

Our Assets

Our Council Panel
29 September 2021

Head of Assets – Julia Nock

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Our mission:
Working as one to
serve our city

wolverhampton.gov.uk

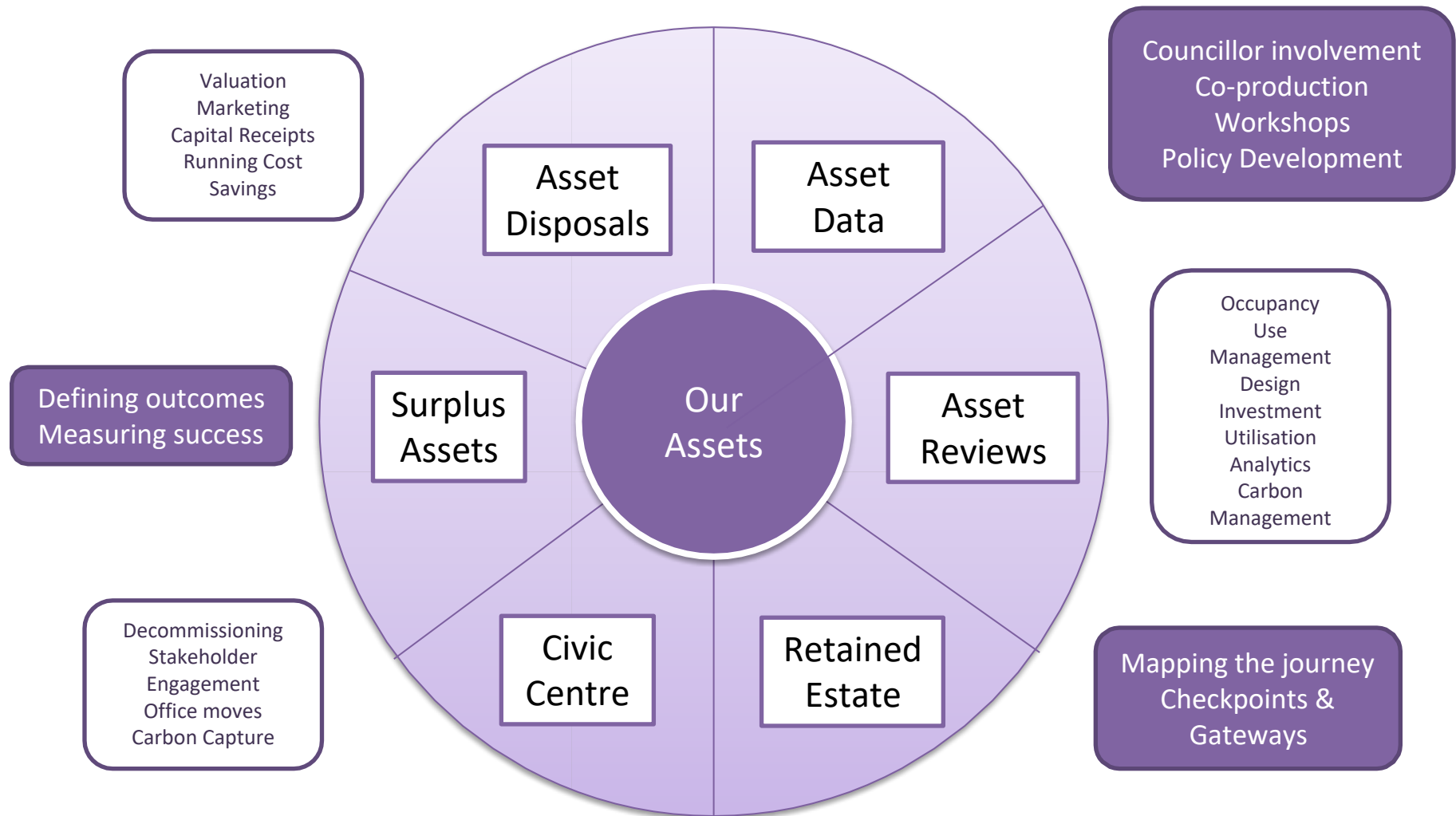
Our Assets – Context

- Our Assets is incorporated into the Relighting Our Council programme
- Agile and flexible working is now happening more than ever
- All employees have been classified as either having Field, Fixed or Flexible working patterns
- This fundamentally changes the future demand for built assets
- Will result in changes of use and occupancy of some buildings - and exiting others altogether (potential commercial opportunities)

Our Assets – Approach

- Our Assets will ensure the Council pro-actively reviews and rationalises our property portfolio - saving money; reducing carbon; and improving the outcomes for our communities
- Assumption that there will be a need for physical/ built assets across the City – though these needs may differ from community to community
- The right solutions will be reached by involving City partners and our communities
- All land and property assets are in scope for review - the future operating model of the Council will rely upon all property asset types for the delivery of services

Programme Design



Our Assets Programme Mandate

- A property estate which delivers better outcomes for Wolverhampton residents, employers, partners & communities
- Ensuring the right Council land and property assets are in the right place, and are being used in the right ways to benefit people in the City
- A property portfolio fully aligned with, and enabling of the future operating models

Proposed Accommodation Strategy

1. Civic Centre is our organisational Headquarters and will be the base for City-wide services
2. Locations other than the Civic Centre will be a service base only where there is a community/ place based need
3. Other buildings/ sites across the City will be used for touchdown and collaboration work opportunities
4. These buildings will be multi-service use/ occupancy and managed corporately by City Assets (unless agreed otherwise owing to the function e.g. Libraries; WV Active)
5. Implementation will be through a phased approach across Short/ Medium/ Long term periods
6. Critical to agree clear narrative for the continued use of any retained buildings for short to medium term

Proposed Review Groupings

1. Corporate offices
2. Other buildings/ sites in active use for the delivery of services (e.g. Libraries; WV Active sites; Strengthening Family Hubs) and include office space (Place based opportunities)
3. Commercial estate
4. Land; Monuments and other sites

Target date for completion of the asset reviews:

31st December 2021

Asset Review Criteria (approved by Our Assets Board)

- Community Outcomes/ opportunities and contribution to service delivery as part of Place-Based working
- Location relative to purpose (i.e. distribution across the City)
- Regeneration potential
- CO2 Emissions/ Net Zero status
- Statutory Compliance
- Condition & Suitability (including accessibility)
- Capital Expenditure requirements for 2021-2024 MTFS
- Revenue expenditure (including utilities)

[wolverhampton.gov.uk](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk)

Business Case approach

- A robust business case approach will be adopted with evidence informing any investment/divestment in the estate, and/or considering third-party use of our buildings.
- Business cases will consider both financial and non-financial factors (such as benefits to communities; creating space for more housing; employment etc.)
- Benefits will be clearly identified with explicit links back to stated Council priorities, and alignment with Relighting Our City/ Relighting Our Council.

Defining our timeline

Short Term

- The period up until the end of October 2021

Medium Term

- The period up until the end of March 2022

Long Term

- The period from April 2022 onwards

Phased Approach – Short Term (to October 2021)

1. Next phase of Civic Centre – From Monday 13 September a set number of desks, meeting rooms and collaboration spaces were made available for all employees to book
2. Review the portfolio and identify assets that will be recommended for re-opening to support the Civic Centre for touchdown and collaborative working across the City
3. All Strengthening Families Hubs to reopen by end of October with touchdown/ collaborative use by Childrens' and Adults' services where possible
4. Collaboration working - Clinical Commissioning Group and MHCLG (temporary) are in occupation of the Civic Centre

Phased Approach – Medium Term (up until March 2022)

1. Continuing to increase the occupancy of the Civic Centre (within social distancing and other covid measures) aligning with the Relighting Our Council programme and new operating models
2. Following the office portfolio review, progress the repurposing/rationalisation of other offices that are no longer required for operational service delivery (subject to approval)
3. Understand potential opportunities and impact at community level
4. Work with city partners on joined up City wide estates solutions (including Wolverhampton Homes) identifying and mapping customer contact points alongside transport infrastructure (including Cycle Hire/ EV Charging Points)
5. Establish a network of connected spaces – better meeting employee needs identifying suitable accommodation for field workers
6. Set out the benefits of the proposals; the timescales for delivery, clearly communicating the planned approach to ensure understanding and facilitate co-production across all stakeholders

Phased Approach – Long Term (from April 2022 onwards)

1. Monitor utilisation and demand of operational buildings to feed into the continued review of assets
2. Continued review of assets to identify investment/divestment options
3. Use of Health and Social Care Facilities and other corporate assets for touchdown/ collaborative use as part of City Wide accommodation strategy

In summary

- We have an opportunity to re-shape our property estate and to ensure this more directly benefits communities across our City
- There is a will - and mandate - to work across the council and with partners, as part of the Relighting Our City/ Relighting Our Council to get it right
- Successful programme delivery will depend on an inclusive and collaborative approach – facilitating creative thinking and actions