

Committee: **Audit Committee**
 Date of meeting: **2nd February 2021**
 Report Subject: **Building Decommissioning Process**
 Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member
 Corporate Services**
 Report Submitted by: **Richard Crook – Corporate Director Regeneration
 and Community Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
			02.02.21					

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present to the Audit Committee an update on the implementation of the Actions identified in the previous report around the decommissioning of the BRC

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The Audit Committee considered a report in March 2020 which identified a number of issues in relation to the decommissioning of the BRC and the Committee sought reassurance that the lessons had been learned and embedded into Council procedures going forward.

2.2 The Business Resource Centre has now been sold and is no longer in Council control. Therefore, this report sets out the response to the action contained in 5.2 of the report *'The Managing Director has tasked the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community Services to undertake a full review of the arrangements for the management of disposals'*.

2.3 The decommissioning process has been reviewed and the lessons learned highlighted the need for a systematic approach to the decommissioning of non-operational buildings. An approach has been developed that is now embedded into working practice, with the Corporate Landlord implementing the actions in conjunction with the service area that is vacating a premises.

2.4 Where a building is to be vacated an officer group comprising the service area and the Corporate Landlord is established to ensure that all relevant service based material is removed prior to the handover of the building to the Corporate Landlord. In parallel with this the Corporate Landlord has a template Appendix 1) to provide a consistent and structured approach which will be customised by the Officer group to reflect the specific premises requirements covering:

- Property and Equipment Maintenance
- Grounds Maintenance
- Network and IT services
- Utilities
- Furniture

2.3 In addition, a protocol (Appendix 2) has been developed using the lessons learned from previous reports for the disposal of schools which include the actions set out previously. The recent disposal of the Queen Street and Bryngwyn Schools has used the revised practice and following completion the Officer Group have met to review how the process has worked to ensure any further lessons are learned and embedded into the disposal process. The use of the developed process for disposals demonstrates that the Council has learned from previous experience (& weaknesses identified in the BRC Decommissioning report) and is now using an effectively process.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1 (preferred option)** - The Audit Committee consider the report and take assurance that improvements in the decommissioning processes have been made and compliance is being monitored.

3.2 **Option 2** - The Audit Committee consider the report and does not take assurance that improvements in the decommissioning processes have been made.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The process now being used will ensure that the Council complies with statutory Duties.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

The following of a process will ensure that the activity is undertaken and delivered within the agreed budget for the decommissioning and should minimise further pressure on the Corporate Landlord budget.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

The process now adopted minimises the risks for the Council of decommissioning of buildings as there is now a consistent methodology applied to the process. This process has been used and a lessons learned approach has been included to ensure that a process improvement can continue to be captured. There is now clear ownership of the process and of any actions which provides clarity and accountability

5.3 Legal

There are no direct implications under legal in this report.

5.4 Human Resources

The decommissioning of property sits within the existing roles of officers.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 Performance Information and Data

The Authority will be able to demonstrate that it gets the best value from its assets if buildings are decommissioned properly.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

The agreement of this report provides assurance to the communities of Blaenau Gwent on the robustness of the Authority's internal control.

6.3 Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

There are no direct implications under involvement in this report.

6.4 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

There are no direct implications under thinking for the long term in this report.

6.5 Preventative focus

The application of correct protocols when decommissioning buildings will protect the Authority's interests and prevent exposure to risks of prosecution or financial loss.

6.6 Collaboration / partnership working

There are no direct collaboration/partnership arrangements arising from this report.

6.7 Integration (across service areas)

There are no direct implications for integration.

6.8 EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)

The production of this report has a neutral impact against people or groups from the nine protected characteristics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The process will be monitored by the Corporate Landlord as part of the disposal process.