Committee	Cabinet
Date and Time	18th November 2026 10.30 am Public

Asset Strategy & Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Roger Evans – Portfolio Holder for Finance
Lead Director:	Duncan Whitfield, Section 151 Officer Kassandra Polyzoides, Interim Service Director Place Shaping
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Electoral Divisions Affected	All Divisions
Key Decision?	Key Decision
Cabinet Forward Plan	8 October 2026
Report considered by	Cabinet – 18 November 2026

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. This report updates Cabinet on progress with the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme and the Council's asset disposal programme, including the current 2026/27 disposal pipeline, and seeks the delegations required to progress the next phase of the programme.

1.2. The Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme will establish the strategic framework for how the Council uses, invests in, manages and disposes of its land and buildings. The new five-year Asset Strategy will replace the Asset Management Strategy that ran to 2025. The programme will also assess and develop the Corporate Landlord model, under which the estate is managed as a single corporate portfolio aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan and operating

model. Development of the replacement Asset Strategy was originally scheduled for completion by 28 February 2025. It was subsequently deferred to 30 June 2026 to align with wider Council improvement work and the development of the new Corporate Plan, which was then targeted for completion by May 2026. The replacement Asset Strategy is now being progressed through the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme.

1.3. The first phase of the transformation programme has delivered: (i) an independent review of the Green and Amber disposals pipeline; (ii) an assessment of the governance, assurance and oversight arrangements supporting property and disposal decisions; (iii) a review of the methodologies used to assess deliverability, valuation, risk and forecast capital receipts; and (iv) further internal review and factual verification of the evidence supporting reported positions and key property and development decisions.

1.4. The programme responds at pace to the Best Value Notice issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 15 July 2026 and the findings on asset disposals in the External Assurance Review undertaken by CIPFA in May 2026. It forms one of the six programmes within the transformation, improvement and change portfolio submitted to MHCLG in September 2026. Cabinet is asked to note the progress made and current disposal pipeline, delegate delivery of the next phase within the approved £3 million programme allocation and agree that a further report be brought to Cabinet in Quarter 1 of 2027/28.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

2.1. Support the £3 million approved by the Budget, Transformation and Change Panel for 2026/27 and 2027/28 to fund the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme, from the £15 million provision for transformation and change approved by Full Council on 26 February 2026.

2.2. Support the new governance arrangements in place since June 2026, set out in **Appendix A**, including the Asset Transactions Group, chaired by the Section 151 Officer, which oversees two workstreams:

(a) the Council's asset disposal programme;

(b) the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme.

2.3. Support the 2026/27 General Fund asset disposal pipeline of £5,900,120 as at 25 October 2026, comprising £2,637,700 received from completed sales, £1,409,000 from sales agreed but not yet completed, and an indicative £1,853,420 from disposals in preparation or on the market.

2.4. Support that £3 million of transformation funding has been approved by the Budget, Transformation and Change Panel for the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme across 2026/27 and 2027/28, from the £15 million provision for transformation and change approved by Full Council on 26 February 2026.

2.5. Agree that provision of up to £3 million for the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme be reflected in the Medium-Term Financial Plan across 2026/27 and 2027/28, with the final profiling of expenditure between financial

years determined in accordance with programme requirements and the Council's financial planning arrangements.

2.6. Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer and the Interim Service Director – Place Shaping, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to commission and incur expenditure required to deliver the initial phase of the programme within the approved funding envelope, including the award of commissions and additional staffing resource.

2.7. Agree that, following completion of the initial phase, a further report is intended to be submitted to Cabinet in Quarter 1 of 2027/28, informed by relevant milestones and outputs from the Council's wider transformation programme, setting out:

(a) progress with the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme;

b) the assessment of the Council's existing arrangements against the requirements of a Corporate Landlord model;

(c) expenditure incurred and the forecast funding requirement for the remainder of the programme;

(d) the early opportunities identified for capital receipts, revenue savings and additional income; and

(e) the proposed scope, delivery approach, anticipated benefits and funding requirement for the principal phase of the programme, together with any further approvals required from Cabinet

3. Background

The Council's financial position

3.1. On 11 February 2026 Cabinet approved the Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31, which included £15 million within the draft budgets to finance the transformation and change programme, subject to a business case. Full Council approved the 2026/27 budget on 26 February 2026, including that provision and the use of £121 million of Exceptional Financial Support.

CIPFA's findings on the Council's assets

3.2. The Government made the Exceptional Financial Support conditional on an external assurance review. CIPFA carried out the review in May 2026 and it was published on 18 August 2026. On the Council's assets it found that:

(a) there was no clear strategy for a more ambitious programme of asset disposals;

(b) the values assumed for disposals had not been independently validated on a consistent basis;

(c) previous forecasts of capital receipts had not proved reliable;

(d) of £109.539 million in further potential capital receipts identified for future years, nearly all were rated red. The Council was therefore relying on receipts it could not evidence.

CIPFA's recommendations on assets

3.3. Of CIPFA's 22 recommendations, two are relevant to this programme:

- **Recommendation 12:** the Council should set a clear, short deadline for feasibility work on the future of Shirehall and sell the asset as soon as possible. Shirehall is the subject of a separate report to this meeting of Cabinet on 18 November 2026.
- **Recommendation 13:** the Council should identify the assets that can be sold, and develop a strategy for selling them that secures best value, by December 2026.

The Best Value Notice

3.4. On 15 July 2026, a month before CIPFA's review was published, the Government issued a Best Value Notice. It cites concerns about the Council's financial sustainability and about its leadership capacity, governance, scrutiny and culture. Two of its requirements bear on the Council's assets:

(a) to continue taking urgent steps to improve financial sustainability, including delivering CIPFA's recommendations; and

(b) to ensure governance and scrutiny enable decisions to be made at pace and performance to be accurately monitored.

The Council's response

3.5. Cabinet accepted CIPFA's findings on 9 September 2026, and Full Council supported the initial responses to CIPFA's recommendations on 24 September 2026. The Council's September 2026 response to MHCLG sets out a transformation, improvement and change portfolio of six programmes. The fourth is the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme, and the response committed the Council to reporting on it to Cabinet.

Funding for this programme

3.6. On 9 September 2026 Cabinet received the Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring Report, which confirmed a base budget provision of up to £15 million to support service transformation, and that transformation funding is approved through the BTCP. A formal submission by the Interim Service Director – Place Shaping had been made on 7 September 2026, seeking £3 million from that provision for the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme. The BTCP approved the £3 million in the week beginning 21 September 2026.

3.7. Full Council approved the £15 million provision on 26 February 2026. Cabinet confirmed on 9 September 2026 that transformation funding is approved through the BTCP, and approval of the £3 million for this programme was granted in the week beginning 21 September 2026. The £3 million is therefore drawn from a provision Full Council approved and was allocated through the route Cabinet confirmed. Recommendations 2.1 and 2.4 ask Cabinet to note the approved funding. Recommendation 2.5 asks Cabinet to agree that provision of up to £3 million is reflected in the Medium-Term Financial Plan across 2026/27 and 2027/28. Recommendation 2.6 delegates authority to commission and incur expenditure required to deliver the initial phase within the approved funding envelope.

Requirements on the Council

3.8. CIPFA Recommendation 13 requires the Council to identify the assets it can dispose of and to develop a strategy securing best value on disposal by

December 2026. The Best Value Notice requires urgent steps to improve the Council's financial sustainability, and governance and scrutiny that enable decisions to be taken at pace and performance to be monitored accurately. Section 4 sets out the Council's response to Recommendation 13, which it meets ahead of that deadline; the five-year Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review that will build on it; and the next phase of the programme.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

The review and independent assurance

4.1. A draft brief for an externally supported Asset Review and development of a new Asset Management Strategy 2026–31 was presented to the Council's Leadership Board in February 2026. By March 2026, following further senior management review, it was identified that further work was required to assure the accuracy and completeness of the Council's estate information before the new Strategy could be developed. The scope of the work was also subsequently broadened to include a review of the Council's Corporate Landlord model, which had not been fully implemented corporately. This addition recognised the need to consider not only the future strategic direction of the estate, but also the governance, accountability and operating arrangements required to deliver it. An independent phase 1 review of the asset disposal pipeline, amber and green rag rated, with its findings informing the scope and priorities of the wider Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord work.

4.2. In March 2026, on the appointment of the Interim Service Director – Place Shaping, the Council began a review of the governance and assurance arrangements for its assets and the robustness of the asset disposal pipeline. The review was led by the Interim Service Director – Place Shaping with the Section 151 Officer, supported by the Property and Development senior leadership team and with direction from the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Leadership Board. It considered the governance and decision-making arrangements for disposals, the credibility of the disposal pipeline, factors delaying delivery, the timing and financial assumptions underpinning forecast receipts, and the foundations required for the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord work. The review identified that forecast capital receipts for 2026/27 materially exceeded the level of disposals realistically achievable and that governance, oversight and assurance needed to be strengthened so that:

(a) risks and blockages are actively captured, managed and resolved;

(b) decision-making is in line with delegated authority; and

(c) corporate oversight, sign-off and escalation sit in one place.

4.3. In April 2026 the review concluded that independent assurance of the disposal pipeline was required, so that the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet could be assured of the capital receipts the Council is relying on. The independent assurance was commissioned in May 2026 to test whether the capital receipts assumed in budget planning could be delivered within the forecast timescales, and to provide targeted actions to expedite the realisation of those receipts. Its findings were reported in early July 2026 to the Interim Service Director – Place Shaping, the Section 151 Officer, the Head of Property and Development and the Portfolio Holder for Finance. It found that:

(a) more than half of the assets rated Green, the highest level of confidence in delivery and value, could not be relied upon to deliver receipts within the period of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan;

(b) capital receipt forecasts were in places optimistic or unsupported by market evidence; and

(c) reporting relied on optimistic headline assumptions rather than on the assets genuinely capable of disposal in 2026/27 and 2027/28.

The Council's response to CIPFA Recommendation 13

4.4. The review's outcome in April 2026 identified a key gap in the Council's asset governance: the absence of a single point of corporate assurance and oversight led by a senior officer at Corporate Director level, with senior legal and finance representation. Decisions and oversight were historically split between the Disposals Board and the Property and Assets Board, without a single corporate assurance structure in place for key decisions, direction and oversight. Stronger corporate governance, oversight and assurance of the Council's asset decisions were therefore required. Both boards were stood down in June 2026 and replaced by the Asset Transactions Group, chaired by the Section 151 Officer, which oversees the Council's asset disposal programme and the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme. The Council acted on its own assessment of what was needed: the Group was in place a month before the Best Value Notice of 15 July 2026 and two months before CIPFA's review was published on 18 August 2026.

4.5. The independent assurance findings were presented to the Asset Transactions Group on 8 July 2026, within days of the assurance report submission, and the Council's response was reported to the Improvement Board in material dated 10 July 2026. The Group began reclassifying the pipeline following the July meeting, and a disposals tracker was implemented in July 2026 to record: lead officer responsibility, risks and mitigation measures, clarity on valuations and key decisions. Subsequent updates have strengthened change control and project management oversight, via the corporate PMO. The response to the independent assurance findings had four elements:

- **Reclassify:** move constrained assets out of the near-term receipts profile.
- **Prioritise:** concentrate resources on assets with the clearest route to disposal.
- **Accelerate:** expedite the deliverable assets by resolving the constraints identified against each asset and escalating those that cannot be resolved at officer level.
- **Track:** monitor and report progress via the disposal tracker as outlined above.

4.6. Reclassification did not remove those assets from the programme. The assets rated Amber remain in active management for disposal, and the assets rated Red will be reviewed through the commissions described in paragraph 4.16.

4.7. From September 2026 every disposal in the 2026/27 pipeline has been recorded on that tracker with a route, a target date and a named officer. The disposals rated Red – those not expected to be deliverable in the foreseeable future because of significant constraints, including cost and legal issues – will be reviewed through the commissions described in paragraph 4.16, with their classification planned for completion in Quarter 1 of 2027/28.

4.8. The Group will report monthly to Leadership Board on the disposal tracker and on the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review and disposal pipeline updates. It provides quarterly assurance to the Finance and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Portfolio Holder for Finance is briefed weekly. Progress on the programme is reported to One Shropshire Board and the Improvement Board as per their forward plan.

4.9. Taken together, the arrangements set out in paragraphs 4.3 to 4.5 are the Council's response to CIPFA Recommendation 13. They deliver it in three ways:

(a) identifying the assets: the 2026/27 pipeline is recorded as set out in paragraph 4.7; further sites come forward during 2026/27 as the Council's service and operational requirements are reviewed, with the Asset Transactions Group considering and making recommendations for declaring each asset surplus; and the Corporate Landlord review will identify further opportunities for the Group's consideration;

(b) securing best value, under the duty in section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 and, on disposal, the duty in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable**:** each asset is valued to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' Red Book standard when it is ready to go to market and is then tested in the market, and the Asset Transactions Group weighs on balance the capital receipt available, any uplift that planning could deliver, the social value of alternative uses, the cost of continuing to hold the asset, and how long a disposal would take; and

(c) expediting delivery: interim internal capacity is being put in place to sustain the pace of disposals, in addition to the escalation arrangements set out in paragraph 4.8.

The 2026/27 disposal pipeline

4.10. As at 25 October 2026 the Council has received £2,637,700 in capital receipts from completed sales in 2026/27, within a General Fund disposal pipeline for the year totalling £5,900,120, made up as follows:

Position as at 25 October 2026	**Value**
Completed sales (receipts received)	£2,637,700
Sales agreed but not yet completed	£1,409,000
Disposals in preparation or on the market (indicative value)	£1,853,420
Total	**£5,900,120**

4.11. Sales agreed but not yet completed are those agreed with a buyer where the sale has not concluded, and disposals in preparation or on the market are shown at an indicative value, before a sale is agreed. Those two amounts may change in value or timing as the sales progress.

The Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review

4.12. The Asset Strategy will be a five-year strategy for the Council's whole estate. Its purpose is to establish what the Council needs from its land and buildings to deliver its services, what it should therefore hold, and how that estate is managed, maintained and paid for under a Corporate Landlord model, in which the estate is held and managed as a single corporate portfolio rather than by

individual services. Disposal is one of the outcomes the Strategy will produce, alongside retention, investment, shared use and increased income.

4.13. The Asset Strategy will define the contribution the estate makes to the Council's financial sustainability: matching land and buildings to service need under the Corporate Landlord model, increasing income, lowering running costs and maintenance liabilities, and extending disposals beyond the current pipeline over the medium term, answering CIPFA's finding that the Council had no clear strategy for a more ambitious programme of asset disposals.

4.14. The criteria for determining which assets the Council should dispose of in future will be established through the Asset Strategy, informed by Phase 1: Discovery and Scoping set out in paragraph 4.19.

The next phase

4.15. The Council's land and buildings had a net book value of £521.2 million at 31 March 2026: £408.3 million in buildings and £112.9 million in land. The £3 million approved by the BTCP, across 2026/27 and 2027/28, is less than 0.6% of that value. The Council's corporate target for the return from its land and buildings is a minimum of 0.5% of that value each year in capital receipts and income. The Council publishes details of its land and building assets annually as open data, as the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 requires, at https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/open-data/datasets/land-and-building-assets/. That published dataset is wider than the net book value above: it covers both the property the Council holds freehold and the property it holds under a lease, including the service and office properties it occupies, property occupied or run under Private Finance Initiative contracts, and future commitments under an agreement for lease.

4.16. The next phase will be delivered through commissioned support in three parts:

(a) Part 1: a new Asset Strategy and options for a Corporate Landlord model;

(b) Part 2: a review of the disposals rated Red, to establish which can be delivered and when;

(c) Part 3: Interim: internal capacity and commissioned specialist technical specialist support will supplement the Council's existing Property & Development team not replace their roles and responsibilities.

4.17. The commissions will be procured under relevant public sector frameworks. They are planned for issue in Quarter 3 of 2026/27, with contracts awarded and suppliers starting in Quarter 4 of 2026/27.

4.18. As the Council's wider transformation programme has developed, the interdependencies between programmes have become increasingly apparent. In particular, the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Digital and IT Transformation programmes involve significant changes to future service delivery and operating models which will directly influence future estate requirements. The Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme will therefore need to identify relevant milestones and outputs from these programmes and the wider transformation portfolio and reflect these within its own programme plan.

This is particularly important during Phase 1: Discovery and Scoping, which will identify the relevant milestones, outputs and decision points from other

transformation programmes and reflect these dependencies within the programme plan, governance and risk arrangements.

4.19. Phase 1: Discovery and Scoping will commence in Quarter 4 of 2026/27 and continue into Quarter 1 of 2027/28, establishing the foundations of the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme before the principal work and expenditure are committed. The principal outputs of Phase 1: Discovery and Scoping will include:

a) **estate baseline:** the estate recorded from the data the Council holds, with the gaps in that data identified;

b) **vision and objectives:** a vision and objectives for the estate, informed by engagement with services, Members and partners, and aligned with the aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan 2026/27–2030/31, service priorities and the Council's strategic programmes, including the new Shropshire Local Plan, the Commercialisation Strategy, and the decarbonisation of the estate, including the energy performance and carbon emissions of the Council's buildings;

c) **review criteria:** the criteria against which buildings are assessed, so that each transfer is tested against the Asset Strategy, the needs of services and the capital receipts the Council is relying on;

d) **heritage assets:** the scope and approach for a Heritage Asset Strategy;

e) **Corporate Landlord:** an assessment of the extent to which the Council's existing arrangements meet the requirements of a Corporate Landlord model, including the arrangements for holding, managing and making decisions on property and the supporting data and systems.

f) **early opportunities:** savings and income capable of delivery ahead of the Asset Strategy;

g) **programme governance and risk:** programme governance, risk and dependencies: how the programme is run and reported; the identification of the principal risks, mitigations and arrangements for their ongoing monitoring and escalation; and the identification of relevant milestones, outputs and dependencies across the Council's wider transformation programme.

Outputs from Phase 1, informed by relevant milestones and outputs from the Council's wider transformation programme, will form the basis of the report intended to return to Cabinet in Quarter 1 of 2027/28.

5. Alternative Options

5.1. The options below concern the work delegated under recommendation 2.6: the three parts of the commissioned support set out in paragraph 4.16.

Option 1: Do nothing

5.2. Doing nothing is not recommended. A new Asset Strategy would strengthen the Council's financial sustainability, as set out in paragraph 4.13. CIPFA found (May 2026) that there was no clear strategy for a more ambitious programme of asset disposals, and its Recommendation 13 requires the Council to identify the assets that can be sold and to develop a strategy for selling them that secures best value by December 2026. Doing nothing would confine the Council to the

assets already in the disposal pipeline, and the Corporate Landlord model would not be taken forward.

Option 2: Deliver the work in-house

5.3. Delivering the programme entirely through existing internal resources is not recommended, given the scale and pace of the transformation programme, the requirement for additional specialist capacity and the benefit of independent assurance in specific areas. The commissioned support will supplement the Council's existing Property & Development professional capability and provide additional capacity and expertise to support delivery. In particular

(a) Part 1: development of the new Asset Strategy and the review and further embedding of the Corporate Landlord model require dedicated transformation capacity and specialist experience of developing corporate property operating models at organisational scale. The commissioned support will work alongside Property & Development and wider Council services to assess existing arrangements and identify the governance, operating model, systems, data and capability required for the future model;

(b) Part 2: independent review of the Red-rated disposal pipeline will provide additional assurance over deliverability, timing, dependencies and value. This will supplement the professional valuation, market evidence and asset knowledge held by the Council and provide independent challenge to the assumptions used for corporate financial planning; and

(c) Part 3**:** additional specialist Property & Development resource will increase capacity to progress individual disposals and resolve asset-specific constraints while the existing team continues to manage the wider estate and disposal programme. The additional resource is intended to support and accelerate delivery and does not replace the Council's existing professional capability.

Option 3: Procure each piece of work separately

5.4. Procuring each piece of work separately is not recommended, because procurement advice is to group the commissions and run mini-competitions under the relevant public sector frameworks.

Option 4: Direct award without competition

5.5. A direct award without competition is not recommended, because competition is needed to demonstrate value for money.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Pace, discovery and evidence base • Programme progressing at pace while the evidence required to support strategic estate decisions is being developed. • Includes estate data, condition, performance, costs and other information required to inform the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord model. • Gaps or changes could affect scope, sequencing, timescales or benefits.	• Discovery establishes and validates the estate baseline and identifies information gaps. • Assumptions, risks and emerging evidence reviewed through programme governance. • Principal phase informed by discovery before further commitments are made.	Transformation programmes and significant projects
Future service and corporate requirements / programme dependencies • Future estate requirements depend on clear, strategic and reliable service and corporate operating requirements. • Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Digital and IT Transformation will significantly influence those requirements. • Changes to relevant milestones or outputs could affect programme scope or timing.	• Discovery identifies relevant milestones, outputs and dependencies from Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Digital and IT Transformation and the wider transformation portfolio. • Emerging service and corporate requirements inform development of the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord model. • Dependencies monitored through programme governance and reflected in programme planning.	Transformation programmes and significant projects
Council-wide capacity and capability • Programme pace and complexity require sufficient Council-wide	• Commissioned specialist support supplements internal capacity and expertise. • Discovery identifies capacity and capability requirements for subsequent	Workforce capacity and capability

capacity and specialist expertise. • Includes property and development, finance, legal, commercial/procurement and programme capability. • Capacity constraints could affect pace, quality or delivery.	delivery. • Requirements kept under review through programme governance.	
Financial requirements and benefits • Programme costs, resource requirements and anticipated benefits will continue to be refined through discovery. • Capital receipts, revenue savings, income or other benefits may differ in timing or scale from current assumptions.	• Costs, resource requirements and anticipated benefits tested and refined through discovery. • Early savings and income opportunities identified where possible. • Expenditure, requirements and benefits monitored through programme governance and the subsequent Cabinet gateway.	Achieving long-term financial sustainability
Disposal timing and value • Individual disposals may complete later or at a different value from forecast due to market conditions or asset-specific dependencies.	• Asset Transactions Group oversight through the single disposal tracker. • Deliverability, timing and value kept under review. • Red disposals subject to further commissioned review.	Achieving long-term financial sustainability Governance, assurance and value for money

Opportunity	**How it is realised**
Further capital receipts beyond the 2026/27 pipeline	The Asset Strategy will identify and release further surplus land and buildings for disposal, in response to CIPFA Recommendation 13 (May 2026), which requires the Council to identify the assets that can be sold and to develop a strategy for selling them that secures best value
Increased income from the retained estate	The Asset Strategy will establish how the Council maximises the income from the land and buildings it retains
Lower running costs and liabilities	The Corporate Landlord model will hold and manage the estate as a single corporate portfolio, reducing running costs, maintenance liabilities, the cost of holding vacant buildings, energy costs and carbon emissions, and the risk of buildings failing statutory compliance requirements

Shared use of buildings, and strategic sites for development	Services will be brought together in shared buildings, including with other public bodies through One Public Estate, and the estate baseline and the Asset Strategy will identify strategic sites that could deliver housing and employment

7. Council Priorities

7.1. The Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme contributes to two ambitions of the Corporate Plan 2026/27–2030/31:

- **a financially sustainable council:** by maximising the capital receipts and income from the Council's land and buildings and reducing their running costs;
- **a thriving economy:** through the early identification of potential strategic sites for the new Shropshire Local Plan.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. The Budget, Transformation and Change Panel has approved funding of up to £3 million across 2026/27 and 2027/28 for the Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme, from the £15 million transformation and change provision approved by Full Council on 26 February 2026. The provision will be reflected within the Medium Term Financial Plan, with expenditure profiled between financial years as programme requirements are confirmed.

8.2. Phase 1: Discovery and Scoping will establish the evidence base, scope, delivery requirements and anticipated financial benefits of the principal phase, which will inform the subsequent report intended to return to Cabinet in Quarter 1 of 2027/28. Expenditure on Phase 1 will be contained within the approved £3 million programme envelope and monitored through the Asset Transactions Group.

9. Legal and HR implications

9.1. The Council has a range of statutory responsibilities relevant to the management and disposal of its land and property. In particular, section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 generally requires the Council, when disposing of land, to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable, subject to the statutory exceptions. The Council must also have regard to its duty under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised.

9.2 The strengthened governance and assurance arrangements described in this report, together with the development of a new Asset Strategy and review of the Corporate Landlord model, will support the Council in demonstrating that property decisions are taken on a properly informed, consistent and transparent basis. Decisions relating to individual assets will continue to be taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution, relevant statutory requirements and adopted policies, with appropriate regard to all relevant financial, procurement, equality and other considerations. This report does not determine the future of any individual asset.

9.3 The external commissions proposed as part of the programme must be procured in accordance with applicable procurement legislation and the Council's Contract

Procedure Rules. The proposed delegation will enable the authorised officers to commission and incur expenditure for the initial phase within the approved funding envelope. The outcome of the discovery and scoping work, together with the proposed scope and delivery arrangements for the principal phase and any further approvals required, will be reported to Cabinet.

9.4 The proposed fixed-term appointments will be managed in accordance with the Council's established employment policies and procedures.

10. Electoral Division Implications

10.1. The Asset Strategy and Corporate Landlord Review Transformation Programme covers the Council's land and buildings in all electoral divisions. This report does not decide the future of any individual asset.

11. Health, Social (including "Child Friendly Shropshire") and Economic Implications

11.1. The Asset Strategy will consider the health, social and economic implications of how the Council uses its estate, including implications for children.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1. The Asset Strategy will take account of equality impacts in setting how the Council uses its estate.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

13.1. The Council's decarbonisation commitments are built into the vision and objectives for the estate developed through Phase 1: Discovery and Scoping, as set out in paragraph 4.19(b).

14. Background Papers

14.1. The background papers for this report, which do not include items containing exempt or confidential information, are:

Financial Strategy 2026/27 – 2030/31 – Cabinet 11 February 2026

Draft 2026/27 General Fund budgets and Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 – 2030/31 – Council 26 February 2026

Exceptional Financial Support: External Assurance Review – Cabinet, 9 September 2026

Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2026/27 – Cabinet 9 September 2026

Exceptional Financial Support: External Assurance Review – Full Council 24 September 2026

15. Appendices

Appendix A – Governance: Asset Strategy & Corporate Landlord Review Transformation programme