

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00, Tuesday, 22 August 2023

## Corporate Property Strategy

Executive/routine  
Wards

Executive  
All

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 That Policy and Sustainability Committee:
  - 1.1.1 Approves the proposed Corporate Property Strategy (Appendix 1); and
  - 1.1.2 Notes that the proposed Corporate Property Strategy Board will bring forward business cases for programmes and projects, as set out in the report, to the appropriate Executive Committee for approval.

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director of Place

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# Report

## Corporate Property Strategy

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report presents the proposed Corporate Property Strategy (attached in Appendix 1) for approval.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The Council's current Corporate Asset Strategy is out of date, having covered the period 2015-2019.
- 3.2 A proposed review of the Strategy was delayed while the Council addressed the outbreak of COVID-19 and, in particular, its impact on the operational property estate as, at that time, it was considered prudent to wait until the medium to longer term outcomes of the pandemic, and their impact on property occupation, were known.
- 3.3 In addition to this, the Council has also approved strategies (such as the 20-minute neighbourhood strategy) and a new Council Business Plan since the current Strategy was approved.
- 3.4 The legacy impact of COVID-19 on property occupation, and society as a whole, is now more clearly understood. This, together with the other approved Council priorities, mean that a revised Corporate Property Strategy can now be developed.

#### **Sustainable Development**

- 3.5 In late 2021, all Council services responsible for property, development, regeneration and placemaking were consolidated into one service area titled Sustainable Development.
- 3.6 The principal rationale was to ensure that these key activities, and their overlapping dependencies, were strategically aligned and that pooling of resources would create greater synergies to get best value from available funding and deliver sustainable, integrated outcomes.

## 4. Main report

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### Corporate Property Strategy

- 4.1 Providing an overarching framework for the Council's operational property estate, the proposed Corporate Property Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.2 It is intended to act as a policy framework which outlines the main strategic objectives and themes that the Council will follow in implementing changes to its operational property estate.
- 4.3 The themes of the Strategy are interlinked and interdependent and connect to all Council major strategies and policies that assist with delivery of the priorities and outcomes in the Council Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- 4.4 The principal strategic themes of the Strategy are:
- **Live Well Locally** - property solutions to support 20-minute neighbourhoods;
  - **Our Future Work** - new ways of working (which are emerging following the COVID-19 pandemic and other flexible working arrangements); and
  - **Net Zero Properties** - delivering and maintaining a Sustainable Corporate Property Estate.
- 4.5 These themes are already being implemented in many areas as consideration is given to how the Council uses its operational property estate more effectively.
- 4.6 In a carefully planned way, and with full community engagement, the aim is to deliver a smaller, more efficient, affordable and accessible estate that contributes to the Council's zero carbon goal. It is intended to take a place-based, multi service and multi-agency approach to deliver this aim.
- 4.7 Formal approval of the Strategy will enable officers to accelerate the implementation of many projects and plans which have been or will be reported to Elected Members in the future. However, by linking their outcomes to this overarching strategy, the Council will achieve a much more cohesive approach to decision making and implementation.

## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 The delivery of this plan is complex and needs to take both a service and place-based approach. To achieve this, it is proposed to establish a Strategy Board to oversee its implementation. This Board will comprise senior officers from the Sustainable Development team and other relevant services across the Council, drawing in partner agencies where appropriate.
- 5.2 A Corporate Property Action Plan will be developed, ensuring that all of the upcoming change projects which may impact on the Council's operational property estate will be captured. This action plan will be submitted to Committee for approval and will then be used to measure progress in delivering the overall strategy.

- 5.3 Business cases for change projects will be presented to the appropriate Executive Committee once finalised, and progress against the action plan will then be reported annually to Committee.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising as a result of this report.
- 6.2 The costs of running the Council's operational property estate are outlined in Appendix 1.
- 6.3 The Council's budget has a saving of £500,000 against property rationalisation in financial year 2023/24 and 2024/25. It is expected that additional saving requirements will be developed as part of the MTFP.
- 6.4 Individual business cases will be developed and approved for projects within the Corporate Property Action Plan. The financial details of each will be reported to the appropriate Executive Committee as part of the development of change proposals.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 Significant stakeholder and community engagement will be required to implement this overarching change programme, and the associated individual business cases. The Corporate Property Strategy Board will be responsible for ensuring that all stakeholder and community impacts are captured in the emerging businesses cases and are monitored throughout the completion of the project.
- 7.2 Stakeholder and community engagement related to any property project emerging from the Corporate Property Strategy will be subject to the normal extensive engagement which is part of the established project development, design and delivery process.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Links to relevant background reading sources are provided in the draft Corporate Property Strategy (Appendix 1).

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Corporate Property Strategy

# Appendix 1 - Corporate Property Strategy

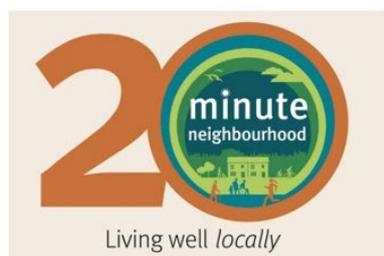
## Executive Summary

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The Corporate Property Strategy is a high-level framework which sets out the strategic themes that will be followed when implementing changes to the Council's operational property estate. It will provide the strategic basis on which property related decisions will be taken to facilitate the delivery of the priorities and outcomes in the Council Business Plan and the Medium -Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The strategic themes are:

- **Live Well Locally** - property solutions to support 20-minute neighbourhoods;
- **Our Future Work** - new ways of working which are emerging following the COVID-19 pandemic and other flexible working arrangements; and
- **Net Zero Properties** - delivering and maintaining a sustainable zero carbon corporate property estate.



The main themes are inter-linked and inter-dependant and, when combined with a focus on the operational property estate, they will guide the delivery of an action plan.

## Vision, Aims and Context

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The Corporate Property Strategy vision is to create a smaller, modern, more efficient, and carbon neutral property estate that supports the delivery of outcomes in the Council's Business Plan and MTFP.

The Business Plan outlines that the future Council will be more digitally enabled, inclusive, and accessible, as a smaller, leaner organisation with fewer, better buildings that meet service needs.

The MTFP is a driving force behind implementation of the Council's Business Plan and will be delivered through a Change Programme. The Corporate Property

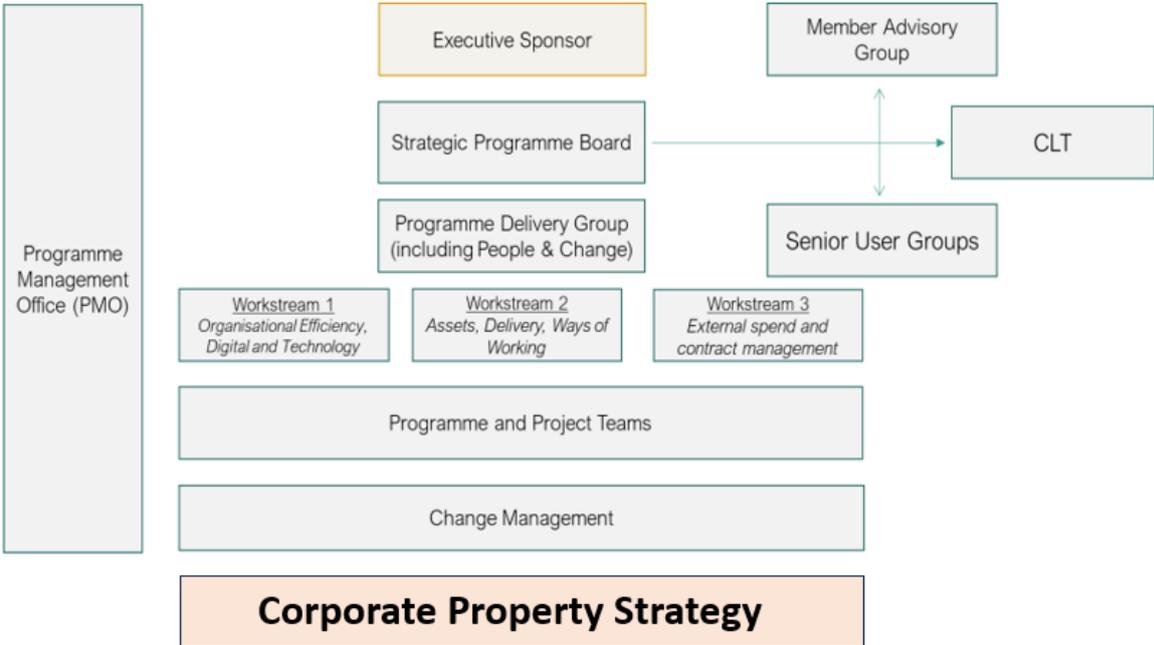
Strategy touches on all four of the principal work themes of the Change Programme, which are:

- **Organisational Efficiency** - ensuring technology is used more effectively, moving more services on-line, simplifying and automating business processes, embedding new, post-covid ways of working in buildings fit for this purpose.
- **Service Design and External Spend** - focusing on improving contract management, seeking efficiencies across a range of spend categories and identifying different ways of designing and delivering services which will inform asset planning.
- **Delivery Optimisation** - making services more accessible to residents, but delivered through fewer, better buildings by rationalising the Council's property holdings, alongside creating opportunities to ensure citizens can access a wider range of services from within high quality multi-purpose settings.
- **Prevention and Partnership Working** - focusing on designing and rolling out new ways of working that help prevent and mitigate the harm and costs associated with poverty, homelessness, and family crisis through more efficient partnership working across Council services, other public bodies, and community organisations.

The key strategic aims of Corporate Property Strategy are to:

- Drive the delivery of a net carbon zero estate;
- Improve workplace standards and service delivery models ensuring change processes are service, not property led;
- Create a property estate which is future proofed, leading to operational and resource efficiencies;
- Maximise the use of our assets so they can help to deliver all relevant Council policies;
- Take a multi-agency, place based approach to the development of change projects, working in particular with the public and voluntary/community sectors;
- Ensure that communities are fully engaged in any change process, and that community engagement is a central hallmark of our approach;
- Drive to improve the accessibility of Council buildings;
- Comply with all necessary health and safety and other regulatory requirements; and
- Take a balanced view of costs and benefits in each business case for change, recognising that where assets are not cost effective to invest in, they can be re-purposed to free up resource to invest elsewhere.

The Corporate Property Strategy is an integral workstream of the Change Programme portfolio. The Change Programme is being overseen by the Strategic Programme Board made up of Senior Leaders and Directors from across the Council. Business cases will be developed for specific property rationalisation, workplace and service design projects which will in turn be approved via the Strategic Programme Board as shown below.



**Corporate Property Strategy Governance**

Specific governance arrangements are in place to support the delivery of the Corporate Property Strategy, and these are summarised in Appendix 1 (of this Strategy). This will be linked to the existing governance arrangements for the 20-minute neighbourhood strategy, the Our Future Work Programme and the Council's sustainability programmes to ensure any service delivery requirements are fully integrated.

**The Current Property Portfolio**

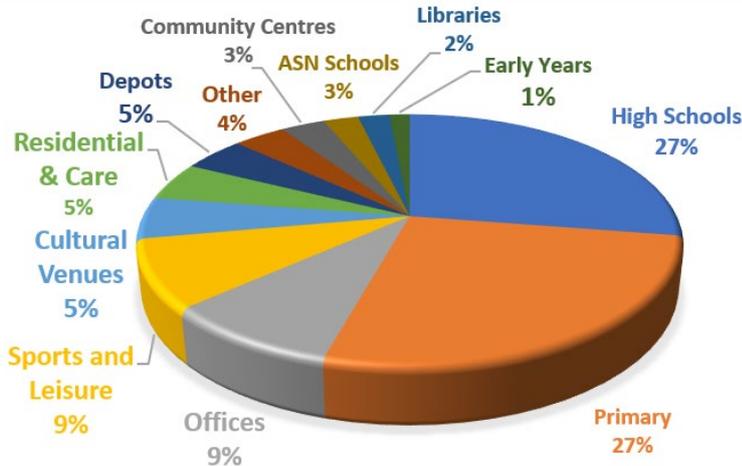
The Corporate Property Strategy applies to all non-housing property and services within the Council and is also relevant to the Council's service delivery partners in situations where integrated service delivery is already happening or will be introduced.

The strategy focuses on operational properties and the decisions required to guide future capital investment and intervention which will improve the efficiency, suitability, and condition of the estate.

In terms of context, the following provides high-level information on the current use, condition, cost, and carbon footprint of the operational property portfolio.

**Use**

The breakdown of the Council’s operational use of the property portfolio is dominated by the learning estate. Based on Gross Internal Area (GIA) the current split is shown below: -

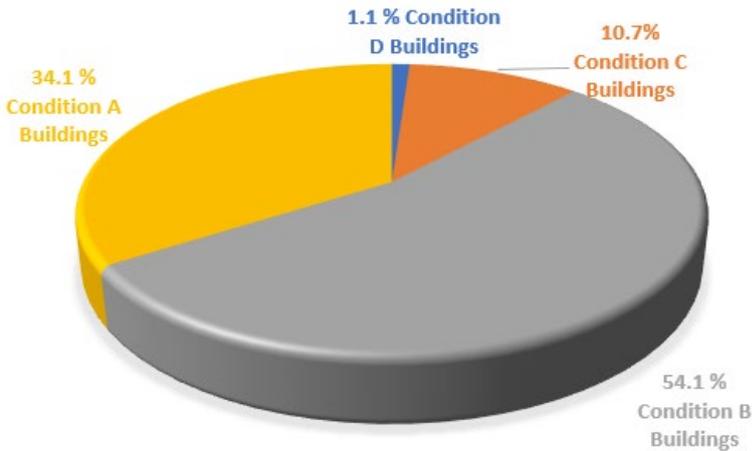


**GIA PERCENTAGE**

City Plan 2030 has been prepared to address the growth of the city and includes a significant requirement for new education infrastructure. Further, the replacement of the existing learning estate is a significant priority in the Council’s Sustainable Capital Budget Strategy 2023-2033.

**Condition**

The operational property estate has benefitted from a five-year investment allocation of £155.5m which was approved by the Council in 2018, with the main beneficiary being the learning estate. The current category of condition of the estate is shown below:



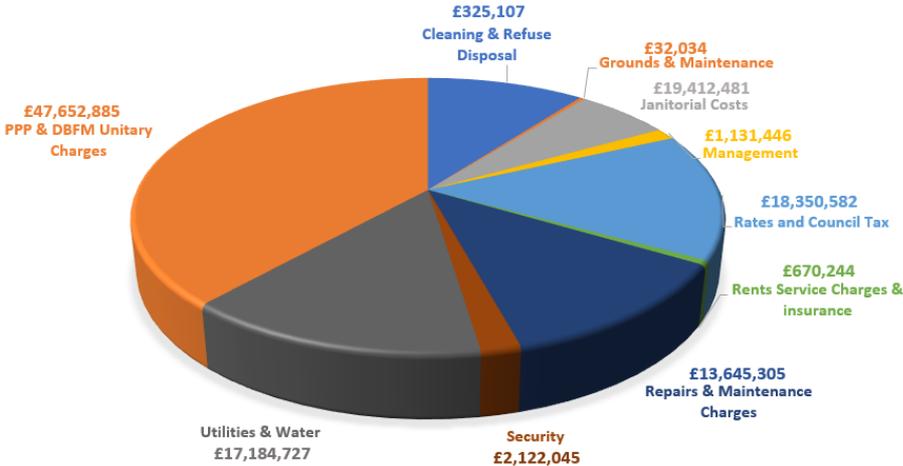
**CONDITION**

Category A and B buildings are in superior condition, although there remain issues with accessibility and suitability due to their design. However, many of the condition C and D buildings are no longer fit for purpose and, in some cases, are at the end of their natural life span with further investment not economically viable.

Further, as set out in the Council’s Sustainable Capital Budget Strategy, there are significant ongoing unfunded pressures to address property condition.

**Cost**

The running cost of the estate is currently £120.52m per annum and can be split into the broad categories below:



**COST**

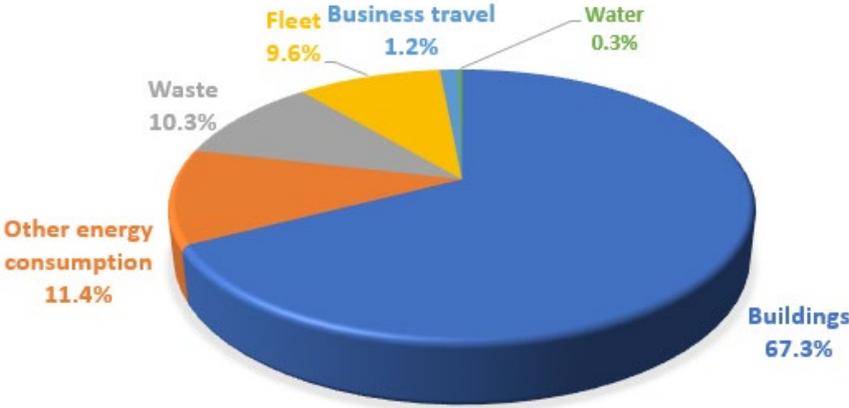
The running costs for the ten most expensive properties (excluding PPP) in the estate are shown in the table below:

Property	Grand Total Actual 2022-23
	£
WAVERLEY COURT	3,031,013
CITY CHAMBERS	2,021,515
PORTOBELLO HIGH SCHOOL	1,759,013
WESTER HAILES HIGH SCHOOL	1,431,701
LEITH ACADEMY	1,240,028
BOROUGHMUIR HIGH SCHOOL	1,100,003
LIBERTON HIGH SCHOOL	1,007,963
CURRIE HIGH SCHOOL	1,005,662
TRINITY ACADEMY	984,004
USHER HALL	817,166

The cost of the estate is predicted to grow significantly in the short term, principally due to increased electricity costs and rising non-domestic rates (NDR).

### Carbon Footprint

The Council Emissions Reduction Plan continues to highlight the significant impact of the property estate on the Council’s carbon footprint, as shown in the table below:



### CARBON EMISSIONS

Addressing the carbon footprint of property assets is an important element of the Strategy and will be a major consideration in all projects, business cases and on the action plan moving forward. In doing so, and closely linked to the conditionality and suitability of the estate, many Council buildings will (physically and financially) not be capable of being retrofitted to achieve zero carbon aspirations.

### Strategic Themes

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A summary of the guiding principles for the three themes of the Corporate Property Strategy are as follows:

#### Live Well Locally

The City of Edinburgh Council’s vision is for a net zero city where everyone can live well locally. The Council is working to achieve this by adopting a ‘20-minute neighbourhood’ approach to service and infrastructure planning and delivery. The aspiration is that everyone should be able to meet most of their daily needs within a 20-minute round trip from their home by walking or wheeling.

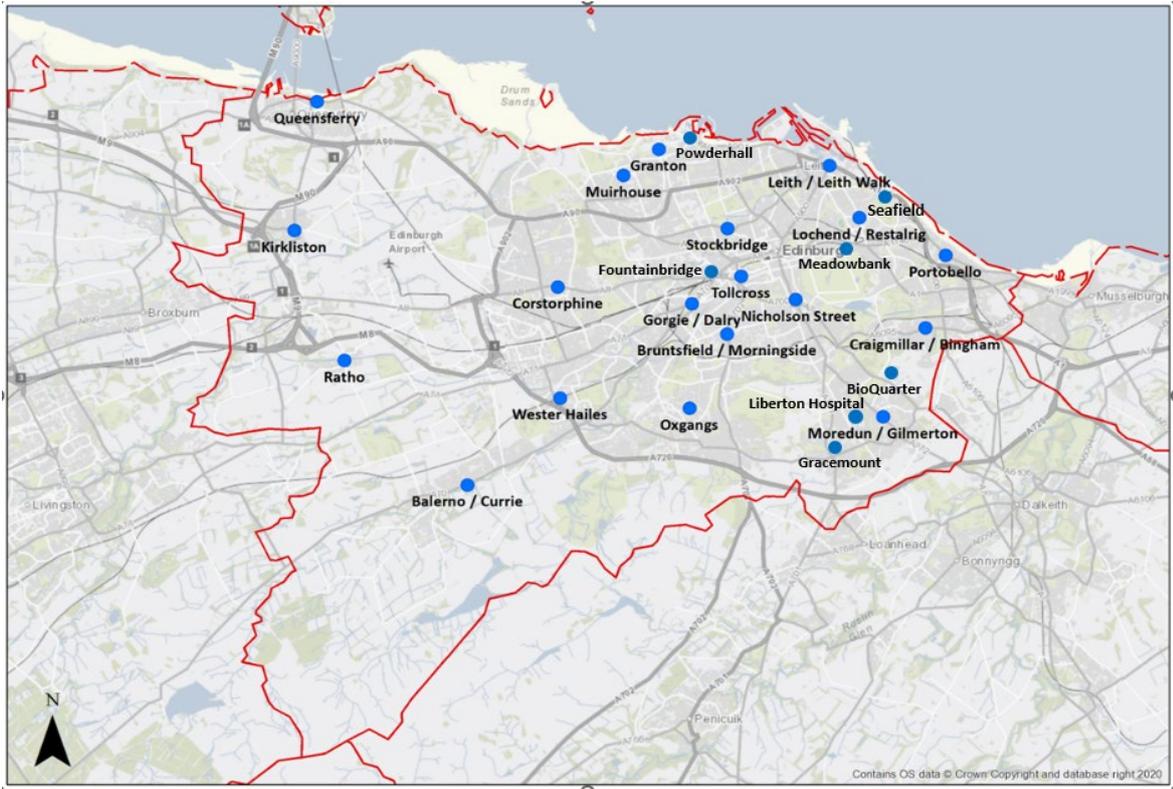
This means citizens having access to essential services such as shopping, schools and community spaces, health facilities and leisure activities. They will also benefit from open spaces, places to work and active travel links to the rest of the city.

The updated 20-minute Neighbourhood Strategy was agreed by the Culture and Communities Committee on 10 August 2023 and is characterised by the following

key strategic actions, which are the “building blocks” for how the 20-minute concept will be implemented:

- Working with local communities;
- Supporting people to access the services they need locally;
- Providing multiple services and facilities from a single location;
- Delivering mixed-use regeneration and development;
- Making our town and local centres greener, more inclusive and people-focused;
- Supporting local economies and businesses; and
- Improving sustainable and active travel access to services and facilities.

Numerous projects are already ongoing in neighbourhoods across the city, as shown below:



**Active engagement with local communities**

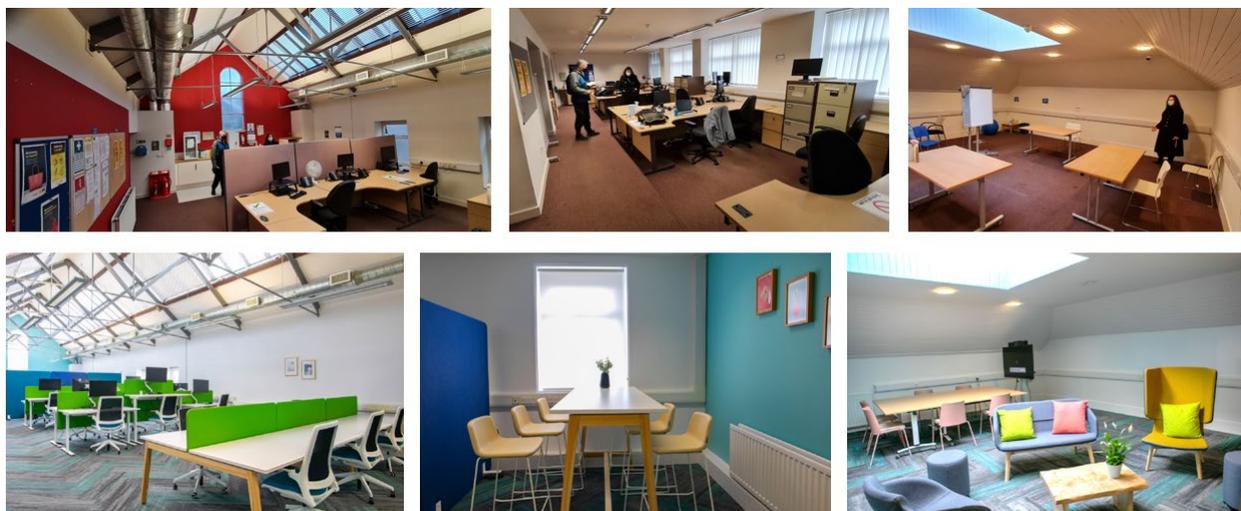
The principal focus for engagement with local communities is on services and place making, with the property context added as part of the infrastructure needed to deliver services and create better places. As an example of the outputs from engagement with the community, Appendix 2 provides the detail of a recent community workshop in Queensferry.

**Our Future Work**

As outlined in the [Our Future Work Strategy](#), the vision for the Council’s workplaces of the future is for an environment that is designed, built and adapted to drive the Council forward with a shared sense of purpose within a culture of collaboration aiming to improve outcomes for citizens.

Creating more dynamic work settings and effective ways of working will improve performance, knowledge sharing and autonomy, leading to greater employee and customer satisfaction, which will ultimately result in improved service delivery.

Waverley Court, the City Chambers and local offices will be redesigned and adapted to create suitable Hubs (for Elected Members, citizens, colleagues and partners) that have hybrid capability and promote the values in the Business Plan (including wellbeing and sustainability).



### **Grindley Street Court – Recently adapted community and colleague space**

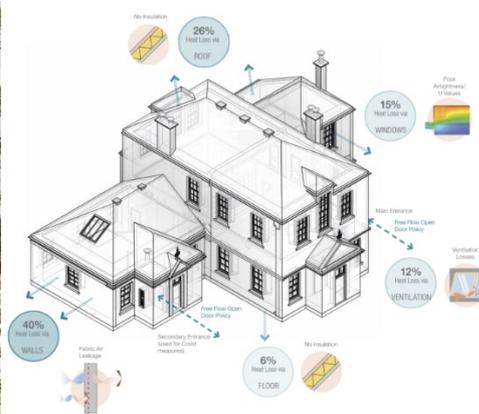
The initial focus will be on Waverley Court which is currently underutilised and the Council's most expensive building. Appendix 3 provides further information on the approach adopted.

Inclusive within this theme will be addressing issues of accessibility. Over a quarter of Council occupied buildings were built over 100 years ago and many suffer from accessibility issues due to their physical attributes. Therefore, as part of any business case, project or proposal coming forward for approval, accessibility will be a material consideration.

### **Net Zero Properties**

Edinburgh has a central role to play in delivering a cleaner, greener and fairer future for everyone. The Council has set an ambitious target for Edinburgh to become a net zero city by 2030.

The Council is adapting strategies to accommodate net zero plans within established asset management practices. A lot of the thinking around the delivery of net zero in buildings is still in development and therefore, this requires the Council not only to make informed decisions about the management and investment in its estate but also to play a part in driving innovation of net zero solutions.



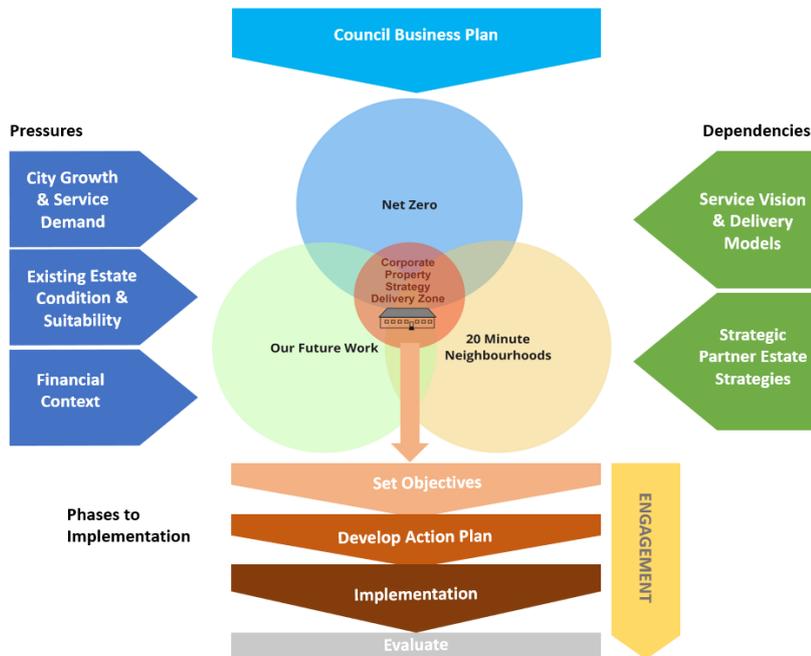
### Sciennes PS Annexe (PassivHaus) Liberton Nursery (Retrofit)

The policy for all new builds being of a PassivHaus standard will continue. Eight projects are on site, with Sciennes Primary School extension being the first to open.

On 22 August 2022, Policy and Sustainability Committee approved the initial Retrofit Strategy (including the first tranche 12 buildings to undergo works as part of the programme). Appendix 4 provides more information and commentary on the current position regarding delivering and maintaining a sustainable corporate property estate.

### Implementation

When the three themes of the Corporate Property Strategy are combined, they provide the strategic basis on which future decisions on property assets will be taken, as shown in the diagram below:



### Implementation & Action Plan

Collectively, the individual projects, business plans and proposals will form an action plan, that will be developed on the three strategic themes of this strategy. Appropriate consultation and engagement will be progressed with Elected Members, colleagues, partners and communities on individual project proposals as they are developed.

## Related documents

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[Council Business Plan 2023-2027](#)

Council Medium Term Financial Plan

[Council Sustainably Capital Financial Strategy](#)

[Our Future Work Strategy](#)

[Council Emissions Reduction Plan](#)

[20-Minute Neighbourhood Strategy](#)

[City Plan 2030](#)

## Integrated impact assessment

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The Corporate Property Strategy itself is too broadly defined to prepare its own Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). The strategy aims to ensure that services, and the buildings they are delivered from, are open and accessible to all those with protected characteristics. It will also contribute to placemaking and local economies, especially with regards to accommodating services that can provide timely and locally available support to those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Furthermore, one of the core workstreams of the Strategy is to contribute to reducing climate change and improving local environments by achieving net zero via sustainable operational property estate.

IAs will be completed for specific property projects and programmes to assess any impacts on citizens with protected characteristics associated with rationalising properties in specific locations or neighbourhoods.

## Risk assessment

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Risk assessment for the Corporate Property Strategy is captured in the Council's established corporate risk process and procedures. Risk registers will be developed for specific projects as part of the overall project governance strategy highlighted in the governance section above.

## Next Steps and Review

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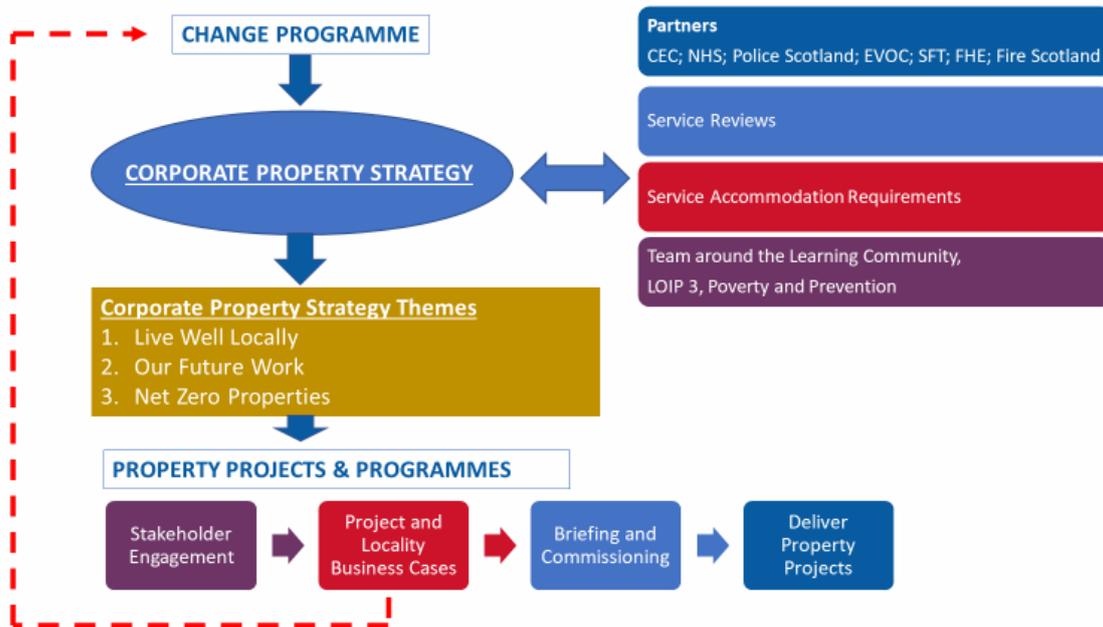
Subject to the appropriate approval by Committee, the next steps for implementation of the Corporate Property Strategy will be to establish the Corporate Property Strategy Board and develop an action plan which will be submitted to a future meeting of the Policy and Sustainability Committee.

Progress against the action plan will then be reported annually to Policy and Sustainability Committee along with any updates required to the Corporate Property Strategy. Individual business cases (which form part of the Strategy action plan) will be reported to the appropriate Executive Committee.

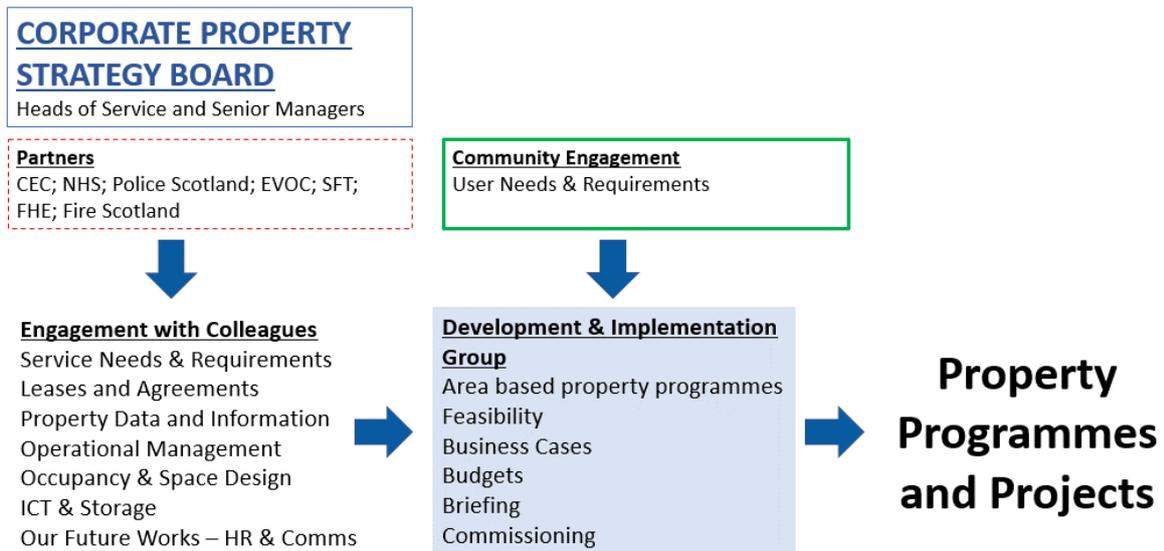
## Corporate Property Strategy Specific Governance and Implementation

The framework and governance structure for future operational property decisions and programme/project implementation is shown in the following diagrams.

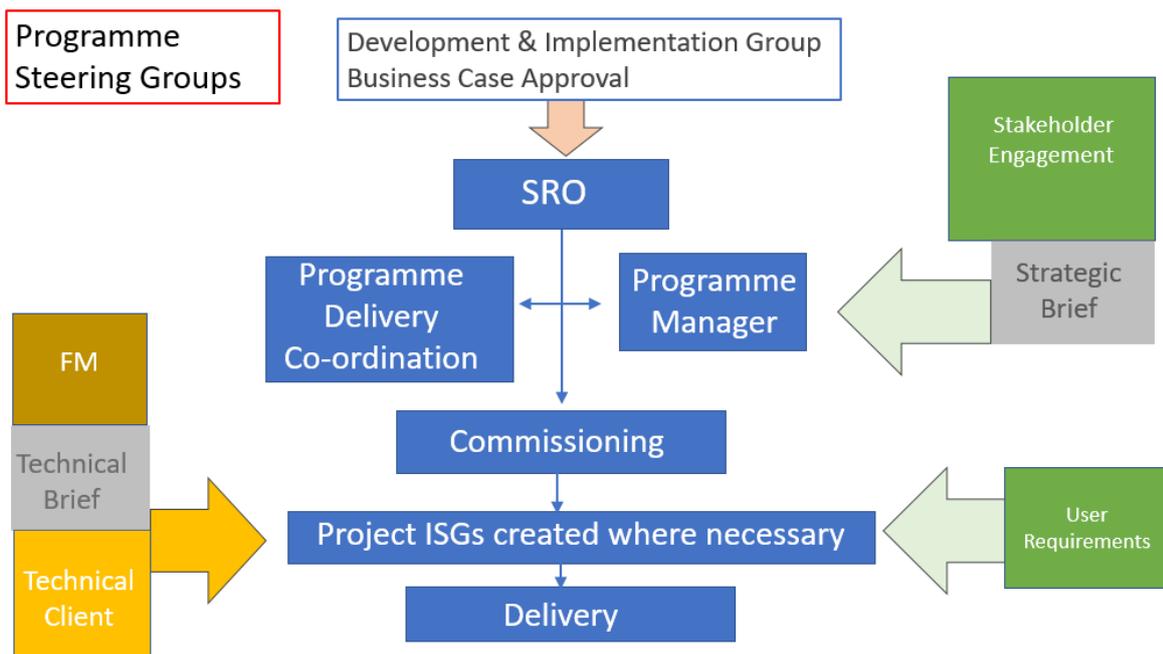
As shown below, the Corporate Property Strategy will be delivered as a workstream of the Council's Change Programme and have interactive connections with key partners, service reviews and accommodation requirements and other key service delivery initiatives.



The specific Corporate Property Strategy Programme and Delivery Governance is as follows:



Following Business Case approval and Committee approval, (where necessary), the following governance structures will be followed to ensure appropriate implementation of corporate property programmes and projects.





# Queensferry Community Buildings & Facilities Workshop

Wednesday 22 February 2023



## Background

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An informal engagement process asking people for their views on the future of secondary provision in Queensferry and Kirkliston highlighted some local residents' more general concerns about the lack of appropriate infrastructure to meet the growing needs of their communities.

Queensferry District Community Council had previously raised concerns with Council Officers regarding the lack of a co-ordinated approach when engaging with the Queensferry community over recent years. In order to gain a better understanding of the community's aspirations for infrastructure improvements, an offer was made to undertake a networking workshop with a range of Council Officers and other partner agencies providing services in this area to discuss the current performance of existing buildings and facilities in Queensferry.

In summary, the following organisations and groups were represented:

- City of Edinburgh Council Officers representing the following teams and departments:
  - Strategic Asset Planning;
  - Primary & Secondary School Leadership Teams;
  - Quality Improvement Education;
  - Facilities Management;
  - Community Empowerment & Engagement;
  - Libraries;
  - Sport & Wellbeing;
  - Heritage;
  - Cultural Venues and Place;
  - Transport & Environment;
  - 20 Minute Neighbourhood.
- Queensferry District Community Council;
- NHS
- Police Scotland
- Edinburgh Leisure
- Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC)
- Rosebery Hall Management Team
- Squids (After School)
- Queensferry Heritage Trust
- Queensferry Parish Church Youth Team
- Queensferry Priory Church
- Queensferry History Group
- Craigmmond Scout Group
- Queensferry Men's Shed
- Kirkliston Community Council.

## Objectives

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The aim of the workshop was to provide an open and creative forum for a small group of community representatives to meet service providers directly and discuss service needs within their growing community:

- *share ideas and aspirations for the future use of buildings and services in and around Queensferry;*
- *share any challenges/issues they face delivering or accessing services from existing buildings;*
- *identify what new investment projects such as a new Builyleon Road Primary School or new housing developments can offer to address any unmet needs;*
- *initiate a dialogue to help inform the development of the communities own Local Place Plan.*



## Format

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The format of the workshop was mixed tables of service providers and community representatives discussing the merits or challenges of providing services from existing buildings/facilities based around an asset map of Queensferry. The discussions were structured around three themed activities.

The membership of each table was decided before the event to provide a mix of interests at each table.

Following a presentation using the slides in Appendix 1, providing introductions, background and context to the event, tables undertook the following activities themed around popular property television shows:

### **Activity 1: 'Love It or List It'**

From your own experiences what are the key challenges delivering or accessing services from existing buildings and facilities in Queensferry?

- Identify and mark the buildings or facilities you discuss on the map.
- For each building or facility, use the Love It or List It sheets to say why – at least one good (Love It) and one bad (List It) for each building or facility.

### **Activity 2: 'Location, Location, Location'**

As a rapidly changing and growing community where would services be best located and why /does location matter/ what other services could / should also be co-located?

- Use the maps provided to show where your service (or any other) would best be located (and with whom).
- Use Post It notes or write on the map why you think that location would be best.

### **Activity 3: 'Amazing Space'**

What potential opportunities are there for pipeline projects and future investment to address any unmet community needs?

- Discuss any future projects or investment you are aware of and record these in the sheet provided.
- Beside each project or investment identify the opportunities it may present for your service or the community as a whole.



Themes	Needs	Post workshop discussions / Outcomes
<p><b>Aged Assets:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rosebery Hall</li> <li>• Museum</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Sports Hub – non CEC</li> </ul>	<p>Significant Investment required to ensure fit for purpose – future long term use still to be determined</p> <p>Constraints- conservation area/common good</p>	<p><b>Corporate Property Strategy</b> – once the future service delivery models and assets strategies have been finalised by the various departments the Corporate Property Strategy will determine capital budget allocations over the next 5-10 years subject to approved business cases.</p> <p><b>Common Good assets</b> - can only be disposed of (sale or lease) with Court approval. If the intention was to sell or lease out a common good property to fund improvements to another community facility, then a consultation would be required under the Community Empowerment Act and the feedback from the consultation as submitted as part of the application to the court.</p>
<p>Co-location Opportunities</p> <p><b>(Further Co-location opportunities are considered in the next section)</b></p>	<p>Library, Museum, Police</p>	<p><b>Corporate Property Strategy</b> – Outline Business Cases will be developed with Police input as part of the Council’s Corporate Property Strategic including an appropriate options appraisal. (Incl. Do Nothing, Refurb /Extend, Repurpose &amp; Relocate, Replace/ Build New)</p>
<p>Maps</p>	<p>Update missing key assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queensferry Parish Church,</li> <li>• Priory Church,</li> <li>• Christ Church Queensferry</li> <li>• Forth Bridge Contact &amp; Educations Centre</li> <li>• Police Station/Fire Station</li> <li>• Burgess Road Depot</li> <li>• GP Surgery NHS 24 &amp; Health Improvement Scotland</li> <li>• Scottish Ambulance Service</li> <li>• Sports Hub</li> <li>• VAT Run</li> <li>• Frankie &amp; Benny’s</li> <li>• No 43 Bus route</li> </ul>	<p>The asset maps shared at the workshop have been updated and can be view using the link below:</p>

Themes	Needs	Post workshop discussions / Outcomes
Operational Management Issues	Affordability/ availability/ Booking systems/key holding etc	<b>Community Centre Strategy</b> - it is anticipated the operational issues identified will be reviewed as part of the proposed strategic review of current arrangements for community centres and other neighbouring assets in consultation with Management Committees and service users. Anticipated timescales April 2023 to April 2024.
Under Utilised sites	Forth Bridges Contact & Education Centre Frankie & Benny's, Burgess Road Depot	Burgess Road depot could be relocated if it was deemed necessary to re-purpose the site for community use subject to outline business case approval.  Frankie & Bennies is owned by MFW Property Development Limited.
Housing	More mid- market rent/smaller houses and housing co-operatives.	<b>Affordable Housing policy</b> dictates 25% affordable housing mix, 70% of which is for social rent. The Council has limited involvement or influence over community benefits for private developer sites.
Active Travel improvements	Queensferry walking, wheeling & cycling	<b>South Queensferry - Local Development Plan Action Programme (LDPAP) Transport Priority Actions Lot 2</b> - The feedback report on the community engagement undertaken last year is available on the <a href="#">Consultation and Engagement Hub</a> . The Council have received Sustrans Places for Everyone funding to continue next stages of engagement and design but no design contract has been awarded yet.
Future Investment/ other funding streams	Learning Estate capital programme for new schools, or school extensions Capital Receipts Community Asset Transfer Community Benefits QDCC funding	Other grant funding options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage Fund: <a href="https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/">https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/</a></li> <li>Let's Do Net Zero Community Buildings Fund: <a href="https://localenergy.scot/funding/lets-do-net-zero-community-buildings-fund/">https://localenergy.scot/funding/lets-do-net-zero-community-buildings-fund/</a></li> <li>Wolfson Foundation: <a href="https://www.wolfson.org.uk/funding/funding-for-places/funding-for-historic-buildings-landscapes/">https://www.wolfson.org.uk/funding/funding-for-places/funding-for-historic-buildings-landscapes/</a></li> <li>Historic Environment Scotland: <a href="https://www.historicenvironment.scot/grants-and-funding/">https://www.historicenvironment.scot/grants-and-funding/</a></li> </ul>
Tourism/Economic Growth	Heritage Trial / 33 Cruise liners	

Themes	Needs	Post workshop discussions / Outcomes
VAT RUN		The VAT run is on the Council's Recreation Account, but is not on Parks register. Various local groups propose ideas, most recently a skate park, but nothing has come to fruition. We have some interaction with the forest schools and there is a biodiversity pond on site along with the Bike Track. They would be happy to arrange a visit to site with the relevant parties to explore redevelopment further if funding was available?
NHS	Additional capacity: GP, Dentistry and Pharmacy	There has been no further feedback provided following the workshop.

### Potential Co-location /Asset Rationalisation Opportunities

A few opportunities for co-location of services particularly the library, museum, and police were highlighted. However no clear preference or consensus on the ideal location for these services emerged. It is recommended that further option appraisals are developed to inform the decision making process and any strategic business cases for change.

	Library	Museum	Community Centre	After School	Early Years	Sports & Comm. Hub	Police (drop - in)	GP
Rosebery Hall	√	√	√					
Queensferry PS	√		√	√			√	
St Margaret's PS	√		√	√	√		√	
Builyeon Road PS	√		√	√	√	√	√	
Queensferry HS							√	
Burgess Road Depot	√		√	√	√		√	
Frankie & Benny's	√		√				√	√
QDCC Ferrymuir site	√		√	√				
Forth Bridge Education & Contact Centre		√						
NHS 24/Scottish Ambulance service								√

There are 2 potential emerging projects (subject to wider consultation and financial business case):

- 1.Potential redevelopment of the Queensferry Primary School and Burgess Road Depot sites to expand the school and develop a community campus approach including the library service.
2. Optimise and invest in the Roseberry Hall and a new Cultural Tourism & Information Hub on the High Street.

## Next Steps

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**Governance:** Establish a **Steering Group** to oversee wider community engagement and develop the relevant **Locality Business Plan**, as part of the **Corporate Strategy and Change agenda**.

**Local Place Plan (LPP):** Jane Lannarelli, from the 20 Minute Neighbourhood Team, has been involved in general conversations with the Scottish Government regarding Local Place Plans and community engagement. Scottish Government have offered to meet with Queensferry District Community Council to discuss how a LPP for Queensferry could be developed.

**Community Centre Strategy:** Community Empowerment & Engagement Team will be embarking on a consultation and engagement process with Management committees, service users and providers during the next calendar year to develop a city-wide community centre strategy.

**Queensferry District Community Council:** further discussion required following the workshop to determine QDCC priorities for creating new Community Hub and preferred location utilising funding secured by the QDCC.

**Learning Estate Strategy:** A statutory consultation to establish Builyeon Road primary school and change the catchment areas of local schools will begin after the summer.

## Appendices

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1. **Presentation**
2. **Summary of Activity Responses**

# APPENDIX 1: Presentation Slides

### Introducing...

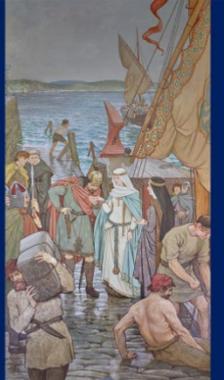
Robbie Crockatt	Learning Estate Planning Manager
Julie Duncan	Portfolio Planner
Keith Giblett	Chair, Queensferry & District Community Council
Terry Airlie	Vice Chair & Correspondence Secretary, Queensferry & District Community Council

Round the table introductions... (3 min)



### Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions (5 min)
- Presentation (10 min)
- Question - Discussion (20 min)  
Question - Feedback (10 min) } X 3
- Summary and Next Steps



### Why Are We Here?

- City of Edinburgh Council and Queensferry & District Community Council
  - Numerous public engagements and consultations;
  - Lack of clear joined up working;
  - Multiple points of contact;
  - Separate conversations.
- Local Plan for Queensferry
- Council's Corporate Property Strategy
- Assemble key stakeholders



### Objectives

To provide an open and creative forum for a small group of community representatives to meet service providers directly and discuss the service needs in their growing community:

- share **ideas and aspirations** for the future use of buildings and services in and around Queensferry;
- share the **challenges and issues** they face delivering or accessing services from existing buildings;
- identify what **new investment projects** such as Builyleon Road Primary School or new housing developments can offer to any unmet needs;
- Initiate a **community dialogue** to help inform the development of a Local Plan.



### Context – Priorities & Challenges

Costs  
Budgets  
Population  
Expectations



### Context – Our Existing Estate



Location  
Running Costs  
Accessibility  
Condition  
Fit for Purpose  
Performance

### Context – Future



### Discussion 1

From your own experiences what are the **key challenges** delivering or accessing services from **existing buildings and facilities** in Queensferry?

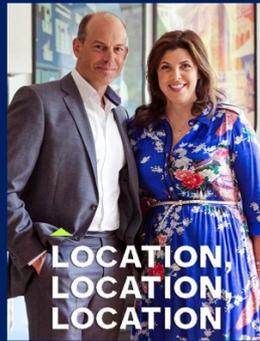


- Identify and mark the buildings or facilities you discuss on the map.
- For each building or facility, use the Love It or List It sheets to say why – at least one good (Love It) and one bad (List It) for each building or facility.

## Discussion 2

As a rapidly changing and growing community **where would services be best located** and why /does location matter/ what other services could / should also be **co-located**?

- Use the maps provided to show where your service (or any other) would best be located (and with whom).
- Use Post It notes or write on the map why you think that location would be best.



## Discussion 3

What potential **opportunities** are there for **pipeline projects** and **future investment** to address any unmet community needs?

- Discuss any future projects or investment you are aware of and record these in the sheet provided.
- Beside each project or investment identify the opportunities it may present for your service or the community as a whole.



## Summary & Next Steps

1. A report from the workshop summarising group discussions, capturing the key themes raised and any challenges identified or ideas/opportunities generated.
2. Feed into the Local Place Plan being developed by the ODCC
3. Inform the Council's Corporate Property Strategy
4. Recommendation areas/topics for more further discussion.

## APPENDIX 2: Summary of Activity Responses

### Activity 1: 'Love It or List It'

From your own experiences what are the key challenges delivering or accessing services from existing buildings and facilities in Queensferry?

- Identify and mark the buildings or facilities you discuss on the map.
- For each building or facility, use the Love It or List It sheets to say why – at least one good (Love It) and one bad (List It) for each building or facility.

<b>Queensferry Museum/ Registrars /Office</b>	
<b>Love It</b>	<b>Why? List It</b>
Great Location – Queensferry needs a museum	Poor access
Excellent location – central, views	Poor access – mobility, wheelchair
Popular museum and wedding venue	No registrar
	No local services
	Under utilised
Location	Accessibility issues – no disabled access
Excellent for visitors/tourists – 33 cruise ships to come in this yeast	High Value asset
Create business opportunities around High St – key foundation	Work required/need significant investment
Used to be popular with visitors and the community love it	
Good venue – potential for community use	Lack of availability/access
Location for tourism: heritage trail/views	Building/access/local connections/mixed use – co-locate with other services
<b>VAT Run</b>	
Forest Kindergarten	Needs TLC
Great potential – large area	
Holiday clubs	
<b>Library</b>	
Location	Past sell by date
Service	Located on a busy road, no parking
	Would be better located up the hill
School, Community use and engagement (Rhyme time, Book Bugs etc)	Varying opening times
	Accessibility issues, too small, on a busy road

Need for a physical library: Books +	Too small / co-locate with museum
<b>Queensferry High School</b>	
Concert Venue for Churches & Primary Schools	Cost of Cleaning
Attractive to Teaching Staff	
Good Quality Environment/Spaces and Technology for pupils	
Sports Facilities well used by the Community, Clubs and Edinburgh Leisure Members	Limits on access due to scale School location/child protection
Fantastic venue for open all hours	As with all high schools – Schools feel they don't 'gain' from including Adult Education provision ie use of their resources but no longer benefit directly from the income generation
<b>Rosebery Hall</b>	
Well Used	Accessibility ( rear access for wheelchair users)
Run well by Management Committee	Limited parking
Decoration ok ???	
Bus or walk ok	
Hired for Wedding's, Shows, parties etc	
Capacity (100?)	
Historic Value	State of repair
Well used for community Groups	Management Committee having to take on repairs/costs
Central	Accessibility
Bookshop (FF)	
Garden run by Local Environment Group	
Strong desire to keep with investment	
Good Management Group	Access issues; Buggies & wheelchairs
Popular	Very busy – limited capacity
Listed Building	Expensive to heat
Iconic & well loved	Challenging location for walking & parking
Keypad access (reduces need for janitorial cover	No evening janitor/varied keyholders
Community services for all age groups	Accessibility issues
	Limited spaces
	Looking tired and requires investment
<b>Queensferry Community Centre</b>	
Location	No investment
Well used daily	Not fit for purpose

Established clientele	Accessibility
Desire to rebuild – a purpose built unit – preferably on existing site	
Cramped site – but well placed, level site	Very old building - issues with: windows, gutters and energy efficiency
Highly used	No serious community ties s a building
Right location – ideally positioned for after school clubs	Accessibility ( ok by foot)
Near Ferrymuir site (the centre of Queensferry)	End of life
Provision of Services	Not big enough
Well used – good provision	Limited space and tired
<b>St Margaret's Primary School</b>	
Location	
<b>Forth Bridge Contact &amp; Education Centre</b>	
Accessible, Modern, Views, Size	Soul-less, Security, Functional, Transport Scotland
<b>Police Station</b>	
	Police presence
	No public access
Location/presence/Re-assurance	Co-location advantages/part time opening/low use

### Activity 2: 'Location, Location, Location'

As a rapidly changing and growing community where would services be best located and why /does location matter/ what other services could / should also be co-located?

- Use the maps provided to show where your service (or any other) would best be located (and with whom).
- Use Post It notes or write on the map why you think that location would be best.

<b>LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION (Maps)</b>
Move Library to a new Hub facility
Co-locate GP Services & Community Services - existing facilities not big enough
Hub – colocation of Nursing/Library/Police/CEC/Pharmacy/Dentist)
lots of locations would work (Community Hub - Queensferry PS and/or GP Hub Builyeon Road)
Quality of Service is important
Sports Hub next to QHS is 20year old
Medical Centre relocate to Frankie & Benny's site
Library relocate to Builyeon Road or Queensferry PS
Museum/Registrars to Rosebery Hall
Rosebery Hall community function relocate to Queensferry PS
Queensferry PS – a more central location for service provision

Active travel improvements/linking the various 20 minute neighbourhoods
Economic Value – Registrars & museum to bring in money
Museum to be integrated not Rosebury Hall
Potential Development Trust/ Edinburgh Development Group – Carers Trust
Need more rented housing & cooperatives – more mid rent and smaller housing
Opportunity to develop a library/community hub on the Frankie & Benny's site
Forth Bridges Visitor Centre – development potential
Transport Scotland – centrally located for a community hub
All schools ideally located and geographically spread across the locality to serve all areas of the community: However changes required to: improve accessibility/ affordability create separate community access and reduce barriers compartmentalise plant/services – for more efficient and cost effective use out with school hours create an information hub; promoting what's on/what's available
Builyeon Road Opportunity to develop a sports hub that complement/supplement the facilities provided at Queensferry HS
Police Drop-In Service across 3 or 4 school /community locations
Investment in the VAT run pump track for young people
Develop a Historic corridor along the high street from the Priory Church to the Queensferry Museum the would be attractive to Cruise Liner visitors
Improve active travel links across the community: North to South & East to West to improve walkability and access and in line with 20min neighbourhoods
Optimise the development potential of the Ferrymuir site

### Activity 3: 'Amazing Space'

What potential opportunities are there for pipeline projects and future investment to address any unmet community needs?

- Discuss any future projects or investment you are aware of and record these in the sheet provided.
- Beside each project or investment identify the opportunities it may present for your service or the community as a whole.

<b>PROJECTS AND FUTURE INVESTMENT</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES to Create 'AMAZING SPACES' (Places)</b>
	Sites/Assets for further development: Transport Scotland (Forth Bridge), Cleansing Building, Scottish Water?
Queensferry HS facilities: Halls, Cinema, Theatre	Make let costs more affordable for community groups
Purpose Built Community Centre	Independent access (a problem with school facilities conflict)
Scout Hall facilities on South side	More lets (waiting list)
Childcare Facilities – expanding population	After School Care

Community Hub Investment Development Trust	Frankie & Benny's
Community Cohesion	Trust/Charities/Services working together with CEC
Site Development opportunities - FETA, Transport Scotland	
Need for a new cemetery	
VAT Run development – funded as part of the developer's community benefits	
Income generation/ economic growth – from cruise liner visitors	
All schools geographically spread/located to serve the whole community	<p>Improve accessibility/ affordability</p> <p>Create separate community access to reduce barriers</p> <p>Compartmentalise plant/services – for more efficient and cost effective use out with school hours</p> <p>Information hub; what's on/what's available</p>
Forth Bridge Experience	Tourism, Heritage story, 'Active Visitors'
Community Centre Hub - Art & Sports	Wider Cultural Opportunities
Health	Secondary Care
	Improve services being delivered from new and existing schools, or other under-utilised sites: Forth Bridges contact & Education Centre and Frankie & Benny's

## Case Study: Waverley Court, Edinburgh

### June 2023

Project Name	Waverley Court Adaptations
Duration (Month/Year)	June 2023 onwards
Functions	Collaborative Hub, Community Hub, Co-Location with Partners

#### 1. Project Description

##### Overview

Edinburgh Council's Business Plan 2023 to 2027 recognises the shared goals and commitments of the Edinburgh Partnership, with a focus on creating good places to live and work and taking actions to end poverty. In order to achieve these shared goals the plan commits to working together through seeking opportunities to share assets, services, and resources towards the three common outcomes.

##### Vision

The vision for Waverley Court, as one project within the Corporate Property Strategy, is to facilitate this way of working by creating modern, attractive and future proof workspaces that can be used as a collaborative hub for Council colleagues and external public sector and service delivery partners. In addition, this will support the Our Future Work agenda through the creation of an effective hybrid working environment, attracting colleagues into the workplace to engage in individual and teamwork activities. This will be achieved through a planned implementation of a low intervention, sustainable design which promotes a collaborative working environment and creates opportunities for collocating with service delivery partners.

There are many advantages to a flexible approach to working patterns in the future which incorporates a healthy mix of different working options for roles where that is appropriate. A balance is good for a variety of reasons such as – welcoming new colleagues, collaboration and teamwork, social interaction, keeping connected with work activities and general wellbeing.

##### Main Objectives

The main objectives of this project are to:

#### 1. Adapt Waverley Court to support Our Future Work strategy

- Transformation of Waverley Court to a collaborative hub for the public sector and its service delivery partners.
- Create an environment which supports and attracts staff.
- Create a fully accessible workplace.

#### 2. Create opportunities to integrate other public sector bodies within Waverley Court

- Explore opportunities to lease space to public sector partners.
- Design spaces that support increased cooperation between public sector partners, leading to multi agency early intervention solutions (STRIVE/MASH).
- Mitigate current running costs and create new income streams.

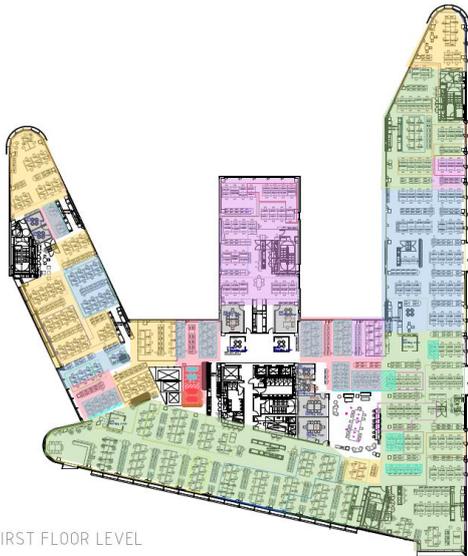
### 3. Sustainable development and the Council's path to Net Zero

- Investigate opportunities to improve energy efficiency of Waverley Court.
- Develop a circular approach to specification and disposal of Furniture, Fixings and Equipment.
- Encouraging more sustainable travel patterns. (Car park).

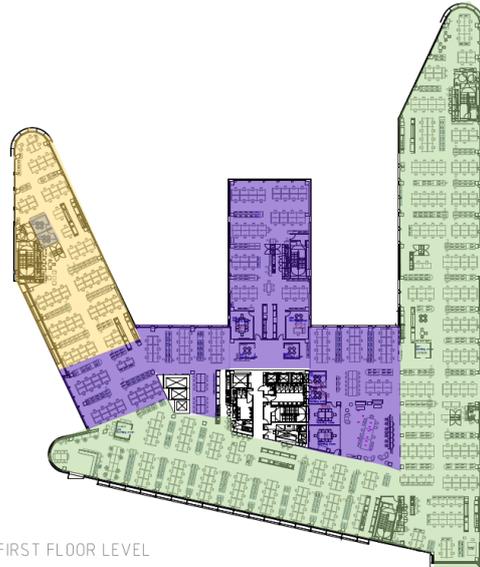
## 2. Function

Waverley Court is currently underutilised following the return to work after the COVID-19 pandemic. Services have assigned desks and areas based on a reduced and the adoption of hybrid working practices. The current usage of this is approximately 14% was when measured in January 2023, although recent occupancy monitoring has shown a marginal increase. An example of how the assigned areas are currently designated is shown below. This partitioning of space in this way contributes to the territorial nature of the workplace and results in less collaboration, isolation and creativity.





FIRST FLOOR LEVEL



FIRST FLOOR LEVEL

The above typical plans show the current directorate placement against the proposed directorate placement.

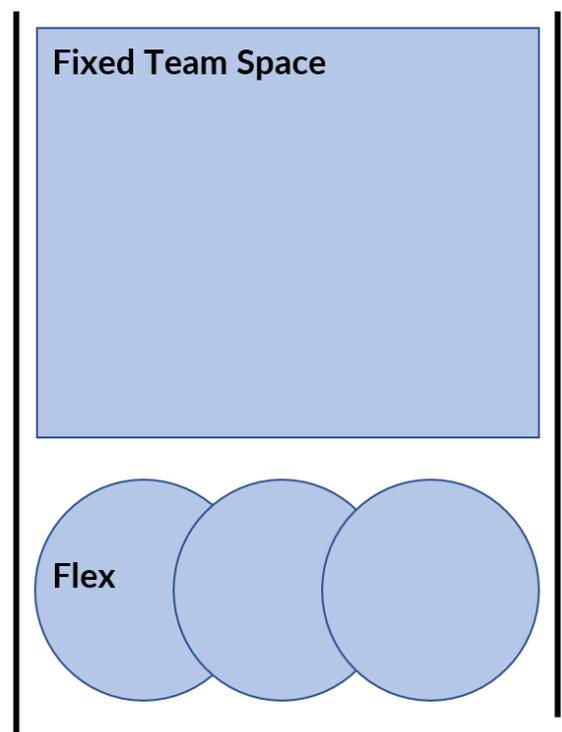
We propose to create directorate neighbourhoods based on a “fixed and flex” approach. This offers a variety of different spaces for teams to work in. With minimal ‘fixed’ desks intended for teams who have specific IT requirements, this gives colleagues the flexibility to complete different tasks in the most appropriate setting and spaces that complement their way of working. This is achieved by creating distinct work areas, also known as “zones.” Flexible office spaces promote collaboration between disparate departments and partners as everyone is in a central location – a “hub”. There are fewer barriers between workstations so that different teams can interact with one another, but there are still delineations so that they do not necessarily interrupt workflows. Better visibility and collaboration helps encourage creativity and additionally enhanced early and reactive intervention.

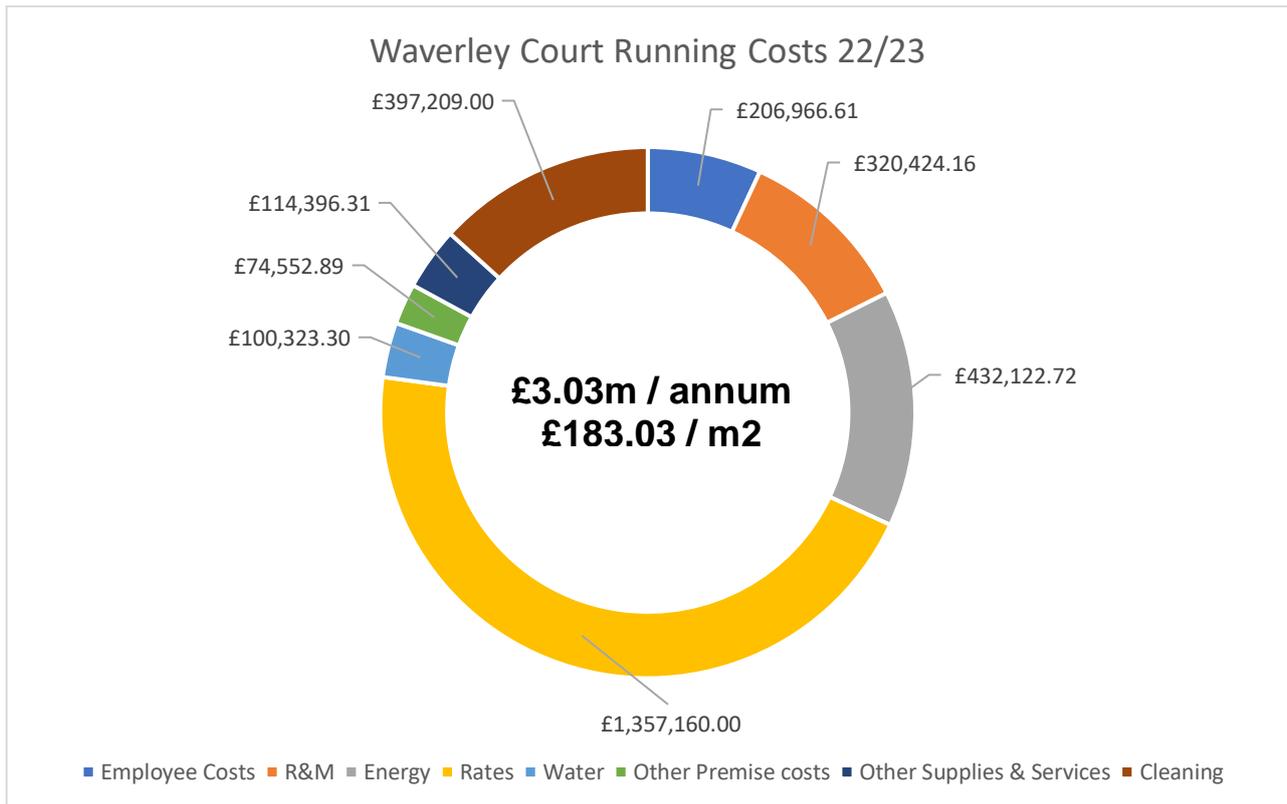
Fixed zones would be based on specific team requirements and would be similar to delineating an area for specific team use albeit on a reduced desk count.

Flex zones would make use of an enhanced desk booking system so that colleagues could actively search, book and occupy desks in a specific directorate neighbourhood. By sharing these area

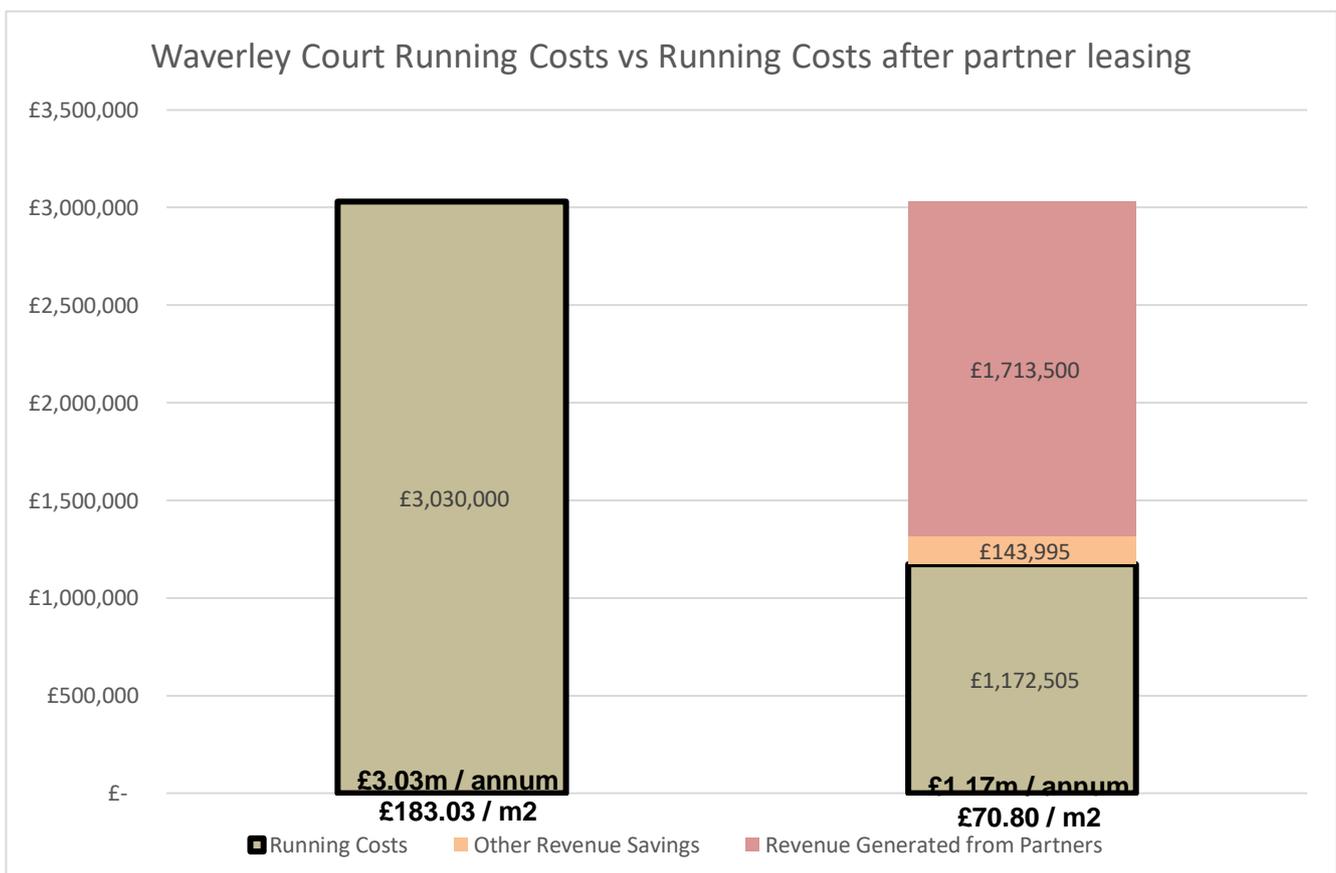
By reducing the amount of fixed desks and the introduction of more desk sharing between teams and services, the intention would be to use any excess space to create a range of other work settings such as collaboration space, bookable teams areas, phone booths and quiet/focus spaces.

The introduction of External Partners into Waverley Court would generate revenue and help offset the the building running costs.





By leasing out approximately 25% of desks in Waverly Court, there is potential to generate approx £1.7m in revenue, realise other savings of £144k by ending external leases, effectively reducing the operational running costs of Waverley Court by 61% to £1.17m per annum.



The Council is experiencing a shortage of customer facing space in the city centre. Further leasing opportunities could be explored as services move into Waverley Court and external leases are ended. To this end, we are exploring creating a Community Hub space within Waverley Court. This would be located on the Ground Floor G2 space, re-opening the existing entrance to Market Street.

### 3. Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment

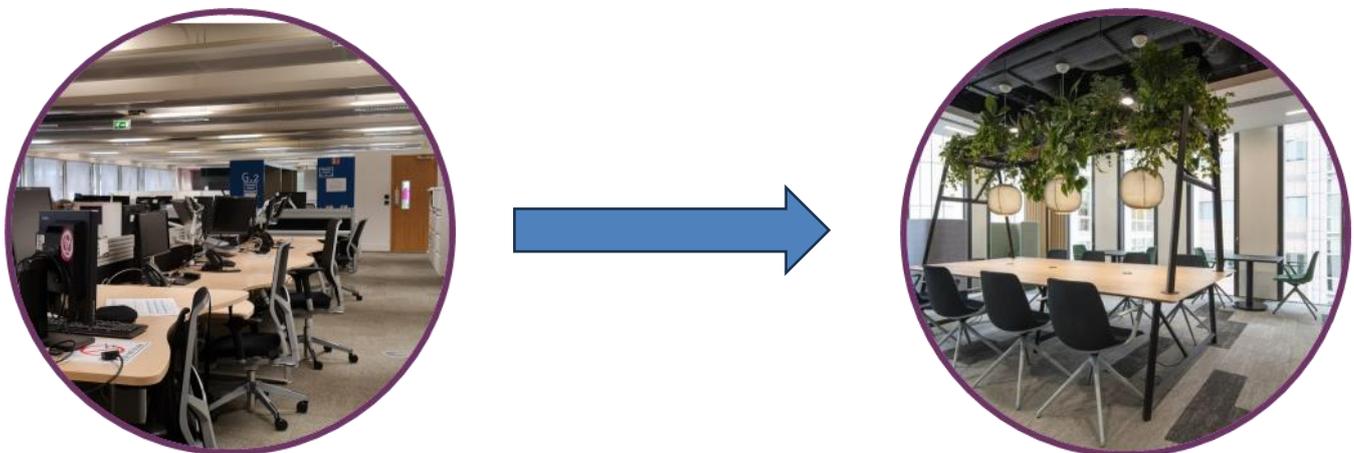
As we adapt space moving forward, reuse of existing furniture, fittings and equipment will be considered where appropriate developing a circular approach to specification and disposal. Budgets and processes for repairs of furniture, fittings and equipment including audio visual equipment and monitors will require to be established.

By utilising current purchasing frameworks, the Council will benefit from associated purchasing savings and benefits. By developing benchmark solutions that can be replicated across the estate, it is planned to use the tender process for Our Future Work trials to incorporate key groupings of furniture solutions that can be 'called off directly' for further trials and adaptations across the estate, this will reduce duplication of procurement costs as the project develops.

A Hybrid Equipment Guide has been included within the Our Future Work toolkit with DSE guidance. During the pandemic, some teams may have organised for their office equipment to be sent home to support home working. Services were asked to review what equipment needs to be returned to an office, and this forms part of their future workplace equipment strategy including equipment that can be purchased to help colleagues work more comfortably in an office.

Waverley Court has implemented a traditional desk based system since its opening in 2007. In fact, the desks are the same as they were in 2007. Although the desks are in relatively good condition for their age, they are not space efficient and there is an opportunity to alter them to modern standards. The requirement for large desks is now outdated – modern workforces are increasing agile and less paper based.

We propose to alter the existing desk to a more appropriate size of 1400x750mm (they are currently 1800x1000mm) in order to free up more space within Waverley Court. By doing this the size of each desk would be reduced approximately 0.7m<sup>2</sup>. and would result in freeing up an additional 1340m<sup>2</sup> (0.7m<sup>2</sup> x 1917 desks) of usable space. This can then be used create a range of collaboration spaces throughout the building.



A good example of the approach is the creation of a new accessible, demonstration space on the Ground Floor (G.6) of Waverley Court. Colleagues will have the ability to book the space with the intention to demonstrate sustainable adaptation of existing equipment where possible with inclusive and wellbeing design principles that can be replicated over the estate. There are also additional opportunities for short term hire of corporate space to partners, use for out of hours and for learning and teaching/digital innovation.



#### 4. Digital

Embedding new, post-covid ways of working and delivering the organisational reform priorities of the Our Future Work programme will require the interior environments over the estate to be digitally enabled with fittings, furniture, and equipment to support and align with the digital strategy.

A selection of new hybrid Audio Visual (AV) equipment has been piloted to facilitate hybrid meetings in certain buildings. AV Screens are required with video conferencing technology including cameras and microphones. In these trials it has been identified there has been a lack of investment in AV with no service directly owning audio visual kit and the associated responsibilities such as procurement and specification advice, repairs and maintenance and support for use. This has resulted in a range of compatibility issues between laptops, monitors and AV equipment.

Physical storage rationalisation will be essential to make buildings more suitable for sharing and collaboration, as currently some services are dependent on being located near files/resources. Removing storage from buildings will allow more inclusive space for wellbeing and collaboration to be developed. Digital storage solutions require to be developed to support the Our Future Work Programme. The Council currently has 827m<sup>2</sup> of file storage within Waverley Court.

#### 5. Accessibility

Since the build opened, further accessibility considerations, legislation and guidance have developed. Under this context we are reviewing the

Throughout this project, accessible design considerations will be fundamental in all decision making. Accessibility audits will be carried out to ensure the operational property estate continues to be improved

for all staff. Equal opportunities, health and wellbeing are innately dependant on the quality of all our working environments and every opportunity will be taken as workplaces are transformed to develop working environments suitable and inclusive for all colleagues.



## Appendix 4

### Delivering and Maintaining a Sustainable Corporate Property Estate

#### Summary

Edinburgh has a central role to play in delivering a cleaner, greener and fairer future for everyone. The Council has set an ambitious target for Edinburgh to become a net zero city by 2030.

The Council is adapting strategies to accommodate net zero plans within established asset management practices. A lot of the thinking around the delivery of net zero in buildings is still in development and therefore, this requires the Council not only to make informed decisions about the management of and investment in its estate but also to play a role in driving innovation.

This Appendix sets out the approach that the Council will adopt to address the challenges and opportunities that the delivery of net zero presents to the Council's operational estate.

#### Background

##### **Legislative Drivers**

The Council has legislative obligations to ensure Health and Safety, statutory compliance and mandatory inspections and certifications are carried out.

The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 commits Scotland to a "Net Zero" emissions target of 2045. Through the Scottish Government's 'Heat in Buildings Strategy' published in 2021, phased targets will be agreed with the Scottish Public Sector, with a commitment to decarbonise public buildings by 2038 at the latest. A key tenet of this is to ensure that publicly owned buildings meet zero direct emission heating requirements. A New Build Zero Emissions from Heat Standard will be introduced from 2024 by which point all new builds will have to use heating systems which produce zero direct emissions at the point of use. These include electric heat pumps, direct electric heating such as storage heaters and connection to heat networks.

In other words, it is expected that all public buildings stop using fossil fuels and replace their current gas and oil boilers as soon as possible, with a backstop of 2038 for hard to decarbonise buildings such as hospitals.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 commits Scotland to a "Net Zero" emissions target of 2045. Through the Scottish Government's 'Heat in Buildings Strategy', phased targets will be agreed with the Scottish Public Sector with a commitment to decarbonise public buildings by 2038. A key tenet of this is to ensure that publicly owned buildings meet net zero emission heating requirements.

The Heat in Building's Strategy also sets out a requirement for Councils to develop Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) by the end of 2023. The Council's LHEES will define the long-term plans for decarbonising heat and improving energy efficiency across Edinburgh.

##### **Council Drivers**

In January 2018, the Council embarked on a five-year programme to upgrade the condition of buildings across the operational property estate. The programme was designed to first stabilise, and then upgrade the condition of the Council's operational estate to a safe and satisfactory condition and to address a backlog of maintenance issues. Condition remains a focus of the Corporate

Property Strategy and will play a central role in informing the buildings that require investment and is therefore integral to how the Council resources the switch to net zero buildings.

The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and a Nature Emergency in 2023 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and corporate emissions. The new Council Business Plan 2023-27 sets “Become a net zero city” as one of the three strategic priorities for the Council. The [Council Emissions Reduction Plan](#) (CERP) was approved in November 2021 and sets out the strategic approach and key actions the organisation will take to ensure that, subject to the appropriate funding being secured, it will be a net zero organisation by 2030. In doing this, the plan also sets out how the Council is delivering against its Climate Compact commitments. The CERP provides detail on the strategic approach to building emission reduction and outlines the key interventions being progressed.

In 2021/22 emissions from buildings made up around two thirds of the Council’s carbon footprint. Set within the wider context of city emissions, Council corporate emissions account for around 3% of total emissions. The scale of this challenge highlights the importance of the Council taking a lead role to drive the change and practices that will support wider net zero delivery across the city.

In terms of the Corporate Property Strategy, this will mean pushing boundaries, bringing in resource and funding, building knowledge and expertise, developing the market, innovating and promoting technology advancement. The Corporate Property Strategy therefore has a wider value that extends beyond the outcomes sought for the Council estate. Importantly, this step change requires consideration of opportunities and impacts beyond the boundaries of any individual properties. The strategy needs to balance the requirements of the individual buildings, with the wider needs of neighbourhoods and the city.

## Defining Condition

Understanding the condition of assets is an essential component of keeping buildings safe and operable. Properties are surveyed on a five-year cycle to monitor condition and identify any required investment. The gathering and analysis of property data (such as any reactive maintenance call outs or surveys undertaken) helps inform this process. Therefore it is important that information is recorded in a way that informs the delivery of current and future objectives. The Council follows the Scottish Government’s [The Condition Core Fact](#) guidance.

Historically, condition was the predominant driver of capital works in the Council’s operational buildings with a risk-based approach taken to prioritise investment. Whilst this remains an essential requirement, future capital works must also support the delivery of a net zero Council estate.

## Defining Net Zero in Buildings

A net zero carbon building is generally considered as a building that is fully powered by renewable energy and, over the course of a year, contributes zero (or negative) carbon emissions. However, this is only part of the picture. There are carbon emissions associated with the construction, maintenance and disposal of buildings that are significant and need consideration.

Establishing a clear pathway to delivering a net zero property estate is not an attainable objective at this point in time. More work is required to research the technical approaches and establish the infrastructure, supply chains and finance that will support the delivery of net zero. The Corporate Property Strategy outlines an approach that will help place the Council on the journey to net zero.

## Net Zero and New build

The Council has set a default requirement to deliver new build properties to Certified Passivhaus Standard in the 2030 Climate Strategy (see action 3.1 in “Net Zero Development and Growth” chapter – “Commit to all City of Edinburgh Council new build operational estate to be Passivhaus standard with LZC primary plant”). This will ensure that buildings are designed to a very high level of energy efficiency. The Passivhaus approach also accommodates the addition of low carbon heating plant which will ensure that new builds support net zero targets and importantly, that new buildings do not add to the challenge of decarbonising the Council estate. The first Council building, constructed to Certified Passivhaus Standard, Sciennes Primary School extension opened in August 2023.

## Net Zero and the wider city

Achieving net zero emissions is a global challenge. Whilst the focus of this strategy is the Council’s corporate property, it is important to recognise the Council as a key stakeholder and leader in the delivery of net zero in Edinburgh and Scotland. Delivering on net zero will require coordination across Edinburgh to create the infrastructure to support low/zero carbon heat and localised power generation.

The Council has a role to play in identifying and supporting the establishment of heat networks in areas of high heat density. According to the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021, local authorities have a duty to consider the designation of heat network zones and assess the suitability of their own estate to connect to heat networks. Larger Council buildings in areas with a high heat density are well placed to act as anchor loads for heat networks and, along with other public sector organisations, will play a central role in the success of future heat networks. Therefore, it is important that the viability of a heat network is considered as part of the decarbonisation strategy for individual buildings in the Council estate.

## The Challenge of Low Carbon Heat

One of the primary requirements to decarbonising Council buildings is to reduce reliance on natural gas as a source of space and water heating. With most of the Council’s estate currently heated by boilers burning natural gas, the most likely strategy available to the Council will be to switch buildings across to some form of electric heating. However, there are practical, operational, and financial considerations to making this switch.

- **Infrastructure** – the switch to electric based heating will require an upgrade to local electricity connections to support the increased demand. Wide-spread adoption of this approach across the city will place pressure on wider infrastructure which may result in delayed switch over. This pressure also points to a need to consider low energy Retrofit as a means to reduce demand on the electricity network. For example, according to [SPEN distribution heat maps](#), in the east side of the city, “at least one factor is close to its operational limit and so installation of most levels of Distributed Generation and a local connection is highly unlikely. It may also require extensive reinforcement works or given the lack of a local connection, require an extensive amount of sole user assets to facilitate such a connection.”
- **Cost of energy** – historically, when compared to electricity, gas has been relatively cheap. This means that converting to electricity from gas could cause a significant increase in operational costs placing pressure on budgets, particularly when a lower level of fabric intervention has been applied to the building. Electricity is more flexible and there are ways

to get 'more' heat output, such as using electricity to power heat pumps (which also reduce the overall demand for electricity – see why this is important in 'Infrastructure' above). However, even with improved efficiencies, running costs will likely increase, making it challenging to create a conventional 'spend to save' argument for decarbonisation. Decarbonisation will come at a cost.

- **Building Characteristics** - the Council operates a diverse property portfolio to meet a broad and evolving range of user needs. Whilst the Council has some more modern buildings, it also has a large portion of older buildings which present specific challenges to decarbonisation (30% of the estate is over 100 years old). Low carbon heat from heat pumps suits lower circulation temperatures (i.e. the temperature of water circulated to radiators) than that provided by conventional gas boilers. This lower grade of heat can present barriers to a direct switch out of gas boilers with heat pumps. Essentially, at lower circulation temperatures, radiators are not able to deliver the same heat to a building. This places a major challenge on retrofit plans with consideration needed on both the capability of existing heat distribution to heat a space, and any corresponding improvements that need to be made to the building fabric to reduce heat loss.
- **Other Risks** - the supply chain would not be ready and the skills gap too big to deliver; Works carried out would be done in an accelerated way (e.g. heating electrification only without fabric first approach), to the detriment of the buildings (increased running costs) and its users (reduced comfort); and levels of disruption / decant.

## Existing Buildings - Aligning condition and net zero

A key aspect of the Council's Corporate Property Strategy is to align established processes to invest in lifecycle condition improvements of the Council's estate with works to decarbonise properties. This places the drive to decarbonise against practicalities of determining the best course of action within the remaining lifespan of any plant and equipment. As detailed above, there are challenges with decarbonising heat, and 'making the switch' can be predicated on other works such as increased insulation, or new radiators, that support the electrification of heat. Adapting to this is an important aspect of the Council's Corporate Property Strategy. More planning will be needed to ensure that works that support the switch to low carbon heat are identified and phased accordingly and prior to any lifecycle replacement of heating plant becoming critical. This may mean upgrading insulation and air tightness at the same time as replacing roofs, even though the building remains on gas for a while longer. Current methods for evaluating the best approach to retrofit are resource intensive and solutions will be building specific. Adapting property surveys to include low carbon opportunities and dependencies and linking to wider LHEES will be an important element in better informing the estate wide retrofit strategy.

## Delivering Best Value

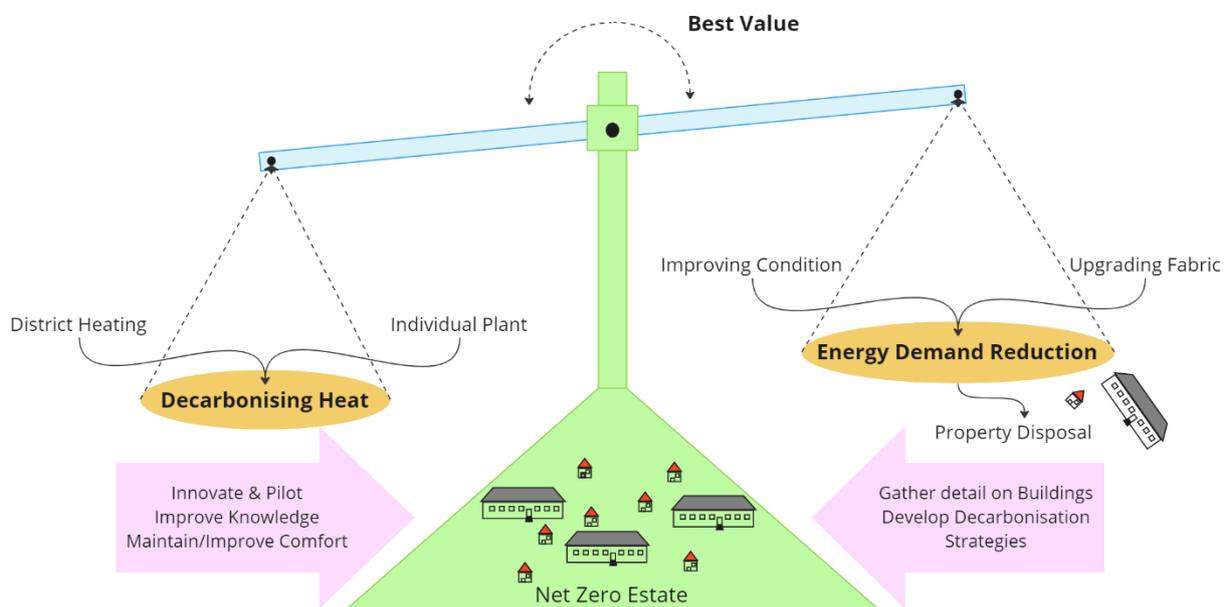
Decarbonising heat and lowering heat demand through retrofit is expensive. Whilst there are opportunities to learn from pilots where a building archetype is made as efficient as possible, this is not practical or affordable across all buildings in the Council estate. The Council needs to strike a balance between low carbon plant and demand reduction. This will vary based on building characteristics, but any approach will likely fall between the minimum level of improvement required to enable the switch over to low carbon heating plant and the optimum level to enable improved comfort and lower running costs. Works can be disruptive to normal building activity and the cost of decanting building users (such as would be the case for schools during deep energy

retrofit) is very expensive. Whilst there are opportunities to look at ways to address this, the Council will need to be innovative where it can be to reduce costs.

Consequently, to deliver best value, the Council will need to be flexible in approach, and the decarbonisation of a building may be an iterative/elemental process over several years. Whilst improved comfort is a desired outcome, decarbonisation of heat is the primary objective.

## Pilots and Innovation

Developing pilot projects and supporting innovation not only help the Council inform the best pathways to deliver net zero, but they also play a role in supporting wider industry in developing responses to the net zero challenge. It is important the Council continues to share knowledge and information gained from pilot projects and continues work with other organisations to support the development of ideas, standards, and research.



## The reality and costs of decarbonising heat and delivering net zero

Delivering net zero across the Council's estate is a significant challenge. The Corporate Property Strategy seeks to prioritise the electrification of heat as the primary objective but this is just one aspect of a larger picture. With over 400 operational buildings, and with options for the electrification of heat expensive and potentially intrusive, the scale of the task ahead is enormous. However, there is also value in assessing the retrofit methodologies at a more modest scale to ensure the build-up of skills and expertise whilst moderating exposure to the risks associated with learning by doing. Therefore, the Council needs to exercise caution but will ultimately need to take bold and informed steps.

In conclusion, as part of the Corporate Property Strategy, the ability (cost and conditionality) to retrofit a building will be a material consideration in informing future decisions.