

**PROPERTY SERVICES OUTCOME FOCUSED REVIEW: OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

**To:** Commercial and Investment Committee

**Meeting Date:** 14 September 2018

**From:** Councillor Joshua Schumann

**Electoral division(s):** All

**Forward Plan ref:** N/a **Key decision:** No

**Purpose:** The Committee is being asked to consider the best way for Cambridgeshire County Council's Property Services to be delivered.

**Recommendation:** For the Committee to recommend which option(s) from the list below they wish to be investigated further or discount at this stage.

a) Deliver service improvements in-house with associated revenue investment

b) Enter into a shared services agreement with Peterborough City Council through a Joint Venture (JV) with NPS.

c) The commissioning of Property Services through an external provider via an open market competition.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In autumn 2017, Members and the Strategic Management Team at Cambridgeshire County Council requested that the organisation undertake a series of Outcome Focused Reviews (OFRs). OFRs have been designed to evaluate the extent to which teams' activities contribute toward the council's priority outcomes and assess whether these outcomes could be delivered in a more effective or efficient way. Recommendations delivered through the OFR process should result in improved delivery of council outcomes and / or better value for money.
- 1.2 Management of the council's land and property portfolio were two of the service areas initially chosen for the review process. Rural asset services have been reviewed in a separate OFR and options for this service have been developed independently.
- 1.3 Property Services are divided into three service areas: Facilities Management, Compliance and Assets. The following table outlines the functions of each of these service areas.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Function</b>
Facilities Management	Service is responsible for site management functions across the council's estate as well as providing the programme and project management capacity for all related works. This includes maintenance, office moves and changes to buildings to meet service needs. The service also has an advisory function; manages the property helpdesk for all property related enquiries; and manages the contracts for pool and hire cars.
Compliance	Service is responsible for ensuring that all CCC buildings including maintained schools reach statutory standards in relation to both safety and equalities legislation. In addition, this service is responsible for delivering corporate security consultancy including physical safeguarding advice for schools. Compliance have a commercial model and achieved £70k of income in the last financial year.
Assets	Service is responsible for the asset management side of the council's property related activities. This includes acquisitions, transfers and disposals of assets as well as leases and other legal agreements associated with use of land and property. They are also responsible for the council's rural asset portfolio.

- 1.4 At the Commercial and Investment Committee in January 2018, it was agreed that the Property Services OFR should progress to the third stage of the OFR process: the design phase. This Committee report can be found [here](#) and Appendix F can be found [here](#). These papers document the research undertaken in phases one and two of the OFR process. Appendix A includes additional financial information.

1.5 As part of the design phase, the service areas have built on the original research from phases one and two of the OFR. The service areas and Transformation Team have organised further workshops and have undertaken desktop research to consider the best options for the future of property services. As an internal exercise, each service area has described the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within their service areas.

## 2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 As part of the Property Services OFR, the services are working to achieve the following:
- Opportunities are identified to further develop the Corporate Landlord Model and to make service improvements.
  - New performance measures and targets are agreed for Property Services.
  - Commercial opportunities are identified so that the services can generate more revenue.
  - Opportunities for joint working with Peterborough City Council are explored.

This section provides context for each of these objectives.

- 2.2 The service has established a Corporate Landlord Model where all decisions regarding property are made centrally and in a strategic way; there is a clearly defined and consistent offer from Facilities Management; and there a consistent brand for the organisation for all CCC assets. The Corporate Landlord Model would benefit from being refreshed to re-clarify what the services can expect from the council's property function through a standardised Landlord's offer. This work will require engagement with members and senior officers across the organisation to ensure that the expectations are agreed and widely communicated.
- 2.3 The primary issue that the future of the council's Property Services needs to address is the leadership of the services. Property Services were part of LGSS until October 2016 and at that time had a Head of Facilities Management and a Head of Strategic Assets working across Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. Following the move back into CCC, the service managers for each area have had to take on some additional responsibilities that would have traditionally been carried out by a Head of Service. They have not been able to have strategic oversight due to ongoing operational commitments and the performance and expectations of the services have not been clearly defined.
- 2.4 Compliance, Facilities Management and Assets have strong service connections and connect with public sector and private sector partners through established networks and they have formed strong links with members. However, a challenge of this OFR has been trying to determine how well the teams are performing outside of customer feedback. Measures and targets need to be introduced to the service that capture what a high performing, value-for-money property function should be delivering with agreement from the organisation. The services could significantly benefit from someone with property experience in a senior role who themselves have capacity and space to pull together things such as the team structure, information management and asset strategy.
- 2.5 As described in the January report, there are opportunities for the services to be more commercial and to generate more revenue. More work and dedicated capacity is needed to fully scope out the commercial benefits and the skills and resources required to maximise the commercial opportunities of the services. Many of these opportunities lie in

implementing a business model to provide a joint property maintenance/property compliance service to Academies. This would also support the government's view that authorities should be ensuring children and adults are sent to safe places on behalf of the council.

- 2.6 There are issues with resources and recruitment, particularly in the Assets service where the professional team have 3.4 vacancies out of a full complement of 7 (this excludes posts that work solely on the council's rural asset portfolio). The service have used agency staff with a steady turnover and some who have not performed well. Following the move back into CCC from LGSS, Assets have had to manage with reduced business support and mapping support while Facilities Management lost specialist technical skills as a result of the move. The services need to be able to attract, recruit and retain staff to deliver services that meet the needs of the organisation but also to realise commercial opportunities that have been identified.
- 2.7 Customer feedback has suggested that the services need to better articulate their offer to internal customers and move from being a predominantly reactive service to a more proactive service. Each service area held a workshop and reflected on their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The table in Appendix A captures the opportunities that the team members from each service area are keen to pursue. Feedback from the workshops have demonstrated ambitions from the teams to demonstrate an excellent level of customer service and to raise the teams' profile within the organisation.
- 2.8 The Shared Services Programme between the Council and Peterborough City Council has grown significantly in both scope and pace in the last six months. Like many other service areas across the council, Property Services have been asked to look into opportunities for joint working with Peterborough City Council. Joint-working arrangements could result in reduced costs as a result of efficiencies of scale and shared management. In addition, having a consistent property service offer between CCC and PCC would support joint-working in other service areas.
- 2.9 This paper outlines three options which could be considered as the vehicle through which service improvements are made. The options presented in this paper are as follows:
- a) Deliver service improvements in-house with associated revenue investment
  - b) Enter into a shared services agreement with Peterborough City Council through a Joint Venture (JV) with NPS.
  - c) The commissioning of Property Services through an external provider via an open market competition.

### **3. Option A) Deliver service improvements in-house with associated revenue investment**

#### **3.1 Summary**

There is agreement that the service cannot deliver improved services without greater strategic input and investment into the service. It is proposed that an interim Head of Service or Service Director is recruited to give the services the leadership and direction needed to become more joined up, more effective and more commercial. With this in place, it is argued that the service could make improvements equitable to what could be achieved

within a Joint Venture. It is proposed that it would be possible to establish a combined Property Services function with Peterborough City Council supported by but not part of NPS (Peterborough) to ensure cost effective property services. If PCC are interested, this could take the form of CCC providing an intelligent client function for PCC's property services but this would need to be explored further.

The combined property/assets/compliance teams have not reformed sufficiently since their departure from LGSS. A Head of Service post would enable the team to rebuild and offer a cost effective service to internal and external clients. The Head of Service post would offer additional capacity and leadership to address areas which require development including communication between the property related teams; and between property and front line services. Information sharing can be improved through further development of the K2 asset management database. This is key to greater efficiency.

### 3.2 Investments

There would be investment required for this proposal for an Interim Head of Service or Service Director which including on-costs is likely to cost circa £100k-140k. There is unallocated budget within the service area so the investment is likely to be £60-70k. There may also be other costs associated with filling vacancies within the teams and possibly recruiting additional commercial support for the services. It is proposed that these costs could be more than covered by increased commercial activities if the services have success at selling their services.

### 3.3 Benefits

- From a sound base, service offers can be made to external clients such as Academy schools, City and District Councils, Health, Police and Fire allowing them to enjoy the economies of scale benefits that Cambridgeshire County Council has through being a much larger Council with established contracts, frameworks and expertise.
- Cambridgeshire has developed and operated a corporate landlord model for several years which is the direction of travel that other authorities are moving towards. This is something that can be further developed through a refresh and relaunch to secure better buy in from senior service leads. The benefits are greater recognition of what the "landlord and tenant" can expect but also financial and non-financial efficiencies making expensive property assets work more efficiently and flexibly for service delivery to meet the new challenges presented by growing demands.
- CCC would retain full control over the services.
- The council would also retain 100% of savings or income generated when the service arrangements take shape.
- An in-house option will also help with continuity of service and will reduce possible disruption. There are a number of important projects including Cambridgeshire 2020 that will require support from these services.
- The recruitment of an Interim Head of Service or Service Director would likely support the services to become more commercial and would provide the leadership that services need. The Head of Service or Service Director would be able to clearly define expectations and set targets in an effective way.

### 3.4 Risks

- The council is unable to recruit a highly skilled candidate to the Interim Head of Property or Director post.
- One year is insufficient for the Interim Head of Property or Director post to establish

a sustainable model for property services.

- Joint working with Peterborough is not as developed as it could be if CCC were to enter into a Joint Venture with NPS. While it may be possible to share resources and expertise, it would be more challenging, if impossible to have shared leadership and vision for the services.

#### **4.0 Option B) Enter into a shared services agreement with Peterborough City Council through a Joint Venture (JV) with NPS.**

##### **4.1 Summary**

A Joint Venture is where two or more organisations come together for a project. They remain separate entities but share costs, profits and losses as set out in the Joint Venture agreement.

Peterborough City Council's (PCC) property services are delivered through a joint venture with NPS. NPS Peterborough Limited started trading in July 2016 and their agreement is for ten years. As part of this model at Peterborough, 16 Estates and Strategic Assets department staff transferred into the new company under Transfer Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) regulations. There is a one year break clause should Peterborough wish to exit this agreement. Subject to PCC's agreement of entering a broader joint arrangement, there would be scope for CCC to join into the JV.

The scope of NPS Peterborough also includes PCC's rural asset services. The future of CCC's rural asset services at CCC is being considered in a separate OFR, however, one of the options being presented in that paper is also NPS. If Committee were to decide that NPS is the preferred solution for both sets of services, they could again be reunited under a single workstream.

NPS have developed a proposal for CCC. Conversations to date with NPS have suggested that CCC could become a partner in the JV by the start of the 2019/20 financial year.

As Property Services can be split into three distinct functions: facilities management, compliance and assets; it may be that there is benefit in each of the service areas adopting a delivery model that best suits that function, resulting in some property functions being included in the Joint Venture but other services being continued to be delivered in house. It is proposed that each Property function is considered on a case by case basis as to whether it is advantageous for it to be part of the JV. This would happen during the business case stage. CCC will always be responsible for legal statutory property compliance, which the Compliance team currently provide, reporting in at Director level.

##### **4.2 Investments**

In order for the Joint Venture to be successful, CCC would have to establish an intelligent client function. This could potentially be shared with PCC. This would likely be a minimum of two professional officers who convey the priorities for the Local Authorities and hold the Joint Venture to account. It is likely that the client function would be the main interface between the Joint Venture and members apart from any members who sit on the Board of Directors. This client function would likely cost CCC and PCC a total of circa £120k including on costs (so likely £60k for CCC based on a 50:50 split). It is anticipated that savings and income delivered through the joint venture will exceed this expense.

### 4.3 Benefits

The benefits of delivering services through a Joint Venture are as follows:

- Savings through shared staff between organisations.
- Reduced management overheads.
- Access to experience and resources of the other organisations within the Joint Venture.
- Shared risk and shared revenue between the other organisations within the Joint Venture. This can enable organisations to maximise their commercial influence and activity within the marketplace.
- Ability to grow the JV could include furthering the One Public Estate model by offering services to the Police Authority and other partners (although 80% of the activity needs to be for the services that the council are putting into it to be Teckal compliant).
- Alignment of strategies and asset management plan between partners.
- Development of best practice processes.
- CCC would retain a direct influence on the strategic direction of the company through representation on the Board of Directors. This gives the council a greater degree of involvement than would be possible in a traditional outsourced contractual arrangement.
- A Joint Venture has the ability to trade with fewer restrictions in wider markets brings increased business flexibility and better returns.

The benefits of working with NPS are as follows:

- NPS have significant experience of managing property and asset functions. NPS have 11 joint venture clients with Local Authorities including Peterborough City Council and Norfolk County Council.
- NPS have a commercial strategy that could build on the commercial activity undertaken in CCC on a regional or national basis.
- Experienced in achieving results in asset management by:
  - Improving asset management plans
  - Implementing current best practice
  - Ensuring disposal of non-profitable assets in a quick timeframe. That said, CCC already have a track record of disposing non-profitable assets quickly. In the last year CCC have carried out the equivalent of several years sales in 6 months.
- Experienced in delivering service improvement plans through working with staff and creating a culture which empowers staff.

### 4.4 Risks

- The legal responsibility for property statutory compliance will remain with the Council even if the compliance work is undertaken by the JV.
- CCC would no longer have full control of Property Services which could potentially make the service less responsive to organisational needs.
- The Service improvements and new commercial activities do not achieve significant financial benefits for CCC in part because any additional income or savings would be shared with the partners of the Joint Venture.
- This option could result in a period of turbulence while the new arrangements are established. This may have a negative impact on services in the short term during a period where there are a number of critical CCC projects which involve Property Services like Cambridgeshire 2020.
- This arrangement will most likely require exclusivity. CCC currently have a framework

arrangement which allows the council to competitively tender specialist services from a range of consultants which has included NPS. Price and quality can be checked to ensure the best service and if they do not perform, they are removed. It also allows good business relationships to be built and maintains professional knowledge as the services are dealing with a variety of consultants who each bring different perspectives sometimes with expertise in different markets across the County.

- Even in a Joint Venture, the services are not fully resourced because recruitment is an issue in this sector. NPS can pay more and can pay signing on premiums but this will ultimately increase the cost of the service for the council.
- Norwich City Council are currently looking to terminate their Joint Venture with NPS Norwich and to bring the property services in-house for 'complete financial control'. This suggests that the Joint Venture model has not been successful everywhere and if CCC does progress with this option, the client side will need to be robust.
- The PCC property portfolio is only 20% of the size of the CCC property portfolio. It is currently unclear what implications the difference in size will have on the model of the Joint Venture.

## **5.0 Option C) The commissioning of Property Services through an external provider via an open market competition.**

### **5.1 Summary**

In this model, property services as a whole would be commissioned out to an external provider, who will deliver the property function on behalf of CCC. Lincolnshire County Council in 2015 engaged VINCI mouchel to undertake a full range of facilities management services as well as design, project management, property management, energy management and estates management to the council's corporate property estate for up to 10 years. A New Engineering Contract (NEC) was used to procure the work which provides a collaborative and transparent relationship between the parties. The NEC3 Term Service Contract fosters trust and cooperation using plain English by an open-book approach, early warnings and key performance indicators linked to pain and gain. NEC contract efficiencies and incentives have helped to deliver over £1 million of cost savings in the first two years and significantly reduced reactive maintenance demand. Lamberts Smith Hampton (LSH) have had a long term partnership with Essex County Council since 1994. The contract was renewed in 2011 for 10 years alongside MITIE and provide facilities management, estates management and transactional services.

### **5.2 Benefits**

- Reduction of in-house costs
- A larger organisation is more likely to be fully resourced
- Outsourcing tests the market and should result in the best option available in terms of price and quality.

### **5.3 Risks**

- The legal responsibility for property statutory compliance will remain with the Council even if the compliance work is undertaken by an external provider.
- This option would require significant time and resource allocation to find a suitable provider
- A robust account management function would be required to ensure that service users are not impacted negatively



- CCC would relinquish full control of the property function and may not be able to realise the commercial opportunities identified
- A number of local authorities are bringing services back in house via frameworks in order to make savings, an example of this being Norfolk County Council (joint owners of NPS) who will return to delivering FM functions in-house.
- Further issues in the external market are evidenced by the current issues experienced by Interserve, who are currently under government watch over financial health fears since issuing a profit warning in September 2017 and Amey, who reported a £189.8m pre-tax loss for 2017

Lessons learnt from the collapse of Carillion in January 2018, which was liquidated with debts of £1.5bn and had 420 contracts in the UK public sector, include the need for:

- A strong tendering process prioritising working with organisations with a strong public service ethos, committed to service outcomes
- A comprehensive understanding of the differences in quality provided by rival bidders.
- A thorough understanding of the risk that CCC would be transferring to a private company and the implementation of measures to ensure that risk transfer is effective
- Robust contract management to ensure that promised savings/revenue are delivered, underperformance against contracts is managed and appropriate levels of accountability are established

## **6. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

Report authors should evaluate the proposal(s) in light of their alignment with the following three Corporate Priorities.

### **6.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

There are no significant implications for this priority

### **6.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives**

There are no significant implications for this priority

### **6.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

There are no significant implications for this priority

## **7. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

Report authors should evaluate any further significant implications using the seven sub-headings below. These significant implications should also be evaluated using the questions detailed in the table below. Each specific implication must be signed off by the relevant Team within the Council before the report is submitted to Democratic Services.

Further guidance and a checklist containing prompt questions are included at Appendix 2.

### **7.1 Resource Implications**

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Each of the options in this options appraisal will have different implications for resources. For each option selected to be investigated further, the Business Case will have full details of all implications.

## 7.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Each of the options in this options appraisal will have different implications for procurement. For each option selected to be investigated further, the Business Case will have full details of all implications.
- For option C, this would require a large scale procurement project and resources from within property, procurement and other teams to research the market and design a robust specification with outcomes and KPIs that can ensure whatever arrangement we commit to is fit for purpose. The SLA in particular may require external support to write and a significant amount of time will be spent by members of the property team to read and evaluate the tenders and ensure a compliant decision is made. A lot of prior market engagement or dialogue will be required .
- If CCC were to enter a Joint Venture with NPS, any additional trading this company carries out with other bodies will be within the teckal limits. The new company will meet all of the teckal tests so it will be feasible for this company to provide services back to CCC without CCC having to go through a competitive process as a teckal exemption could be applied as detailed in section 2.2 in the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-alternative-delivery-models-toolkit/alternative-delivery-models-explained>
- For such a large amount of spend of a commercial interest to the private sector, compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 will be essential for both options above and will require a high level of dedicated procurement and legal resource as well as technical experts supporting the council's SLA.

## 7.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Each of the options in this options appraisal will have different statutory, legal and risk implications. For each option selected to be investigated further, the Business Case will have full details of all implications.
- If CCC were to enter a Joint Venture with NPS, any additional trading this company carries out with other bodies will be within the teckal limits. The new company will meet all of the teckal tests so it will be feasible for this company to provide services back to CCC without CCC having to go through a competitive process as a teckal exemption could be applied as detailed in section 2.2 in the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-alternative-delivery-models-toolkit/alternative-delivery-models-explained>

## 7.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

*There are no significant implications within this category.*

## 7.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Each of the options in this options appraisal will have different engagement and Communications implications. For each option selected to be investigated further, the Business Case will have full details of all implications.
- Early discussions have begun to ascertain whether Peterborough City Council would be open to entering a broader joint arrangement so that CCC could join into the JV.

## 7.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

*There are no significant implications within this category.*

## 7.7 Public Health Implications

*There are no significant implications within this category.*

<b>Implications</b>	<b>Officer Clearance</b>
<b>Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?</b>	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood
<b>Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Gus De Silva
<b>Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?</b>	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Mickaela McMurtry
<b>Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Julia Turner
<b>Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Christine Birchall
<b>Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Julia Turner
<b>Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Liz Robin

<b>Source Documents</b>	<b>Location</b>
Commercial and Investment Committee reports	Democratic Services

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## Appendix A: Staff Establishment for Property Services

### Facilities Management

Post Title	FTE	Total Cost (£)	Vacancies
Premises Project Manager	1.0	<b>560,906</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Site Facilities Officer Cambridge	1.0		
Site Facilities Officer Cambridge	1.0		
Premises Programme Manager	1.0		
Facilities Manager	1.0		
Senior Technical Services Property Officer	1.0		
Senior Technical Services Property Officer	1.0		
Helpdesk Officer	1.0		
Site Facilities Officer Cambridge	1.0		
Helpdesk Officer	1.0		
Finance Administrator	1.0		
Site Facilities Officer Cambridge	1.0		
Site Facilities Manager	1.0		
Facilities Technical Officer	1.0		
Finance Administrator	1.0		
Business Support Assistant	1.0		

Agency Staff: £40,000

### Compliance

Post Title	FTE	Total Cost (£)	Vacancies
Fire Safety Advisor	1.0	<b>161,804</b>	<b>0</b>
Compliance Manager	1.0		
Technical Support Premises and Security Officer	1.0		
Compliance Officer	1.0		

### Assets

Post Title	FTE	Total Cost (£)	Vacancies
Principal Surveyor Urban	1.0	451,383	3.4
Strategic Asset Manager	1.0		
Principal Surveyor Urban	1.0		
Area Manager Rural	1.0		
Area Manager Urban	1.0		
Rural surveyor	1.0		
Urban surveyor	1.0		
Surveyor (Rural)	1.0		
Estate Officer Rural	1.0		
Property Surveyor	1.0		
Business Support Assistant	1.0		
Principal Surveyor Rural	1.0		
Principal Surveyor Urban	0.6		
Group Asset Manager	1.0		

**\*Posts marked red work on rural assets only and their costs and vacancies are not included in the Total Cost and Vacancies columns as these are not in the scope of this OFR.**

Appendix B: Opportunities identified through team workshops

<b>Opportunities Identified Through Team Workshops</b>		
<b>Facilities Management</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Assets</b>
Becoming more commercial and selling services.	Becoming more commercial to generate revenue and to offset costs.	Recruitment – add more skills and different perspectives
Improving systems and processes.	Shared Services to increase trading opportunities and to reduce costs.	Greater promotion of the team and the council's assets.
Improving communication and raising the service's profile within CCC.	Expanding areas of work e.g. more on accessibility, project work, more security and safeguarding work.	New systems to facilitate internal efficiencies.
Full adoption of the corporate landlord model and to standardise the corporate offering.	Expand the team.	Changing of working practices to become more flexible.
Greater customer focus and collect more feedback.		Building on external relationships.
Develop a roadmap for the future with a defined strategy and targets.		Generating external work.
Better use of knowledge base to encourage proactive works.		
To use joined up systems, help desk, administration, finance.		
Provide for all the organisational structure so that objectives are met and work continuity is maintained		
Upskill existing team and re-profile responsibilities and remits		

Fill staff establishment gaps.		
Further develop work with Districts		
Place all FM, in FM		
Pursue OPE opportunities		
Aim for a one provider County		