



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held in the The Council Chamber, Lodge Road, Daventry, NN11 4FP on Monday 7 November 2022 at 6.30 pm

Agenda

1.	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members
2.	Declarations of Interest Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
3.	Minutes (Pages 5 - 12) To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 October 2022.
4.	Chair's Announcements To receive communications from the Chair.
5.	Urgent Business The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.
6.	Budget Scrutiny The Committee to commence its budget scrutiny process for 2022-23 with a particular focus on the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Budget.
7.	Call-in of Cabinet Decision of 11 October 2022 - Agenda Item 13: Office Optimisation Stage 1 building adaptations budget and disposals (Pages 13 - 22)

Called in by Councillors:

Cllr Wendy Randall (originator)
Cllr Janice Duffy
Cllr Jamal Alwahabi
Cllr Keith Holland-Delamere
Cllr Catherine Russell
Cllr Danielle Stone
Cllr Kyriakoulla Jolley
Cllr Muna Cali

In accordance with 10.5.5 of the Council's Constitution.

Cabinet – 11 October 2022 – Agenda Item 13: Office Optimisation Stage 1 building adaptations and disposals

Decision:

- a) Agree to the proposed new capital budget of £2 million to carry out Stage 1 of the Office Optimisation project and recommend to Council that the Capital budget is amended to reflect the proposed change.
- b) Authorise the Assistant Director Assets & Environment to procure and award the contracts to deliver the Stage 1 works.
- c) Authorise the Assistant Director Assets & Environment in consultation with the Executive Director Finance and Cabinet Member for Finance to dispose of the Lodge Road offices, in whole or part, by leasehold or freehold, for the best consideration reasonably obtainable.
- d) Agree that the Lodge Road offices be vacated by 31st March 2023 in order that the revenue savings and/or capital gains be achieved as quickly as practicable thereafter.

Reasons for Call-in

- That the financial implications and data associated with this decision requires further examination by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- There was a failure to adequately consider alternative options with this decision.
- There was failure to consider the impact this decision would have on the voluntary organisations currently based in the Abbey Centre and in turn the ramifications that would have on the local community.

On these grounds, this Cabinet decision contravenes clauses:

- (a) "take into account all relevant considerations and ignore those which are irrelevant"
- (d) "due consultation and proper advice is taken and consideration of alternative options before decisions are reached"
- (n) "following best practice, securing best value and making the most efficient and effective use of resources"

Under section 1.22 "Principles of Decision Making" in the West Northamptonshire Council Constitution.

It is requested that this matter placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and review.

The alternative course of action requested of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and in turn Cabinet, to take into consideration is keeping the Lodge Road

	offices open for staff that require desks and renting out any vacant space.
8.	Review of Committee Work Programme (Pages 23 - 32) To review and note the Committee Work Programme.

Catherine Whitehead
Proper Officer
28 October 2022

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members:

Councillor Ian McCord (Chair)	Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Jamal Alwahabi	Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Councillor Paul Clark	Councillor Maggie Clubley
Councillor Rupert Frost	Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
Councillor Mark Hughes	Councillor David James
Councillor Koulla Jolley	Councillor Colin Morgan
Councillor Ken Pritchard	Councillor Azizur Rahman
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms	Councillor Danielle Stone

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

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If you have any queries about this agenda please contact Richard Woods / Tracy Tiff, Democratic Services via the following:

Tel: 01327 32043

Email: democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk

Or by writing to:

West Northamptonshire Council
One Angel Square
Angel Street
Northampton
NN1 1ED



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in The Council Chamber at The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Wednesday 12 October 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present	Councillor Ian McCord (Chair) Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice-Chair) Councillor Jamal Alwahabi Councillor Paul Clark Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere Councillor Mark Hughes Councillor Ken Pritchard Councillor Azizur Rahman Councillor Danielle Stone
Substitute Members:	Councillor Wendy Randall (For Councillor Koulla Jolley)
Apologies for Absence:	Councillor Sally Beardsworth Councillor Maggie Clubley Councillor Rupert Frost Councillor Koulla Jolley Councillor Colin Morgan
Officers	Martin Henry, Executive Director - Finance (Section 151 Officer) Luiza Morris-Warren, Assistant Director - Customer Services Simon Bryant, Business Intelligence Manager Richard Corless, Corporate, Early Years & Education Lead Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager Richard Woods, Democratic Services Officer

12. Declarations of Interest

Minute Item 11 – Revenue Monitoring Report – Quarter 1 2022-23

Councillor Danielle Stone, Non-Statutory Disclosable Interest, as a member of a voluntary organisation based at Albion House, Northampton who's building was owned by the Council.

13. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

14. Chair's Announcements

The Chair made the following announcements:

1. The item relating to the Joint Scrutiny Review of the Highways Contract had been withdrawn from the agenda, owing the item needing to be considered by Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee beforehand. The Chair explained that the need for this postponement had arisen due to alterations to the calendar of meetings following the period of national mourning.
2. That substantive agenda items 7 and 10 would be taken first and second respectively, to allow the officers presenting these items to leave the meeting at the conclusion of the respective items.

15. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

16. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2021-2022

The Committee considered a report from the Complaints and Compliments Manager and the Assistant Director – Customers and Corporate Services which provided an overview of the learning and recommendations from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) Annual Review Letter and recognised the Council's comparative performance in relation to the national issues identified by the Ombudsman over the previous 12 month period over 2021-22.

In introducing the report, the Assistant Director – Customers and Corporate Services explained that the central Complaints and Compliments Team administered 131 contacts from the LGSCO during the report period, many of which did not require a detailed investigation and in some cases, were closed following initial enquiries demonstrating no evidence of fault by the local authority. There were 34 complaints that required detailed investigation, down from 38 across the sovereign Council's in the previous year 2020-21, only 11 of which were new complaints originating from services provided by West Northamptonshire Council.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the Ombudsman's assessment the Council's performance in responding to complaints in a timely manner, the Assistant Director – Customers and Corporate Services added that this was partially attributed to the Council's transition to becoming a Unitary authority during the reporting period, which caused some levels of service disruption, which had since been addressed in the harmonisation of systems, reporting streams, and working practices.

The Assistant Director – Customers and Corporate Services outlined that the period covered by the annual letter included some legacy complaints that originated with the sovereign authorities but were adjudicated within the last year, and mainly occurred during the pandemic which in some cases had impacted on the service delivery and timescales before the complaint was raised with the Ombudsman.

In response to further questions from the Committee regarding whether there was a provision for independent advocacy for those navigating the Ombudsman process, the Assistant Director – Customers and Corporate Services explained that there were limited provisions, which were mainly focussed on minors or adults with learning disabilities.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2021-2022 be noted.

17. Highways Contract - Joint Scrutiny Review

The Chair reminded the Committee that this agenda item had been withdrawn and would be brought to the 7 November 2022 meeting of the Committee.

18. Revenue Monitoring Report - Quarter 1 2022-23

The Executive Director – Finance submitted a report which set out the Quarter 1 Revenue Monitoring Report that was considered at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23 September 2022.

In introducing the report, the Executive Director – Finance advised that the Council was currently projecting a forecast overspend of £7.6m, which represented a forecast variance of 2.2% of the total net budget of £342.3m.

The Executive Director – Finance set out that during the current financial year, this Council along with many other local authorities had seen a significant impact on its finances as a result of external factors beyond its control, including inflationary and cost of living pressures, the ongoing financial aftershocks of the Covid pandemic and the withdrawal of Covid funding by central government, demand-led inflationary pressures on the Children's Trust and Adult Social Care, and a higher than anticipated cost of living pay award.

In explaining some of the mitigating actions currently being taken by the Council, the Executive Director – Finance explained that directors had developed plans to reduce the cost of service delivery in their areas and increase opportunities for income where possible. A spending restriction panel had also recently been set up and all expenditure over £500 is now considered by this panel, unless deemed critical to the delivery of statutory services.

In response to questions raised by the Committee regarding the overspend in the Children's Trust, the Chair proposed that, due to the Council having no financial control over the Children's Trust Budget and taking account of the potential for such an overspend to further increase and add additional pressure to the Council's Budget for 2022-23, it be agreed that the Committee recommend that Cabinet writes to the Department for Education regarding the Children's Trust model and state that, whilst West Northamptonshire Council will honour its contract regarding funding its agreed proportion of the Children's Trust budget, any subsequent difference be covered by the Department for Education.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Danielle Stone and subsequently carried.

Resolved

- (1) That Cabinet be requested to write to the Department for Education regarding the Children's Trust model and state that, whilst West Northamptonshire Council will honour its contract regarding funding its agreed proportion of the Children's Trust budget, any subsequent difference should be covered by the Department for Education.

19. Medium Term Financial Strategy - Quarterly Update

The Committee considered a report from the Executive Director – Finance which provided an update on the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS).

In introducing the report, the Executive Director – Finance outlined the key pressures, caused by external factors, that have emerged since the budget for the current year was set in February 2022 which resulted in the current projected £7.6m overspend. The Executive Director – Finance reiterated such an overspend represented 2.2% of the total net budget and was therefore within acceptable tolerances and reminded Members of the management action being taken to alleviate further pressures being faced.

The report also provided Members with an overview of Capital Monitoring and the Treasury Management Quarter 1 report.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding whether the Council was reliance on its reserves, the Executive Director – Finance explained that the use of reserves and contingencies to bring the overspend within the 2.2% acceptable tolerance of the total net budget would be a temporary measure, and that robust management action would be required to end any reliance on reserves or contingencies.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.

20. Corporate Plan Performance Report - Q1 2022-23

The Executive Director – Finance submitted a report which provided an update for Quarter 1 on the Council's performance metrics for the current year and set against the priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan.

In introducing the report, the Business Intelligence Manager outlined that the Business Intelligence service interacts with all other services Council-wide, in order to pull together performance data to ensure that services are performing well and that identified priorities are being monitored and delivered against. The Business Intelligence Manager also explained that performance was monitored within services and owned by service directors, and that performance data was also fed into the Executive Programme Board and Executive Leadership Team.

The Business Intelligence Manager set out that at the end of the first year of West Northamptonshire Council's existence, a review was undertaken on the performance metrics in order to ensure that the reporting to Cabinet was representative of the Council's corporate priorities. This reporting had been developed and streamlined since vesting day, leading to the continuous improvement of the Council's ability to accurately report on and monitor its service-wide performance data.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the metric covering 100% self-directed adult social care, the Business Intelligence Manager explained that anybody in receipt of social care received a level of self-directed support, which was targeted towards their specific care needs rather than a blanket level of support for all cases.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

21. Expenses Policy Review

The Deputy Democratic Services Manager presented the final report of the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group, which sought to understand how West Northamptonshire Council's Expenses Policy for employees was structured and operated and to make recommendations as to potential improvements. The Task and Finish Group also reviewed the procedures in place for Councillors claiming expenses, while acknowledging the policy matters fall under the responsibilities of the full Council, with Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review the impact of this report in six months' time.

Resolved

- (1) That the report of the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group be Approved.
- (2) That it be agreed that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report in six months' time from when Cabinet responds to the recommendations detailed in the report and then subsequently as part of the agreed monitoring schedule.

22. Process for Budget Scrutiny 2022-2023

The Committee considered its process for scrutiny activity relating to the Budget Setting Process for 2022-23.

Following a discussion between Members of the Committee and officers it was highlighted that a key area of concern amongst Members was the Children's Trust budget, and it was therefore agreed that an agenda item relating to the Children's Trust Budget be added to the next meeting of the Committee, with an invitation extended to the Chief Executive of the Children's Trust, in order to explain the trust's current financial position and gain an understanding of service delivery and any further financial pressures that may be to come, and how this may impact upon West Northamptonshire Council's budget.

The Executive Director – Finance explained that the Council's draft budget for 2022-23 would likely be brought before Cabinet shortly before Christmas 2022, therefore officers, in consultation with the Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be requested to identify dates for further workshops for scrutiny of the draft budget.

Resolved

- (1) That an agenda item relating to the Children's Trust Budget be added to the next meeting of the Committee, with an invitation extended to the Chief Executive of the Children's Trust.
- (2) That officers be requested to identify further dates for scrutiny of the draft budget before Christmas 2022.

23. Review of Committee Work Plan

The Committee considered its Work Programme.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding future scrutiny activity of the Waste Contract, the Deputy Democratic Services Manager explained that this item had been listed on the work programme of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a future review.

Resolved

- (1) That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.43 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____

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WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Council

3 November 2022

Cabinet Member for Finance: Cllr Malcolm Longley

Report Title	Office Optimisation Stage 1 building adaptations budget and disposals
Report Author	Colin Barrett, Head of Works Colin.Barrett@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

MO	Catherine Whitehead	03/10/2022
S151	Martin Henry	03/10/2022
Other Director	Stuart Timmiss – Executive Director Place, Environment & Economy Simon Bowers – Assistant Director Assets & Environment	22/09/2022
Communications	Becky Hutson – Head of Communications	29/09/2022

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek authority for budget provision to carry out stage 1 of building adaptation works for the office optimisation programme. These relate to the planned closure of the Lodge Road, Daventry offices for Council services and creation of a new Daventry hub.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 As part of the Future Way of Working programme the Council has been reviewing its offices (the Office Optimisation project). Following the transfer of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) staff out of One Angel Square and the adoption of hybrid working current occupancy levels across the Council's buildings are low. There is also a drive towards more co-location with partners to jointly deliver services and collaborate to help reduce public service costs, as well as looking at ways to reduce the Council's carbon footprint through more energy efficient buildings.
- 2.2 Due to the urgency of financial challenges facing the Council and the need to deliver upon property savings already built into the Council's revenue budgets, a decision on part of the work – to close the Lodge Road offices in Daventry – has been made. Staff and services would be moved to alternative accommodation. This includes developing a new hub for WNC services in Daventry at the Abbey in nearby St John's Square.
- 2.3 The relocation of services from Lodge Road is the first stage of the Council's Office Optimisation project. To accommodate those services and staff affected, the Council needs to make adaptations to the Abbey in readiness for the closure of Lodge Road to Council services by 31st March 2023.
- 2.4 It is also necessary to make arrangements for the disposal and interim management of the Lodge Road offices.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that Council:
- 3.1.1 Agree the recommendation from Cabinet that the capital budget be amended to reflect the proposed new budget of £2 million to carry out Stage 1 of the Office Optimisation project and includes works to both the Abbey Centre and possible works to the leisure centre.
- 3.1.2 Note that Cabinet:
- a) Authorised the Assistant Director Assets & Environment to procure and award the contracts to deliver the Stage 1 works.
 - b) Authorised the Assistant Director Assets & Environment in consultation with the Executive Director Finance and Cabinet Member for Finance to dispose of the Lodge Road offices, in whole or part, by leasehold or freehold, for the best consideration reasonably obtainable.
 - c) Agreed that the Lodge Road offices be vacated by 31st March 2023 in order that the revenue savings and/or capital gains be achieved as quickly as practicable thereafter.
- 3.1.3 Note that the decision of Cabinet has been called-in by Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1 To provide an effective accommodation solution, and best value for the residents of West Northamptonshire in consideration of service operating models and Council objectives.
- 4.2 To provide a fit for purpose facility to replace the Lodge Road offices for Council services which enables the wider objective to provide cost effective accommodation.
- 4.3 To reduce the Council's energy use and carbon emissions.
- 4.3.1 The reason for recommendation 3.1.3 is because the decision taken by Cabinet on 11 October is the subject of a call-in request to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is due to consider the call-in at their meeting on 7 November 2022. The recommendation to Council relates to the budget provision. The decision whether or not to use the provision sits with Cabinet. This decision therefore does not affect the Call-in process or the ability of Cabinet to review the decision if Corporate Scrutiny Committee decides to refer the decision to Cabinet.

4.4

5. Report Background

- 5.1 The Council currently provides main office accommodation from the existing pre-vesting day buildings at Lodge Road, Daventry; Abbey Centre, Daventry; The Forum, Towcester; Guildhall, Northampton; and One Angel Square, Northampton. Following the departure of many staff now employed by North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) from One Angel Square and the adoption of hybrid working, this office estate is significantly under-used. Under half of desks are in use at any time. There is also a drive towards more co-location with partners to jointly deliver services and collaborate to help reduce public service costs, as well as looking at ways to reduce the Council's carbon footprint through more energy efficient buildings.
- 5.2 As part of its Future Ways of Working programme the Council has been reviewing its office needs under the Office Optimisation project. There are different constraints relating to each building, so the eventual solution will involve a mixture of exiting buildings and bringing others into retained buildings, with the aim of securing a good level of use across the estate and reduced net costs.
- 5.3 As part of this process a decision has been taken to close the Lodge Road offices and to relocate services to alternative accommodation. Along with services from the Council, the Lodge Road offices accommodate services from Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) and Jobcentre Plus (JCP).
- 5.4 Meeting the needs of its residents and businesses requires a continued operating base for the Council in Daventry. This will provide a one stop shop facility and accommodation for a range of services best provided locally. Following a review, the proposed location is the

Abbey. This is an office building used for some Council services, including Daventry library, voluntary and community sector (VCS) groups, and one commercial tenant. There is also some space recently vacated by a different commercial tenant.

- 5.5 The VCS groups already in the Abbey are a natural complement to the services to be provided and it is intended these are retained alongside the Council's own services. The existing commercial tenant will need to relocate; discussions to that effect are underway.
- 5.6 To accommodate the needs of the relocated staff and services the Abbey requires adapting. This will increase capacity and ensure suitable working environments. Where practical, cost effective, and within timescale requirements measures to ensure the building meets future energy performance requirements will also be undertaken. The building does have some limitations, including a central load-bearing wall, which have to be taken into account. This is likely to result in a degree of compromise between cost and creating open-plan working environments.
- 5.7 The existing heating, ventilation and cooling plant to the Abbey building is old and in poor condition. It will need to be upgraded to provide a suitable working environment and to reduce the energy demands of the building.
- 5.8 Once vacated of Council services the Lodge Road offices would contain, until the end of their respective agreements, JCP and NCT.
- 5.9 NCT has indicated a willingness to work with the Council to relocate its services to elsewhere in Daventry. It is proposed this is within the Abbey. This offers the potential to develop hub with adults and children's services, housing services, the library, and allied VCS services all in one place.
- 5.10 The JCP lease is due to end in November 2022. In the interests of good public services and to secure continued income it is proposed to seek to continue to provide for JCP, either in Lodge Road or elsewhere; this will depend on JCP's views and on what other demands there are for the Lodge Road offices. The most likely relocation site, should this be required, is currently poorly-used space in the upper parts of Daventry Leisure Centre. This can be provided with direct access to the St John's Square car park, immediately opposite the Abbey and thus retaining reasonable public service integration.
- 5.11 Once vacated, the Council would be free to dispose of the Lodge Road offices. There are a range of options. It is proposed that, unless a compelling offer comes forward separately, the building be marketed and the most favourable offer or offers taken. This may involve the freehold sale of the whole building, or leasehold disposal or all or parts of it.
- 5.12 The Abbey centre is part of the opportunity in rationalising our office space across west Northants whilst creating a public centre hub meeting the needs and expectations of

residents. Pre contract estimates up to £1m for works to the centre which will retain staff from range of council services whilst also providing drop down space and meeting rooms required to implement modern ways of working.

- 5.13 The plans for the building allow for the retention of all current voluntary sector partners with alternative provision for the shopmobility being discussed ensuring retention of this service within the town. Currently there is one private sector commercial business within the Abbey centre however alternative and improved space has been identified as part of this process.
- 5.14 Improvements to the Abbey Centre will also enable the creation of a WNC/Children's Trust hub, with a rounded set of services for families.
- 5.15 Initial interest has been identified in regard to the lodge road site with soft market testing providing initial estimates in regard potential rent or values

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The choices on the budget open to the Council are as follows.
 - a. Do nothing. This would not enable the closure of Lodge Road to Council services, retain a high level of under-used office space, not contribute to savings goals, our net zero commitments or the development of a unified 'one Council' culture.
 - b. Approve the proposed budget. This would enable the work to proceed and the new Daventry hub to be created.
 - c. Instead seek to purchase or lease office accommodation elsewhere in central Daventry. This is unlikely to provide suitable accommodation and location, and would not optimise use of the Abbey. It would involve new lease rent or purchase costs.
- 6.2 It is undesirable for the Council to hold vacant or partially vacant Lodge Road offices any longer than necessary. This incurs costs, leaves the building vulnerable, and does not make any economic or social contribution to Daventry. It is therefore recommended that authority is granted to enable its disposal for the most economically advantageous outcome.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

Resources and Financial

- 7.1 Detailed analysis of the expected savings is currently underway. Indicative savings are as follows:

Item	£
Lodge Road Costs	-495,097
Lodge Road Income	122,424
Lodge Road Net	-372,673
Increased Abbey costs from enhanced use	70,476
Abbey lost income (commercial use)	17,108
Retained JCP Income (assumes space for JCP created at rear of leisure centre)	21,150
Net position	-306,239
Option 1 Lease	
Capital financing costs	147,000
Rental Income	-348,670
Overall position	-507,909
Option 2 sale (assumed £4.5 million)	
Capital taken from sale value so no capital financing costs	
Savings from borrowings at 1.5%	37,500
Overall position	-343, 739

- 7.2 Freehold or leasehold disposal, or use for other Council purposes, of the Lodge Road offices should generate capital or revenue income (or savings). The relocation will also support the delivering of more integrated, efficient, and effective services, which should in time deliver other savings.
- 7.3 There is likely to be a period where the building is held partially vacant, despite measures to accelerate disposal or re-use, reducing the initial savings. This is inevitable when making accommodation changes and does not undermine the overall case.
- 7.4 The proposed budget is £2 million capital, this relates to an equal split of £1m for the redevelopment of the Abbey to provide the space requirements and additional mechanical engineering required for the increase of staff and £1m for the changes to the Leisure Centre for the possible relocation of the JCP. Over 20 years on an annuity basis this would cost £147k pa at 4%. However, these costs would be reimbursed by the capital receipt should Lodge Road offices be disposed of.
- 7.5 Additional costs it is not legitimate to charge to capital are also likely to be incurred. These are currently being quantified but should not exceed £100k and will be funded through one off reserves.

7.6 Early discussion in regard the retention of the Job Centre Plus has led to underutilised space with the leisure centre being considered. A full business case will be developed to justify the future spend and likely income. The works will only progress if the business case provides robust evidence that the finances and investment opportunity is clear.

8 Legal

8.1 The Council has the power to provide offices and other facilities it needs to provide services under Section 111 (ancillary etc. powers) of the Local Government Act 1972 and under the general power of competence provided by Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

8.2 The Council has no legal obligation to retain office buildings in Daventry but does have an obligation under the Local Government Act 1999 to deliver best value. In reaching this decision members will also need to have regard to the Council's obligations under the public sector equality duty (most notably in this context, to "advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it").

8.3 The Council has duties towards its workforce and other users of its building under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. The proposed arrangements in the Abbey would comply with these duties.

8.4 In proceeding with these changes, the Council would comply with various applicable duties, including in relation to its employees, under the Employment Rights Act 1996, and landlord and tenant law.

9. Risks

9.1 There are a number of risks inherent in these proposals.

9.2 The Council may be unable to complete the construction works prior to April due to (a) delay in appointing designers and the contractor and (b) programming the works around existing occupants. To mitigate these risks, it is proposed to make an early appointment of the design team and contractors, and to create a small working group that can work closely with the affected services, tenants, contractor, and design team to progress differing work packages in parallel.

9.3 Costs of the refurbishment could increase due to prevailing market conditions. This will, as far as possible, be mitigated by making early appointments and placing orders for materials in short time.

9.4 The disposal of Lodge Road may take an extended period, slowing down the receipt of the full benefits of the relocation of services. This will be mitigated, as required, by marketing, and by taking a flexible approach to the type of disposal.

9.5 Disruption to services as staff and systems move. This is being mitigated by a cross-organisational working group addressing issues such as IT and staffing. Where possible, services will relocate at times which suit their operational needs.

9.6 Reputational risks around the perception that the Council is reducing its focus on Daventry and the surrounding area. This risk should be reduced by the investment going into creating the new Daventry hub at the Abbey.

10. Consultation

10.1 Staff affected by the relocation are currently being consulted with. This consultation process has been discussed and agreed with the joint consultative group including trade unions.

11. Climate Impact

11.1 By closing the Lodge Road offices to its staff, the Council will reduce its carbon footprint and costs of energy. Whilst some increase in staff travel may result the combination of hybrid working and the open of using 'hot desks' in the Abbey should mean any increase in carbon emissions from that source is minimal.

11.2 The Abbey Centre has an existing solar (photovoltaic) array on the roof to generate sustainable electricity. Options to reduce energy costs and carbon footprint include the installation of more efficient heating, cooling, and ventilation solution.

12. Community Impact

12.1 By relocating services and staff from Lodge Road to the Abbey the Council is seeking to retain the positive socio-economic impact that having staff located within the town centre provides to Daventry. The re-use of the Lodge Road offices should also deliver benefits to Daventry town centre, whether by residential, office, hotel, or other commercial use.

12.2 Retaining the existing community services such as DACT, Time to Talk and Citizens Advice Bureau in the same locality as they currently are but within close proximity to Council services should enhance the service offering of all parties by closer integration.

13 Communications

13.1 It will be essential to continue to communicate effectively with employees about the Daventry relocation proposals, along with the public and other key stakeholders as the plans progress. Communication is also planned for VCS tenants and for service users who may be affected by the changes.

14. Background Papers

a. None.

	Topic identified and scheduled
	Topic identified but not yet scheduled
	Topic completed

Title	Proposed purpose	Date of Committee meeting	Cabinet Member and Executive Director	Proposed Task and Finish Group	Comments
Pay and Grading Review	To provide scrutiny input to the Pay and Grading Review	16 January 2023	Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services Executive Director – Corporate Services and Assistant Director – Human Resources	No - Whole Committee	The Committee to provide scrutiny input into the Pay and Grading Review
Revenues and Benefits Performance Update Page 23	The Committee to receive and review the performance of the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service.	16 January 2023	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance and Assistant Director for Revenues and Benefits	No – whole Committee	The Committee to receive and review the performance of the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service. Agenda Item 8

Budget Scrutiny	The Committee to confirm its budget scrutiny process and undertake budget scrutiny of the Council's budget 2023/24	<p>12 October 2022 – The Committee to consider its budget scrutiny process</p> <p>Budget Scrutiny to continue over a number of meetings:</p> <p>7 November 2022 - Children's Trust Budget</p>	Executive Director for Finance	No	The Committee to confirm its budget scrutiny process and undertake budget scrutiny of the Council's budget 2023/24
Treasury Management	To scrutinise treasury management focusing on efficiencies – forward looking	<p>15 March 2022 – The Committee to set up a Task and Finish Group to undertake this scrutiny activity</p> <p>Prior to the setting up of the Task and Finish Group a briefing will be scheduled on Treasury management that will provide important information to Councillors. ACTIONED.</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group commenced its work in June 2022</p> <p>4 July 2022 - The Task and Finish Group presented its scope (Terms of reference) for consideration by the Committee. Actioned</p> <p>16 January 2023 – The Chair of the Task and Finish Group to present the final report to the Committee.</p>	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	Yes	<p>A Task and Finish Group will carry out a review.</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group commenced in June 2022 and presented its scope to the meeting of the committee on 4 July 2022</p>

Modernising Systems	The Committee to receive information regarding systems at the Council and to consider their value for money	<p>15 March 2022 - A report to the Committee providing background information, to assist the committee in deciding how it will undertake scrutiny activity</p> <p>Modernising Systems Inquiry day(s) have been programmed from September 2022 onwards</p> <p>Reports to Committee November 2022 onwards</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Executive Director - Corporate</p>	To be confirmed	The meeting on 15 March 2022 comprised a comprehensive question and answer session (Scrutiny Inquiry) to inform a potential scrutiny review.
Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports	The Committee to receive regular budget monitoring reports at its meetings	<p>12 October 2022</p> <p>16 January 2023</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Executive Director for Finance</p>	No	To receive a quarterly budget monitoring report which will inform the budget scrutiny role of this Committee.
Quarterly reports on the MTFP	The Committee to receive regular MTFP monitoring reports at its meetings	<p>12 October 2022</p> <p>16 January 2023</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Executive Director for Finance</p>	No	To receive a quarterly budget MTFP report which will inform the budget scrutiny role of this Committee.

Performance Monitoring Report	The Committee to consider the Performance Monitoring Report to inform Performance Management Scrutiny	12 October 2022 16 January 2023	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	No	The Committee to consider the Performance Monitoring Report to inform Performance Management Scrutiny
Performance Management Scrutiny	The Committee to undertake Performance Management Scrutiny	12 October 2022 16 January 2023 6 March	Executive Director Finance and relevant Cabinet Members dependent upon the key performance indicator to be reviewed	No	The Committee will consider the performance monitoring report and undertake performance management scrutiny of specific indicators at these meetings.
Revenues and Benefits Performance Management Scrutiny	The Committee to undertake performance management scrutiny – Revenues and Benefits	7 November 2022	Assistant Director – Revenues and Benefits Cabinet Member for Finance	No	The Committee to undertake performance management scrutiny – Revenues and Benefits

The Children's Trust Budget	The Committee to receive a briefing on the Children's Trust budget	15 September 2021 actioned 7 November 2022 - Budget Scrutiny Further meeting TBC To consider the Business Plan for the Children's Trust	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	No but following the briefing the Committee may consider setting up a Task and Finish Group	The Committee received a briefing on the Children's Trust Budget at its September 2021 meeting and resolved to receive the business plan for scrutiny input at a future meeting
Asset Management	To undertake scrutiny activity of asset management	15 March 2022 - The Committee to set up a Task and Finish Group to undertake this scrutiny activity Actioned A presentation to be given to the Committee at its meeting 10 May 2022 and from there the Committee will consider Scrutiny work into this issue. - Actioned Date to be confirmed: The Sustainability Working Group is asked to report back to a future meeting regarding the alignment of workstreams around the development of the new Asset Management Plan to the Corporate Plan and the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality.	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Place	To be confirmed	It was resolved that the Sustainability Working Group is asked to report back to a future meeting regarding the alignment of workstreams around the development of the new Asset Management Plan to the Corporate Plan and the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality.
Transformation Projects	The Committee to review transformation projects: Definition of the Transformation Projects Spend on transformation Savings	Meeting dates in 2022 to be confirmed	Director – Transformation Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	No	

Social Values Act 2013	The Committee to receive a briefing on the Social Values Act 2013	15 September 2021 - 15 March 2022 – Further information to be provided to the Committee, and the representative leading on social value to be invited to address the Committee Actioned	To be determined	No but following the briefing the Committee may consider setting up a Task and Finish Group	The Committee to receive a briefing on the Social Values Act 2013 and the procurement of contracts, contract management and social value to enable Members to decide on how it will undertake further scrutiny activity on that topic.
Expenses Policy	To review the Council's expenses policy	4 July 2022 – The Task and Finish Group presented its scope (Terms of reference) for consideration by the Committee. ACTIONED 12 October 2022 - The Chair of the Task and Finish Group to present the report of the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group to the Committee Actioned	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	Yes	A Task and Finish Group will carry out a short sharp review. This Task and Finish Group held its inaugural meeting on 20 June 2022. 12 October 2022 Chair of the Task and Finish Group to present the report of the Expenses Policy Task and
Contract management and procurement	To receive a presentation on contract monitoring and procurement and the links into Social Value	15 September 2021 Actioned	Executive Director Finance and Head of Procurement	No	Highlighted at the first meeting as an area of interest with particular reference to social value The Committee noted the presentation with a view to it being background information in respect of any future work on Social

Work Programming Event	The Committee to confirm the date for its Work Programming event	15 September 2021 Actioned	Executive Director for Finance Cabinet Members to be invited to the work programme event	No	COMPLETED Taken place
People Strategy	To provide scrutiny input to the 50 key actions contained within the People Strategy	10 May 2022 4 July 2022	Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services Executive Director – Corporate Services and Assistant Director – Human Resources	No - Whole Committee	The Committee to provide scrutiny input into the People Strategy
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/2022	The Committee to consider its Annual Report 2021/2022 for submission to full Council for information	4 July 2022	The Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee	No	The Committee approved the Annual Report 2021/2022 for submission to full Council at its September 2022 meeting

Schools Budgets	To receive a briefing on the way schools need funding and how this is calculated	15 November 2021 Actioned	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	Not at the meeting on 15 November 2021, The Committee may consider setting up a Task and Finish Group to undertake a review of school's budgets	The meeting on 15 November 2021 will comprise a comprehensive question and answer session (Scrutiny Inquiry) to inform a potential scrutiny review. The Committee noted the presentation and agreed that Cllrs Aziz and Traasiewicz attend all
Draft West Northamptonshire Council budget 2022-2023	To provide scrutiny input into the draft budget	15 November 2021 – briefing on the budget process was provided Actioned 12 January 2022; and further additional meetings of the Committee to be scheduled as required.	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	To be confirmed	Budget scrutiny is a key role of this Committee. The Committee could decide on which budgets it would scrutinise in-depth at a later meeting (to be set)

Potential cross-cutting themes for the Scrutiny Committees

Topic	Proposed purpose	Committees to be involved in this review	Cabinet Member and Executive Director	Proposed Task and Finish Group	Comments
Highways Contract	The Committee, together with Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the highways contract	Corporate and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees Place OSC - 18 October 2022 Corporate OSC - & November 2022	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	Meeting of Place OSC on 28 June 2022, with Corporate OSC to undertake joint Scrutiny of this item October meetings of Place OSC and Corporate OSC to consider the content of the scope of this joint review

Major Contracts and Capital Contracts	The Committee together with Place and People Scrutiny Committees to undertake scrutiny of major contracts of the Council including the Children's Trust	Corporate, People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	
Housing	The Committee, together with Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake scrutiny activity of the housing costs and social value	Corporate and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting dates in 2022/23

- 16 January 2023
- 6 March

Development of Overview and Scrutiny work programmes for 2022/23

NB: The Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group considered the process to be used to develop Overview and Scrutiny work programmes at a meeting on 25 May 2022. The Group agreed that rather than go out to public consultation about suggestions for scrutiny topics as in 2021/22 it could be more useful to consider a survey of residents' views about Council services. This would enable areas to be identified where Overview and Scrutiny might help to alleviate issues. The Group also agreed that Cabinet Members should be asked to provide details of forthcoming issues within their portfolios that might be subject to pre-decision scrutiny. The chairs of the three Overview and Scrutiny committees have written to the Leader of the Council to progress these matters.

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