



BRAINTREE ASSET  
MANAGEMENT  
FRAMEWORK:  
**POLICY & STRATEGY**

# INTRODUCTION

This Asset Management Framework document covers the period 2024 – 2028 and aligns itself to the current corporate strategy in 2024, set around the strategic approaches to:

- **Communities**
- **Prosperity**
- **Environment**
- **Fit for the Future**



The key to ensuring an Asset Management model works is to ensure there are clear links between the Corporate Strategy, key Council Policies and what we want to achieve from our Property Land and Buildings.

To that extent, this Asset Management approach has been modelled by CIPFA and focusses on three main areas:

- 1 **Asset Management Policy**
- 2 **Asset Management Strategy**
- 3 **Asset Management Plans**



The purpose of this document is to articulate what we want to do with our assets; communicate those plans with our stakeholders; ensure there is a common vision for property and assets; create a practical plan for delivery; and ensure our plans are adaptable to meet the changing nature of the Council’s priorities.

# ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY

In order to set the framework for our assets, we need to ensure that we are aligned to the overarching corporate objectives and consider how we will use our assets to support those objectives.



## Communities

### Our Key Priorities:

- Improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life for individuals and families and reduce health inequalities focusing on prevention and early intervention.
- Provide affordable, high quality and safe homes that meet the needs of our residents.
- Reduce social isolation and loneliness and support communities to build positive social networks and connections.
- Develop safer and more resilient communities, empowering residents to take ownership of local projects and initiatives.



### What does this mean for Property Asset Management:

- Use of good practice appraisal approach (e.g. HM Treasury business case/Green Book) to measure and communicate socio-economic benefits, costs and risks around health and wellbeing.
- Work with partners to develop/ redevelop homes to meet needs. This includes provision of temporary accommodation, which is a sector wide cost pressure.
- Considering viable opportunities to convert Council owned property and/or sites to housing/temporary accommodation.
- Maintain community facilities, including green spaces. Advocate the delivery of Council services and community services from these.



## Prosperity

### Our Key Priorities:

- Ensure district growth is sustainable and accessible with strong connectivity and infrastructure.
- Attract and support business growth, providing high quality employment opportunities in high growth sectors and industries.
- Provide tailored business support and access to funding to help businesses thrive and innovate.
- Develop skills that are attractive to employers and support residents to access opportunities to improve their economic wellbeing.



### What does this mean for Property Asset Management:

- Where there are gaps in market provision ensure that the Council considers the viable demand as part of its regeneration process.
- Working with local partners, including businesses and education providers, to promote the services available at these key venues.
- Consider opportunities to build the supply chain by being clear on a pipeline of work and through supporting local education providers and businesses.





## Environment

### Our Key Priorities:

- Protect and enhance our built and natural environments across the district, providing good access to open spaces and increasing biodiversity.
- Continue to deliver a cohesive and integrated response to climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Support residents and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint and be more resilient to climate related impacts.
- Improve the way that we manage waste and encourage residents and businesses to reduce, reuse and recycle more.



### What does this mean for Property Asset Management:

- Develop a robust understanding of the scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse emissions from the Council's property assets, report this and use in decision making;
- Using a structured approach to consider the future shape of the Council's property asset holdings, such as the RAG ratings used when developing this Asset Management Framework, that includes consideration of whether a particular building will achieve or get close to net zero/carbon neutrality;
- Consider disposing of or repurposing buildings that will not achieve or get close to net zero / carbon neutrality;
- Tackle sustainability in an integrated manner, considering the interrelationships and sequencing of interventions, for example fabric first retrofit before micro generation. Also, the impact of wider resources such as water and waste.



## Fit for the Future

### What we heard from our residents, communities, businesses, members and stakeholders:

- The importance of helping people to help themselves and have less reliance on Council services.
- The need to use technology more widely to support delivery of services.
- The need to work in partnership and share services to add resilience and reduce costs.
- The need to use council buildings and land to generate additional income.
- The importance of being more efficient in managing council funds.
- They are least accepting of reducing spend on frontline services or introducing charges or increasing council tax to generate additional income to spend on services.



### What does this mean for Property Asset Management / Behaviours needed:

- Challenge as to whether a Council property is needed, including: meeting a frontline service need not addressed elsewhere or in another manner (e.g. via technology); is suitable in terms of accessibility, location, ways of working; is well utilised; has reasonable running costs including capital maintenance requirements;
- Focus on partnership working in buildings, with colocation of Council and wider Public and Community Services;
- Consider the alternative usage / value of a particular property asset and/or opportunities to generate additional income. Where commercial properties do not meet an income threshold, assuming there are no wider socio-economic reasons for holding them, considered disposal;
- Look to optimism funding and financing opportunities, including grant funding;
- Transition towards a Corporate Landlord Team (CLT) approach, effectively a centralised service function for property and asset management, in order to maximise efficiencies and maintain one source of data.





## ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Asset Management Strategy sets out an overview of the organisation's land and property estate, together with governance arrangements, approach and key initiatives for the management and development of the estate that support corporate objectives.



# INTRODUCTION

The strategy is influenced by the following Council strategies:

- **Economic Growth Strategy**
- **Climate Change Strategy**
- **Housing Strategy**
- **Procurement Strategy**

Some of our land and buildings will be essential for delivering effective and vital services to our communities and service users in the future. Others are no longer fit for purpose, possibly being in the wrong place, not suitable for modern approaches to working and/or service delivery, other assets may simply be duplicates due to several organisations forming into one.



In order to achieve our Corporate Priorities, we need to ensure that we use all our resources in the most effective ways possible which especially includes our land and buildings. This is something that will take the lifespan of this Strategy to achieve and will consider:

- How our land and buildings are currently used
- How they will need to be utilised in the future and where they need to be sited
- A programme of acquisition, disposal, construction, and partnership to ensure we have the most effective estate moving forward within the resources available.

# PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT VISION

As a major revenue income generator for the Council, our vision for portfolio is twofold:

1. To maximise commercial opportunities on the investment portfolio to ensure a healthy income stream supports the delivery of Council priorities.
2. To better understand how the services across the Council utilise operational land and assets to enable services to be delivered from the right facilities in the right locations.

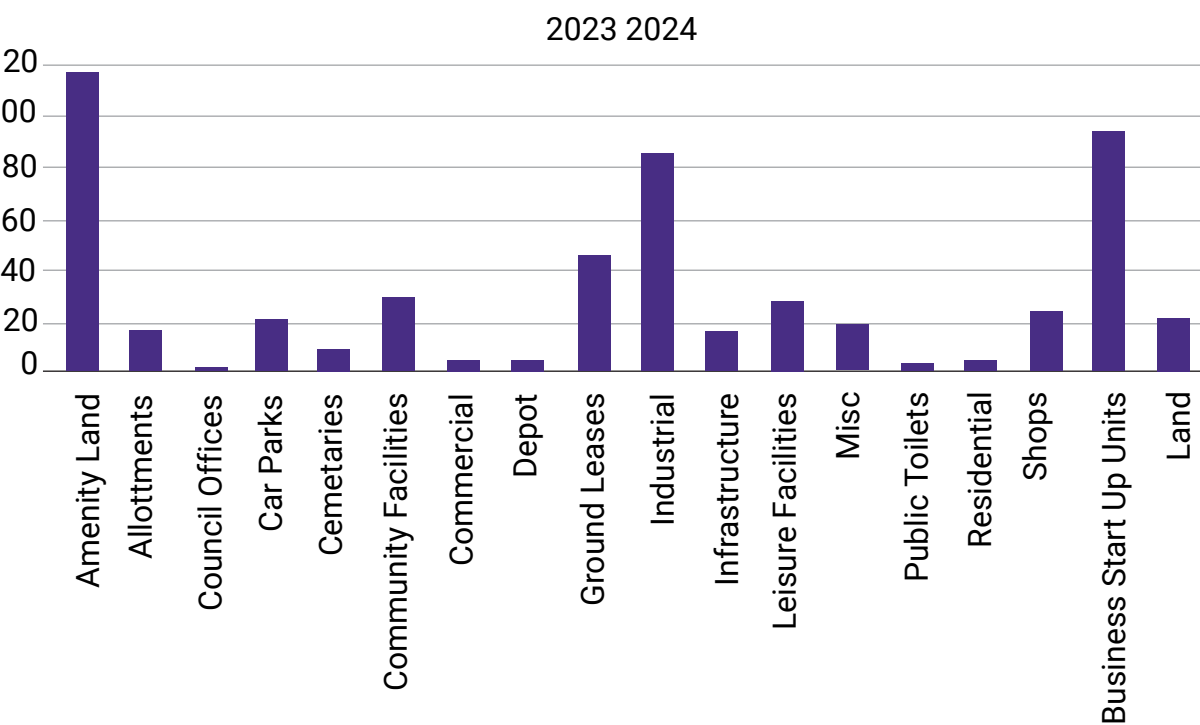


**To achieve this we will:**

- Ensure our investment portfolio meets our investment criteria and where it is underperforming look at alternative options to replace income.
- Harness our Shared Experience – Using our combined knowledge and understanding of our land and assets we will enable a more structured operational delivery model, governed by the Strategic Property Asset Management (PAM) Board
- Implement a Unified Approach – Working collaboratively we will support the Council, its communities, and its stakeholders, to maximise our land and assets to achieve our corporate priorities through a corporate landlord approach to asset management
- Embrace and Maximise Digital Transformation – We will make greater use of the digital tools available to map our assets to operational demand centres, ensuring we are delivering services from the right locations to serve our communities.

# WHAT DO OUR ASSETS LOOK LIKE?

We hold 545 assets, which are categorised as below:



A full list of our assets is published on the Council’s website under the Transparency Code.

The total book value of our assets stand at over £157m

# ACCOUNTING BOOK VALUE

The Council is required to account for the book value of property and land on an annual basis.

The regulations require them to be grouped into three valuation methods, the method is determined by the category.

Some assets are valued as an investment (Fair Value), some are

valued according to service use (Existing Use Value) and the final category are assets valued according to replacement with an allowance for depreciation (Depreciated Replacement Cost) such as a heritage asset.

The total value of our assets is approximately £157,793m and is broken down as follows:

|                              |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Existing Use Value           | £43,390,300         |
| Depreciated Replacement Cost | £54,314,000         |
| Fair Value                   | £57,097,000         |
|                              | <b>£154,801,300</b> |

Note: the figures represented are Book Value not Market Value



# ASSET FUNDING AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

Over the period of this Asset Management Framework, we have forecast in the MTFS gross income on the portfolio held by asset management of circa £3.9m. This income is an important part of our revenue funding, funds which are used to support Service delivery.

**The Capital Programme for 24/25 totals £13.691m of which £7.031 are related to property and land projects:-**

| Project   | Business Plan           | Programme 2024/25 |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------|
| John Ray Park Improvements                                | Strategic Investment    | 6,070             |
| Planned Maintenance of Council Owned Assets               | Asset Management        | 636,520           |
| Horizon 120 - Dev Phase 1                                 | Strategic Investment    | 238,170           |
| Witham Community Centre                                   | Strategic Investment    | 3,883,090         |
| Allotments Gt Notley Country Park                         | Operations              | 56,470            |
| Halstead LC Changing Rms                                  | Community & Leisure     | 25,000            |
| Refurbishment of Public Toilets at Newlands Drive, Witham | Operations              | 50,000            |
| LED Installation at the Leisure Centres                   | Environment             | 34,480            |
| Causeway house windows                                    | ICT & Facilities        | 47,000            |
| Weavers Park Tree Planting/Bench                          | Strategic Investment    | 15,860            |
| Witham Town Park Phase 2                                  | Strategic Investment    | 78,610            |
| Trees Bocking Blackwater                                  | Sustainable Development | 11,980            |
| Lakes Road Depot - Refurbishment                          | Operations              | 75,000            |
| Causeway House - Refresh                                  | Strategic Investment    | 1,200,000         |
| WLC - LED Light Replacement                               | Environment             | 64,350            |
| WLC Car Park - Solar Canopy                               | Environment             | 355,000           |
| WLC Roof Mounted Solar Array                              | Environment             | 93,000            |
| Flitch Way Improvements                                   | Strategic Investment    | 6,060             |
| Rose Hill - New Park                                      | Strategic Investment    | 154,600           |

# PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The property and asset management service are resourced by a team of nine officers, a mix of full time and part time roles.

The team do not currently provide a Corporate Landlord function, the transition towards Corporate Landlord will require the ongoing review of capabilities, capacity and additional resourcing as detailed in the Asset Management Plan.

# OPERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND ALIGNMENT

The Asset Strategy will enable current and emerging Service Review (operational) models of delivery.

In developing this strategy, engagement was sought from each major service area to determine current and future plans for the operational estate.

These have been incorporated into our strategy and ensure we remain connected to emerging service pressures and how the estate can best support those needs.

Our Corporate Landlord model and associated governance will factor future requirements into our structured to enable proactive asset management.





# ASSET STRATEGY

Our strategy is centred around 2 fundamental principles:

- 1 Organisational Strategy
- 2 Technical Delivery

In order to ensure that work undertaken can be mapped to our strategy, we have developed **6 strategic pillars** aligned to those 2 fundamental principles. They are as follows:

Organisational Strategy:

- **Governance** – Corporate Landlord & Decision-making processes
- **Systems and Processes** – Efficiency of the delivery (service)

Technical Delivery:

- **Asset Management** – Acquisitions/ Disposals links to investments & MTFS
- **Asset Reviews** – structured reviews of asset holdings (why we are holding assets)
- **Building Obsolescence** – The current state of the asset holdings
- **Readiness for the future** – Future service and Net Zero objectives

To ensure our strategy is aligned to the Corporate Priorities, we have mapped each item against the following classifications:

C - Community  
P – Prosperity  
E – Environment  
FF – Fit for the Future

## Fundamental Principle 1: Organisational Strategy

### 1 Governance

- Introduce a corporate landlord model that ensures centralised, robust, decision making processes are in place to enable professional asset management input to land and building considerations. (FF)
- Utilise the Property Asset Management (PAM) Strategic Board to comply with constitutional decision-making powers. (FF)
- Lead the Council’s interface with shared services on property matters. (FF)
- Support decision making through the development and delivery of well-formed outcome business cases. (FF)

### 2 Systems and Processes

- Develop and implement an annual process of property policies and processes based on RICS guidance and best practice for the public sector. (FF)
- Create a due diligence framework for asset acquisition, disposal or retention. (P, FF)
- Adopt the HM Treasury Building Better Business Case methodology to support recommendations / considerations for asset use. (P, FF)

## Fundamental Principle 2: Technical Delivery

### 3 Asset Management

- Ensure that Asset Management plays a key role in supporting the financial objectives of the Council considering HM Treasury Guidance for Managing Public Money (P, FF)
- Oversee performance of investment assets to maximise yields (FF)
- Consider finance and funding options for a sustainable estate (E, FF)
- Classify the Economic, Social and Environmental value of all operational and community assets. (C, E, P, FF)
- Develop a suite of assets that can be considered underutilised or surplus, for alternative use or disposal (which includes community asset transfers) (C, P, FF)

### 4 Asset Reviews

- Utilise the CIPFA Asset RAG model to challenge the assets we are holding (C, E, P, FF)
- Utilise the HM Treasury Better Business Case model to assess asset suitability in line with service delivery models for the future (C, E, P, FF)
- Asset Management to advise and promote understanding of categorisations to facilitate asset reviews through the PAM Strategic Board (C, E, P, FF)
- Consider social, environmental, community benefit of assets (C, E, P, FF)

## 5 Building Obsolescence

- Develop an active programme of surveys on assets to be retained and resource future planned preventative and capital cost programme (E, FF)
- Include Compliance in the Council's risk register to ensure Compliance is minimised, managed or mitigated (C, E, P, FF)
- Review assets planned to be retained that would may suit a fabric first retrofit to support the Council's Environmental Strategy (E, FF)
- Maximise procurement power to stimulate competition from supply chain in maintaining buildings and services (C, E, P, FF)

## 6 Readiness for the Future

- Evaluate categories to ensure asset optimisation to promote and support prosperity and economic growth (P, FF)
- Consider the future of Community Assets to better support place shaping (C, FF)
- Create a sustainability roadmap for achieving Net Zero on assets under the Control of the Council and approved for retention. (E, P, FF)
- Optimise funding and financing for a greener portfolio (E, P, FF)
- Review Asset Management into broader One Public Estate or other shared services models (FF)



## DEFINITIONS:

### • Strategic Asset Management:

Strategic asset management can be defined as the activity of aligning property assets with the strategic aims and direction of the organisation and adding both financial and non financial value to the organisation as a result.

### • Professional Asset Advisory:

Specialist technical advice relating to strategic asset management including asset valuations, leasehold advisory, development viability appraisals, disposals, investment appraisals, acquisitions, portfolio management, condition surveys, dilapidations.

### • Estate Management:

Landlord and tenant transactional work including agency, marketing, lease negotiations, rent negotiations, wayleaves, easements, landlord and tenant covenant monitoring, service charge budget setting and initiating action for breaches of covenant, insurance surveys.

### • Property Management

Operational transactions including setting up rent collection and monitoring, tenant liaison, site inspections, boundary disputes, land queries, database management, production of plans, measurement of property and land, reports, land ownership, site risk assessments, unauthorised access risk assessments, insurance claims processing.

### • Building Maintenance

Includes planned maintenance and reactive maintenance, engineering, building fabric and services, minor works projects (up to £250,000)

### • Compliance Management

Includes property risk assessments such as asbestos and fire. Compliance with regulations such as fixed electrical wiring, water hygiene, radon. Energy Performance Certificates, Display of Energy Performance Certificates, Life Safety Systems, Lifts.

### • Facilities Management

Soft services management which is provision of a service desk, security, vacant property management, cleaning, waste, utilities, estate cleaning, hygiene supplies.

### • Corporate Landlord

The concept of Corporate Landlord is that the professional advisory, estate and property management, building maintenance, compliance management and facilities management of all general fund property and land assets is transferred from the service departments to the Corporate Landlord, which is a centralised function of the Council. The service departments become corporate tenants.

The centralised function has a number of models, all in house (includes shared services), all outsourced, or a hybrid approach.



