

## **ASSET MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2025**

Notes of a meeting of the **ASSET MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **MONDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2025** at 7.00p.m.

### **PRESENT**

**Councillor Martin Ashcroft (Chairman)** and:  
Councillors: Tunde Akinsanya, Jaci Beddard, Tony Beddard,  
Arun M. Chandran, Lisa Conners, Phillip Hawkins, Richard Hutchinson,  
Carl Robinson, Kyle Robinson and Ken Robson.

### **OFFICERS**

Mr Dan Austin (Town Clerk)  
Mrs Tracey Woodhead (Finance Manager)  
Mrs. Sharna Stretch (Senior Admin. Officer)

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

No members of public were present.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Lindsey Aston, Neil Collinson and Jackie McFadden.

#### **2. MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS**

There were no requests for dispensations.

#### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

#### **5. MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor Ken Robson, and seconded by Councillor Richard Hutchinson and;

**RESOLVED** - that the minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management Sub-Committee, held on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **6. ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

An update report, together with appropriate appendices, was presented by the Town Clerk for consideration, highlighting progress in delivering the Council's Asset Management Plan.

The report set out a mid-year progress update on all the capital works planned for this financial year. This followed on from the agreement at the last meeting of which works are to go ahead this year, and which projects were to be deferred to a future year or maintained as provisional sums.

The report also provided financial information to support the progress update, including details of the adjusted 2025/26 Capital Programme Budget and spending to date against the budget, the capital budgets for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30 from the recently approved Medium-Term Financial Plan, and extracts from the Asset Management Plan setting out the ten-year schedules of building works, replacement vehicles and machinery, office equipment, street equipment and play equipment.

It was agreed to move to consideration of the individual appendices and consider these in turn.

### **Appendix 1 – 2025/26 Land and Building Works Progress Update**

This appendix highlighted the building works that are planned for the 2025/26 financial year as part of the approved 2025/26 Capital Programme Budget, along with all those projects carried forward from the previous year, and any additional projects that have been approved during the year.

Members considered the report page by page, receiving any progress updates and asking any questions on individual projects as noted below.

#### **Sports Complex**

It was advised that the sports hall floor sand and reseal is to be deferred to 2026/27 and carried out at the same time as the refurbishment of the male and female changing rooms in order to minimise closure times. The same principles are being applied to the squash court flooring and sports hall redecoration projects which will also now be undertaken in 2026/27. It was advised that the male toilet refurbishment was completed in the summer. The Chairman wished to pass on his thanks to the works department maintenance team for their quick work repairing the automatic access door.

#### **Sports Complex Solar Panel System**

The Town Clerk advised that he is trying to secure a date for the feasibility study with a view to starting the tendering process in early 2026. Councillor Tony Beddard suggested that the solar panels should have an estimate of their capacity. The Town Clerk advised that this would be part of the first stage of the process within the scope of the feasibility study to come shortly.

#### **Golf Shop and Driving Range**

It was advised that both the driving range steelwork repainting and replacement bay dividers will be quoted for to be carried out at the same time with a report due to be brought to the November Recreation Committee Meeting.

#### **St Oswald's Pre School**

It was advised that the main door locks have been replaced.

#### **Simpasture Playing Fields**

It was advised that the drainage scheme is now complete.

### **Moore Lane Eco Centre**

It was advised that Green Arts have carried out internal redecoration and discussions are being held with the Probation Service with a view to painting the exterior of the building.

### **Flat Roof Surveys**

It was advised that the surveys are now complete and no major works have been identified.

### **Pitched Roof Surveys**

It was advised that these surveys are due to be arranged shortly.

### **Appendix 2 – Other Capital Works Progress Update**

This appendix highlighted all of the non-building related capital investment projects that are planned for the 2025/26 financial year as part of the approved 2025/26 Capital Programme Budget, along with all those projects carried forward from the previous year, and any additional projects approved during the year.

Members considered the report page by page, receiving any progress updates and asking any questions on individual projects as noted below.

### **Golf Course Improvements**

Councillor Carl Robinson noted that the ditch clearance works and clearing of vegetation from the ponds has helped with drainage on the golf course.

### **Works Electric Equipment**

Councillor Arun Chandran commented that the Climate Emergency was declared during the last term, and it is possible that Net Zero commitments will disappear depending on the priorities of the new administration at DCC. He advised that all options should be considered in replacing works equipment and not just electrical. The Town Clerk advised that a Climate Change Update Report will be presented to the next Full Council meeting, and this may be a good opportunity for the Council to reaffirm or vary the previous climate emergency recommendations.

### **Sports Complex Electric Vehicle Charging Points**

Councillor Carl Robinson suggested that any excess generation from the solar panel system could be utilised to charge the depot vehicles.

### **Aycliffe Village Play Area**

It was advised that a report was to be presented to the October round of meetings in relation to the replacement play area in Aycliffe Village. Councillor Tony Beddard requested that consideration be given for accessibility which the Chairman clarified is always undertaken.

### **Information Technology**

The Town Clerk advised that the main priority for the use of this budget would be in addressing recommendations from the recent cybersecurity audit by the Council's Information Technology support company. It was advised that officers are looking to attain the Government Cyber Essentials accreditation. Councillor Arun Chandran made a statement regarding the importance of considering the human risk factor in relation to cybersecurity and the importance of staff training.

### **Christmas Lights**

The Town Clerk advised that the street lighting columns on which the Christmas lights are mounted are a Durham County Council asset and that five columns have failed their stress test. An update in relation to this issue is to be provided at the next Environment Meeting.

### **Rapid Deployment CCTV Cameras**

The Town Clerk advised that officers are liaising with Newton Aycliffe Police in trying to get Durham County Council onboard with the testing of street lighting columns and the movement of cameras from one location to another.

### **Town Park Swing Unit**

The Town Clerk advised that Section 106 Agreement monies have been secured to replace the Town Park Swing Unit and a report would be presented to the next Recreation Committee Meeting with options.

### **Simpasture Park Junior Play Area**

The Town Clerk advised that Section 106 Agreement monies have been applied for to enable this project to proceed. Councillor Tony Beddard asked how much visibility the Council gets with Section 106. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council had a good working relationship with the Durham County Council Planning Department, and that a list of available minutes is regularly shared with town and parish councils and there is a good track record on successfully applying for funding.

### **Appendix 3 – 2025/26 Adjusted Capital Programme Budget**

This appendix set out the adjusted Capital Programme Budget for 2025/26. The Finance Manager advised that the budget currently stands at £981,400, comprised of the original approved 2025/26 Capital Budget of £567,350, the carry forward of ongoing budget commitments totalling £366,900 and additional capital budget approvals totalling £47,150 for the sports complex bar chairs, sports complex heating system boiler replacements, driving range ball dispenser machine and additional monies for the ride on mower replacement.

### **Appendix 4 – 2025/26 Capital Programme – Spending to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025**

The Finance Manager advised that this appendix showed a total investment to date of £263,028, (£227,130 net of use of capital contributions), against an adjusted Capital Budget of £981,400, representing 33% of the total projects identified to go ahead in 2025/26. It was noted that based on the analysis made, total spending for the year, *if* all agreed projects go ahead during the year, would be in the region of £675,300 (net of capital contributions), and higher than this if any provisional sums are required to be used during the year.

### **Appendix 5 – 2025/26 to 2029/30 Medium Term Financial Plan Capital Budgets**

The Finance Manager advised that this appendix set out the five-year Capital Programme Budget schedule from the recently approved Medium-Term Financial Plan. It set out the adjusted Capital Programme Budget for 2025/26, together with estimated figures for the following four years from 2026/27 to 2029/30. It was advised that the Council faces potentially significant capital investments commitments over the next five years of £2.317 million.

### **Appendix 6 – 2025/26 to 2034/35 Asset Management Plan Schedules**

The Finance Manager advised that this appendix provided the Council's ten-year forecast for asset replacement and schedules for each category of assets. It sets out the material assets held, the year of purchase, the cost, the expected useful life, anticipated year of replacement, and estimated replacement cost. It was noted that these schedules currently identify total potential capital investment requirements of in the region of £4.070 million over the next ten years. The funding of these medium to longer term capital investment commitments could see the Council's earmarked capital and reserves significantly depleted or even wiped out altogether towards the end of the decade *if* all capital investment goes ahead and earmarked capital reserves cannot be replenished from the Council's Revenue Budget.

It was proposed by Councillor Arun Chandran, and seconded by Councillor Ken Robson, and

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended that

- i) The report and appendices be received.
- ii) The progress review of the Asset Management Plan for the financial year 2026/27 be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration and approval.

## **7. DRAFT 2026/27 CAPITAL PROGRAMME BUDGETS**

The Finance Manager submitted a report for members to consider the Council's draft Capital Programme Budget for the 2026/27 financial year.

The Finance Manager highlighted that the budget had been prepared largely on the basis of the investment already identified in the Medium-Term Financial Plan, adjusted for any changes in costs as well as the addition of any new projects identified by managers as being of an essential nature.

The draft budget had been agreed with all budget managers and considered at a meeting of the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of each Committee and spokesperson for each political group and will be reported to Environment, Recreation and Policy and Resources Committees during October.

It was further noted that a number of capital projects from the current financial year will need to be carried forward to 2026/27. These projects include various unspent provisional sums and deferred projects.

It was proposed by Councillor Carl Robinson, and seconded by Councillor Ken Robson, and

**RESOLVED** – that it be recommended that:

- i) The report and appendix be received.
- ii) The draft 2026/27 Capital Programme Budget be agreed.
- iii) The officer review of the draft planned capital works programme for the financial year 2026/27 and classification of each project between those which are to go ahead this year, which are to be maintained as provisional sum, and which should be deferred to a future year or deleted; be agreed.

**CHAIRMAN**