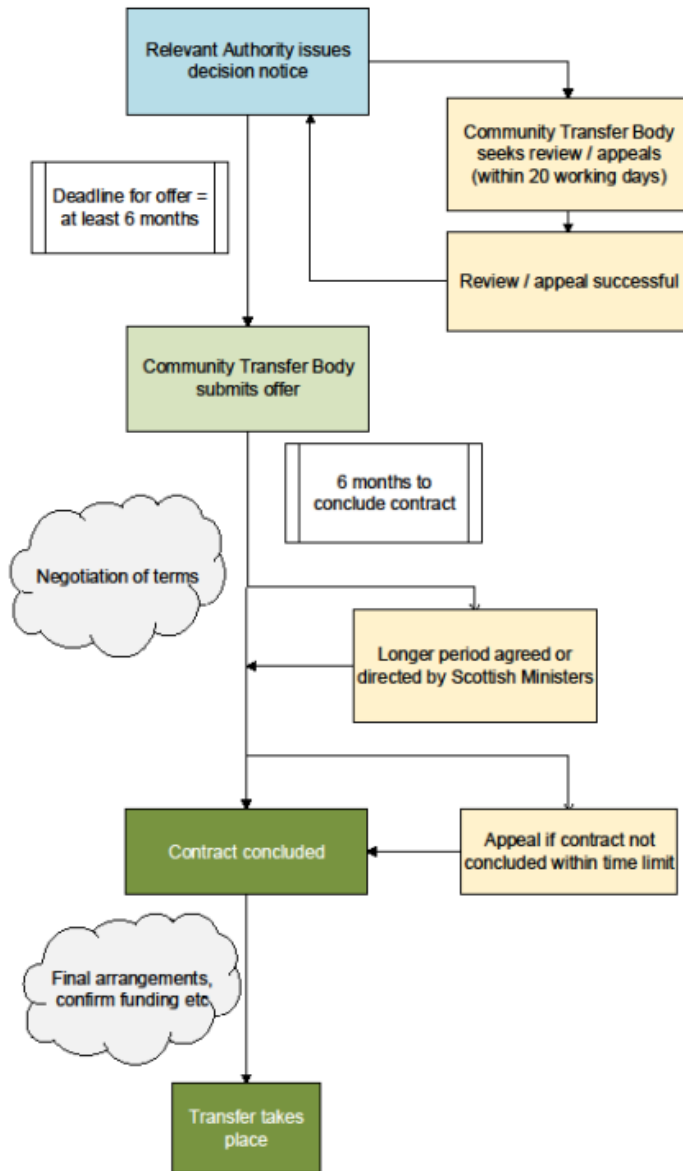**Previous Minute Reference: n/a**

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Contact us at estatemanagement@scotborders.gov.uk

Appendix A

Asset transfer process once a decision has been issued.

Flowchart of the asset transfer process:

- **Relevant Authority issues decision notice** → Community Transfer Body seeks review / appeals (within 20 working days) → Review / appeal successful (loops back to decision notice)
- Deadline for offer = at least 6 months
- **Community Transfer Body submits offer**
- 6 months to conclude contract
- Negotiation of terms
- Longer period agreed or directed by Scottish Ministers
- **Contract concluded**
- Appeal if contract not concluded within time limit
- Final arrangements, confirm funding etc.
- **Transfer takes place**

Extract from the Scottish Government's Asset Transfer Guidance for Relevant Authorities