

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CALL IN SUB-COMMITTEE	DATE 8 January 2025	ITEM NO 4
TITLE Call in report for: Asset Review – Further Outcomes – the Equestrian Centre & 28 Mereworth Drive	WARD (S) All	
CHIEF OFFICER Director of Place & Growth	CABINET MEMBER Planning, Development & Estate Renewal	
DECISION CLASSIFICATION Non key Not subject to call in Non-exempt report Non-exempt appendices	IS THE FINAL DECISION ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT TO BE MADE AT THIS MEETING? Yes	

1. **Decision required**

This report makes the following recommendations to the decision-maker:

1.1. To note the decision of Cabinet taken on 26 November 2024 and take no further action

or

1.2. To refer the decision to Cabinet as the decision maker for reconsideration with comments

or

1.3. If the Sub Committee considers that the decision is contrary to the Policy Framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget refer the decision with or without comments to Full Council.

2. **Links to Our Greenwich missions**

2.1. Mission 8: Development delivers positive change to an area for existing and new communities.

It is anticipated that some of these properties may be redeveloped by future owners, which in turn will result in investment into the borough and positive change both directly and indirectly for communities through the regeneration of these assets.

- 2.2. Mission 18: Our Council is an adaptive organisation, enabling it to navigate the increasing number of challenges it faces while remaining financially sustainable.

These sites no longer serve the objectives of the Council. By agreeing to proceed with a programme of disposals, the Council can anticipate the likely capital receipts and positive revenue impact at the same time as contributing towards the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy protecting Council services and minimising cuts to services.

Rebalancing the property portfolio align with the Council's Carbon Neutral Plan and Transport Strategy.

- 2.3. Mission 19: Our Council works in the most efficient and effective ways possible.

The recommended disposal of the 341 Shooters Hill, Equestrian Centre and Mereworth Drive, is a necessary step towards in meeting the Council's objective of refining the Councils' property portfolio to better meet its wider objectives.

Additionally, it will generate both capital receipts and revenue savings, which in turn will improve the Council's financial position and allow it to focus its resources to better effect.

Ongoing maintenance and capital investment will also be avoided in respect of the properties, allowing resources to be more effectively directed to the remaining portfolio.

3. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 3.1 Part 4B of the Council's Constitution (Overview and Scrutiny Procedures) includes a procedure under which decisions taken by Cabinet or Cabinet Members, or Key decisions taken by Chief Officers under delegated powers, may be "called in" for further consideration. The "Call In" procedure has been invoked in respect of a decision taken by the Cabinet on 26 November 2024 in respect of the Asset Review – Further Outcomes.
- 3.2 This report provides responses to the matters raised in the Call in Notice and provides supporting information where relevant.

- 3.3 The report considered by the Cabinet is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.4 The decision was called in by Notice signed by Councillors Matt Hartley and Roger Tester and as it contains two signatories, it is in line with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4B of the Constitution). In accordance with the procedures for the call-in of items, the Members (Councillors Matt Hartley and Roger Tester) who have requested the call-in have been invited to the meeting and will have an entitlement to address the meeting. The Call-In Notice is attached as Appendix B. The reasons for the call in and responses are set out in paragraph 4 of this report, together with any other relevant information. The subject of the call-in relates to the following properties:

- 341 Shooters Hill (Former Equestrian Centre)
- 28 Mereworth Drive

- 3.5 The Governance principles to which all Councils must adhere and the financial pressures that this Council faces, provide both the background and context to the responses set out in section 4.

The severe financial constraints coupled with the obligation to protect vital services, directly impact and influence the options available to reduce overheads, improve revenue and generate capital receipts, to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory obligations.

- 3.6 **Governance:** The general power of disposal is set out in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. This provides Councils with the power to dispose of land held by it in any manner it wishes, provided it achieves the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained, with the exception of a disposal for a term of less than seven years.

There is no specific process for determining “best value” in respect of property but it is generally accepted that this is evidenced through independent valuations or a market sale. The mechanics for disposal are governed by statutory Instrument including:

- 3.7 The General Disposal Consent (England) 2003, which removes the "requirement for authorities to seek specific consent from the Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of State ("the Secretary of State") for any disposal of land where the difference between the unrestricted value of the interest to be disposed of and the consideration accepted ("the undervalue") is £2,000,000 (two million pounds) or less".

This is not an unfettered authority. The circular goes on to say:

"It is Government policy that local authorities and other public bodies should dispose of surplus land wherever possible. Generally, it is expected that land should be sold for the best consideration reasonably obtainable. However, it is recognised that there may be circumstances where an authority considers it appropriate to dispose of land at an undervalue. Authorities should clearly not divest themselves of valuable public assets unless they are satisfied that the circumstances warrant such action. The Consent has been issued to give local authorities autonomy to carry out their statutory duties and functions, and to fulfil such other objectives as they consider to be necessary or desirable. However, when disposing of land at an undervalue, authorities must remain aware of the need to fulfil their fiduciary duty in a way which is accountable to local people."

- 3.8 The expectation is clear that Councils should dispose of surplus land and they should, in the first instance, seek to do so at market value. Any disposal at an undervalue is *by exception*, provided this does not undermine the Council's broader responsibilities to all residents.
- 3.9 In addition to the Local Government Act 1972 and The General Disposal Consent (England) 2003, Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011 deals with the nomination of Assets of Community Value (ACV) and the right to bid for these at the market price. ACV's can be both publicly and privately owned. The Council has a published policy on ACV's.

However, there is no specific legislation that deals with a Community Asset Transfer (CAT). A CAT is essentially a label for a disposal in the normal way under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972, at an undervalue, in accordance with Paragraph 2 of the General Disposal Consent 2003. This provides that no specific consent is required where a local authority considers that the purpose for which the land is to be disposed is;

- a. likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement of economic, social, or environmental well-being of its area or any persons, resident or present in its area, and
- b. the difference between the unrestricted value of the land to be disposed of and the consideration for the disposal does not exceed £2,000,000 (two million pounds).

So long as these two conditions are satisfied, it is open to the Council to proceed with a transfer *if* it chooses to do so. The Council cannot be compelled to enter into a CAT (although communities may choose to bid on properties the Council are disposing of).

Any such application will be assessed on its merit and will need to be supported by a robust business case, bearing in mind the Council's fiduciary duty and duty to achieve Best Value

3.10 Value for Money

The financial position which the Council, alongside many other councils face, is well documented. It is therefore vitally important that the Council ensures that it can demonstrate Value for Money, alongside making significant savings.

3.11 The Council has a large property portfolio with significant operating and capital/condition costs. Responsibility for this portfolio sits within the Directorate of Place & Growth and as explained in the Cabinet report of 26 November 2024, the Property function have undertaken a review of the Council's property assets with a view to right sizing the portfolio, thereby reducing the costs associated with poorly utilised assets and those assets that do not support the delivery of key services.

3.12 The identification of surplus assets that are not required by a Council service and their subsequent disposal is not only in line with existing legislation, which expects Councils to dispose of surplus assets, but is also necessary to ensure that the Council's portfolio is fit for purpose. In turn, this process assists the Council in meeting its financial challenges, through reducing revenue costs and generating capital receipts, to support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and help protect Council services from deeper cuts.

3.14 Disposal

Disposal is a broad term, that encompasses a number of options including, but not limited to:

- freehold sale,
- sale of a long leasehold interest of possibly 99 years or more,
- a commercial letting for a term to be agreed but typically up to 25 years at a full market rent,
- Community Asset Transfer (CAT) – see 3.15 below
- Asset of Community Value (ACV) – see 3.16 below
- a letting on concessionary terms for 7 years or more

3.15 Community Asset Transfer

Community Asset Transfer is an entirely voluntary process which involves the transfer of the management or ownership of publicly owned assets to a community based organisation. This is usually by way of a long lease (25 + years) or occasionally a freehold sale.

3.16 Asset of Community Value

The Localism Act gives community groups a right to bid on land or buildings included on the assets of community value list, before the Council can sell it on the open market. Under the Act, voluntary and community organisations can nominate land or buildings (an asset) to be included on the list. Where a nomination is made, the Act requires an assessment of the nominated asset with two criteria needing to be met as follows:

- (i) the assets use has furthered the social well-being or social interest of the community in the recent past
and
- (ii) it is realistic to consider that this use, or another, will resume over the following 5 years.

3.17 Disposal of Council owned property does not automatically require public or community engagement.

4. Responses to the Call In and Alternative Decision Sought

341 Shooters Hill, former Equestrian Centre:

4.1 Ground 1: The decision to approve in principle the disposal of the Equestrian Centre is being taken **without any prior public or community consultation:**

Response:

There is no general duty to consult on the disposal of Council owned property although there may be a duty to consult in relation to the disposal of specific types/classes of property. In the case of 341 Shooters Hill (known as the Equestrian Centre) part of the property comprises land designated as Metropolitan Open Space. Prior to any disposal the Council will ensure that it complies with the requirements of S123(2)(A) with respect to advertising its intention to dispose.

The Cabinet decision did not preclude Public or Community Consultation or Engagement and all interested parties will have the opportunity to respond to the consultation in accordance with S123(2)(A).

There has been extensive discussion of the Council's asset review and which was formally discussed in October 2023 by the Council's Regeneration, Transport and Culture Scrutiny Panel. In addition officers have engaged over an extensive period of time with a number of enquirers, this includes:

- Meeting and corresponding with the British Equestrian Foundation
- Meeting and corresponding with Sport England
- Corresponding with residents

In the context of the Council's MTFs and the assets have been identified as surplus to the Council's requirements, the Cabinet proceeded with considering this site for disposal.

Consultation will be undertaken in accordance with S123(2)(A) in due course.

- 4.2 **Ground 2:** There is significant public interest in the disposal of this site and **significant public opposition** to this disposal as evidenced by (at the time of writing) 994 signatures on a petition.

Response: The petition was formally presented to Full Council on 4 December 2024. The process for responding to petitions is set out in the Council's constitution and will be followed. Compliance with that procedure will reflect the wider fiduciary duty the Council owes to all residents.

- 4.3 **Ground 3:** As the adjacent Woodlands Farms Trust was not informed, much less consulted, on the Council's intention to dispose of this site, it is clear that the **potential future impact on Woodlands Farm** has not been taken into account. The Woodlands Farms Trust is concerned that "the disposal of the site in this sensitive area risks loss of control of its future use. This could well work against the interest of preserving the surrounding environmental assets which would be degraded to the detriment of the health of borough residents and the future viability of Woodlands Farm" – and we believe these concerns need to be fully listened to, understood and considered before any decision is made.

Response: As stated above under Ground 1, part of the Equestrian Centre is Metropolitan Open Land and therefore subject to the requirements of section 123 (2)(A). Once the proposal to dispose is advertised the Woodlands Farms Trust will have the opportunity to make comments/ representations. The decision taken by Cabinet on 26 November is not inconsistent with those provisions.

Woodlands Farm and others, will have the opportunity to make representation when the disposal is advertised in accordance with Section 123(2)(A).

There is no specific statutory process on how the responses to the S123(2)(A) consultation are considered. Officers are discussing with the Council's Legal Services on the steps that will follow.

4.4 Ground 4: We are similarly aware that **other local stakeholders have not been consulted**, including the Friends of Oxleas Woods, and they should be given the opportunity to comment before any decision is made.

Response: As stated above part of the Equestrian Centre is Metropolitan open land and therefore subject to the requirements of section 123 (2)(A). Once the notice requirements of S123 are complied with stakeholders including Friends of Oxleas will have the opportunity to engage.

4.5 Ground 5: We have seen **no evidence that a wide range of alternative uses, within continued Council ownership, has been fully explored** by the Council before proposing disposal – the decision appendix only refers to consideration for SEND use (which was rejected).

Response: A cross functional review of assets by officers identified use of the site for those with Special Educational Needs (SEND) as an option. However, further review indicated that the site was not suitable for the reasons set out in the Cabinet Report of 26 November, namely “the property is vacant with high operating costs. This site has been considered for SEND use but discounted due to the existing building not being large enough or suitable for conversion, combined with the scale (and cost) of demolition required. The property's use does not fit with the rest of the Council's portfolio and is recommended for disposal”.

In addition, all Council departments were given the opportunity to consider if this property had the potential to meet a key service delivery need. As explained in the Cabinet report this prompted a review of the site for SEND provision.

Moreover, section 3 of this report and the Cabinet report of 26 November 2024, outlines the financial pressures that the Council faces. The need to ensure the financial stability of the Council is paramount and the focus is rightly on ensuring key services are maintained.

In the context that no Council department could identify a need for the property to facilitate the delivery of a key service, the property was identified as surplus and recommended for disposal.

- 4.6 Ground 6:** And furthermore, without adequate consultation with the public **over potential future community uses** – including uses that may be enabled via Community Asset Transfer or by declaring the site an Asset of Community Value – it would be premature to delegate authority for the disposal of this site

Response: Paragraph 4.9 of the Cabinet report addresses the issues of an ACV (Asset of Community Value) and a CAT (Community Asset Transfer) as follows:

“it is possible that following the Cabinet Decision recommended by this report, that an application could be received from a member of the Community for either a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) or for a property to be listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV).

CAT is an entirely voluntary process which involves the transfer of the management or ownership, of publicly owned assets, to a community based organisation. This is usually by way of a long lease (25+ years), but occasionally freehold sales are undertaken.

The Council currently has no published policy and there is no obligation to do so. There is no specific Legislation in England and Wales setting out the legal obligations or the process.

This is distinct from an ACV for which the Council has a published Policy in line with the 2011 Localism Act. Properties so listed can be in both Public and Private ownership and confers a right to bid for such assets at their open market value.

An advantage to the Council of a CAT could include it being an appropriate way for the Council to meet other community objectives and Council aspirations. In addition, a Community Asset Transfer may pass on liabilities to that group such as repairs, maintenance, insurance, security and management, which the Council would otherwise remain liable for.

However, the disadvantage is that any lease granted or property sold is expected to be at a level which is below the market value or at nil value. Given the current financial constraints and MTFS pressures, this would not optimise financial returns to the Council for investment in services supporting the wider objectives of the Council and its residents. It is also possible that such transfers could involve continued financial support for the Community based group. It should be noted that some properties may be subject to covenants, easements or agreements which affect the title and prior to a disposal full due diligence will be required and undertaken”

Any application for a CAT would be considered on its own merits and would need to be supported by both a robust business case and clear financial modelling.

The procedure for the nomination of the property as an Asset of Community Value, is published on the Council’s website and the delegated authority to dispose of the property does not change this. It can be made at any time and as noted in paragraph 4.9 of the Cabinet report, such assets can be both publicly and privately owned.

Alternative decision – 341 Shooters Hill

4.7 The alternative decision sought in respect of the Equestrian Centre is that any decision on the future of the **Equestrian Centre** at 341 Shooters Hill should be deferred until:

- *A full public and community consultation is carried out over the future of the Equestrian Centre site*
- *The Woodlands Farms Trust’s concerns over the potential future impact on Woodlands Farm are fully listened to, understood and considered by the Council*
- *Other local stakeholders, including the Friends of Oxleas Woods, are specifically consulted on their views over the future of the site.*

- *The full range of potential community uses – including uses that may be enabled via Community Asset Transfer or by declaring the site an Asset of Community Value – are formally considered by the Council.*

Response: There is no reason to defer the decision to provide time for consultation with the public and the community. Once the Council advertises its intention to dispose of the site under Section 123(2)(A) the public and the community have the option to make representations.

The potential for a Community Asset Transfer or for the property to be declared an Asset of Community Value was already envisaged in the Cabinet report of 26 November and it was expressly stated that such applications may come forward. Neither has been precluded.

4.8 **28 Mereworth Drive**

Ground I: Similarly, the decision to approve in principle the disposal of 28 Mereworth Drive/Green Garth is being taken **without any prior public or community consultation**

Response: There is no general duty to consult on the disposal of Council owned property, although there may be a duty to consult in relation to the disposal of specific types/classes of property. Unlike the Equestrian Centre this site is not designated as Metropolitan Open spaces therefore no specific provisions apply. The Council does however have a power to consult and concluded on balance that it was not appropriate to consult because “The Council has made substantial investment of over £1.6m in Shrewsbury House with large scale repair works. The property at Mereworth Drive is not part of the site that is managed by the Shrewsbury House Community Association (SHCA). While 28 Mereworth is shown within the curtilage of the listing, the property itself is not mentioned in the listing, whereas the pergola (summer house) is. It is for this reason that the pergola was refurbished together with Shrewsbury House. An assessment of the cost benefit has been undertaken and it is recommended for disposal.

In addition, disposal activity is routine and as referred to above "It is Government policy that local authorities and other public bodies should dispose of surplus land wherever possible”.

This property is not affected by any statutory obligation for consultation and as such this is not anticipated.

4.9 Ground 2: There is **significant public interest in the future of this site**, as evidenced by (at the time of writing) 1,050 signatures on a petition supporting Shrewsbury House Community Centre's wish to take on its management in order to 1) create a community garden and an allotment space for their fork to plate café project, and 2) transform the building into additional space for community activities

Response: The process for responding to petitions will be followed and will reflect the wider fiduciary duty the Council owes to all residents.

The Cabinet decision to approve a disposal does not affect the ability of Shrewsbury House Community Centre to make representation to take over the management of the site. As previously noted, until the asset is declared surplus and available for disposal this process cannot commence in any meaningful way. A robust business case and clear financial modelling would need to be provided to support such a proposal.

4.10 Ground 3: The decision to approve the disposal **omitted key information** about the history of this site and RBG's engagement with Shrewsbury House Community Association (SHCA) which has tried to engage with RBG on their proposals

Response:

In making the decision Cabinet had the relevant information before it in order to make the decision. Reference to the listing was made in Appendix 1 to the 26 November Cabinet report. The report stated that the Mereworth property is shown within the curtilage of the listing, the property itself is not mentioned in the listing, whereas the pergola (summer house) is. It for this reason that the pergola was refurbished together with Shrewsbury House..

The 26 November Cabinet report noted that the Council had made significant investment of over £1.6m in Shrewsbury House with large scale repair works undertaken.

Whether or not a building is listed or in proximity to a listed building does not preclude a recommendation for disposal.

Historically, dating back to 2019, officers have specifically engaged with the Shrewsbury Housing Community Association regarding the future of Mereworth Drive and their suggestion to run and make use of the

property. However, the terms put forward to the Association were not accepted and this matter did not progress.

The Council in the context of the MTFS for 2024/25 proceeded with its asset review and concluded that the property was surplus to requirement and should be available for disposal.

The Cabinet decision to approve a disposal does not affect the ability of Shrewsbury House Community Centre to make representation again, to take over the management of the site. A robust business case and clear financial modelling would need to be provided to support such a proposal.

4.11 Ground 4: SHCA notes its concern over the proposed disposal and in particular that “the listed area of Shrewsbury House including 28 Mereworth/Green Gareth is complex and requires sensitive management because it includes listed features which are carried across the entire site, some of which might be vulnerable in the event of a purely commercial disposal [and] this risk was not make clear to cabinet.” We believe these concerns from SHCA need to be fully listened to, understood and considered before any decision is made.

Response: Listing does not preclude disposal. Any future proposals would be subject to the relevant legislative rules. For example, if changes were proposed that required planning consent, this would include engagement with Shrewsbury House Community Association and other neighbouring properties.

4.12 Ground 5: Similarly we are aware that **other local stakeholders have not been consulted**, including the Shrewsbury Park Residents Association (SPRA) and 10th Eltham Scouts, and they should be given the opportunity to comment before any decision is made.

Response: There is no general duty to consult on the disposal of Council owned property, although there may be a duty to consult in relation to the disposal of specific types/classes of property.

Unlike the Equestrian Centre this site is not designated as Metropolitan Open spaces therefore no specific provisions apply. This property is not affected by any statutory obligation for consultation and as such this is not anticipated.

In addition disposal activity is routine and as referenced at 3.7 "It is Government policy that local authorities and other public bodies should dispose of surplus land wherever possible.

Alternative decision – 28 Mereworth Drive

4.13 The alternative decision sought in respect is to agree that any decision on the future of 28 Mereworth Drive/Green Garth should be deferred until:

- *A full public and community consultation is carried out over the future of the 28 Mereworth Drive site*
- *The Shrewsbury House Community Association (SHCA) has been specifically consulted on their proposals, supported by more than 1,000 local residents, for SHCA to take over management of the site – through any legal mechanisms available – to create a community garden and additional community space*
- *Other local stakeholders, including the Shrewsbury Park Residents Association (SPRA) and 10th Eltham Scouts, are specifically consulted on their views over the future of the site.*

Response: Disposal of Council owned property does not automatically require public or community engagement. This property is not affected by any statutory obligation for consultation.

The Council routinely disposes of property assets in a variety of ways as previously outlined and does not as a matter of course consult. With respect to the interest that the Shrewsbury House Community Association have expressed in taking over management of the site, with the intention to create a community garden and additional community space, any such proposal would need to be supported by a robust business case and detailed financial modelling.

5. Available Options

5.1. Part 4B of the Council's Constitution (Overview and Scrutiny Procedures) sets out three options:

Option 1

5.2 Note the decision of the Cabinet and agree to take no further action, in which case the decision will have immediate effect and be implemented.

Option 2

- 5.3 Refer the decision to the Cabinet, for reconsideration, together with the sub-committee's comments relating to the call-in reasons and the alternative decision which is sought.

Option 3

- 5.4 Refer the decision to Full Council if the decision is considered contrary to the Council's Policy Framework.

This option is not applicable to this particular Call In. Given that the decision is part of the Council's Medium Term Financial strategy it is not contrary to any policies within the Councils approved Policy Framework set out in Article 4 of the Constitution.

6. Preferred Option

- 6.1 Option 1 is recommended as the preferred option, namely, to note the decision of the Cabinet and agree to take no further action, in which case the decision will have immediate effect and be implemented.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 Option 1 is the recommended option.

This option which asks the sub committee to note the decision taken by Cabinet of 26 November 2024 would enable the Council to proceed in the knowledge that consultation will be undertaken in respect of the Equestrian Centre site and that Shrewsbury House Community Association (or others) can submit a proposal with a business case as set out in point 3.14.

- 7.2 Section 4 of the report responds to the reasons for the Call In as set out in the Notice of Call In. The responses either resolve or explain the issues raised in the Call In Notice.
- 7.3 The decision is not contrary to any of the policies and objectives set out within the approved Policy Framework, as set out in paragraph 5.4.

8. Consultation Results

- 8.1. There is no relevant duty to consult for this decision.

9. Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<p>Legal including Human Rights Act</p>	<p>The Legal implications of the decision are set out in the Cabinet report dated 26 November 2024.</p> <p>The legal implications and procedure relating to Call In are described in this report .</p> <p>The Call In Sub Committee may either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the decision of Cabinet taken on 26 November 2024 and take no further action. - Refer the decision to Cabinet as the decision maker for reconsideration with comments Or - If the Sub Committee considers that the decision is contrary to the Policy Framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget refer the decision with or without comments to Full Council. <p>The decision is not contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework for the reason set out at Paragraphs 5.4.</p> <p>As a result the options set out at paragraphs 5.2 (the preferred option) and 5.3 are the only options.</p>	<p>Azuka Onuorah Interim Director of Legal Services 24 December 2024</p>
<p>Finance and other resources</p>	<p>The report provides responses to the matters raised in the Call-In notice following the decision taken by Cabinet, on 26 November 2024, to dispose of two surplus assets.</p> <p>Recommendations were made in-line with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), with specific reference to the</p>	<p>Michael Horbatcheskyj Accountancy Business Change Manager (P&I) 24/12/2024</p>

	<p>Asset Review which is intended to drive efficiencies from the corporate estate.</p> <p>The mechanism by which the economic benefits arising from the disposal of the two premises is not prescribed in the original decision report and therefore does not limit the options set out in paragraph 3.14.</p> <p>The Asset Review must take into consideration the requirement to obtain best value alongside the financial sustainability of any alternative use; assessed against the need for the Council to deliver short and medium-term revenue efficiencies. Further assessment of available options will be undertaken following market engagement, including the evaluation of any robust business case linked to community use.</p> <p>Delays to market engagement, and subsequent realisation of any financial benefit, to facilitate non-statutory consultation will have a negative impact on the Council’s revenue position and MTFs forecasts.</p>	
<p>Equalities</p>	<p>The decisions recommended through this paper generally have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act.</p> <p>The Asset Review was undertaken within the context of RBG’s Equalities Objectives (2020-2024) and Equalities & Equity Charter. The impact of property decisions and recommendations from an Equalities perspective is included as part of the Review’s evaluation, scoring and recommendation process</p>	<p>Karen Surtees, Corporate Property Officer 19/12/2024</p>

Climate change	<p>While the report has no direct Climate implications to consider. The decisions recommended in the Cabinet Report of 26 November support the Council in optimising the Council’s property portfolio and ensures that under utilised buildings can be considered for other purposes by prospective purchasers.</p>	<p>Karen Surtees, Corporate Property Officer 19/12/2024</p>
Risk Management	<p>In bringing the proposed decision forward, key risks have been considered and will continue to be monitored and managed in line with the Council’s Risk Management Toolkit</p>	<p>Karen Surtees, Corporate Property Officer 19/12/2024</p>
Community Engagement	<p>There has been no community engagement in respect of this report as none is required and it is not appropriate. However in respect of the decision of the Cabinet dated 26 November, Cabinet was made aware in respect of all the assets which were the subject of that report including the Equestrian Centre and Mereworth Drive that “Consultation will be undertaken where a disposal impacts directly on service delivery in line with the Community Engagement Pledge dated 24th July 2024”.</p> <p>The responses to the grounds for this Call in sets out the community engagement that was carried out ahead of the Cabinet decision which included engagement with the Shrewsbury House Community Association (SHCA) dating back to 2019, who also canvassed the views of the wider community. The discussions between the Council and the SHCA did not result in SHCA agreeing to the terms proposed in respect of 28 Mereworth Drive.</p>	<p>Karen Surtees, Corporate Property Officer 19/12/2024</p>

	<p>There has also been engagement with interested parties with respect to the Equestrian Centre, including the British Equestrian Foundation, Sport England and interested individuals. The S123(2)(A) statutory consultation as it applies to the Metropolitan Open space will be progressed in 2025</p>	
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10. Report Appendices

10.1. The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

Appendix 1: Cabinet report (26 November 2024) Asset Review Further Outcomes

Appendix 2: Call in notice

11. Background Papers

- Regeneration, Transport & Culture Scrutiny Panel report (October 2023 - Strategic Asset Review update

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