

## **The Corporate Landlord Model**

The way the Council manages its property assets is important to support the delivery of the Council's objectives. The Corporate Landlord model is an established approach that takes a strategic approach to property and asset management across the council, with the ability to scrutinise the ownership, management and use of property and assets to deliver revenue savings and a fit-for-purpose platform for service delivery

The Corporate Landlord approach will support the Council in delivering the Target Operating Model by working closely with service departments to ensure that they have the right spaces in the right locations to deliver change.

The Corporate Landlord model approach sets out to enable services a quicker response by working closely with them to understand their current and future space requirements, which will facilitate a proactive approach to be taken in finding suitable solutions, backed by robust business case.

### **What is a Corporate Landlord?**

The concept of a Corporate Landlord is that the ownership of all property assets and the responsibility for their management and maintenance is undertaken by a Corporate Landlord, which is a centralised function of the Council. The service departments become corporate tenants and make use of the property or land in delivering a service.

The Corporate Landlord's function is to ensure the service departments needs are accommodated and to maintain and manage the property assets having regard to principles of efficiency and good estate management, property law and to the duties of a Local Authority as a property owner.

The Corporate Landlord does not work in isolation and ongoing liaison with the service delivery teams is an essential part of its function.

The Corporate Landlord will take responsibility for providing a corporate and consistent policy/standards approach to:

- Acquisition and disposal
- Space standards and utilisation
- Repair and maintenance
- Premises related Health and Safety requirements
- Statutory inspections
- Security, caretaking and cleaning
- Disabled access requirements
- Insurance – buildings and building works
- Energy efficiency and sustainability issues

## Current position

Due to a Corporate Landlord model not having been implemented within Slough Borough Council, issues such as:

1. Asset plans not aligned to business planning or not delivering corporate objectives
2. Capital investment not prioritised
3. Total backlog maintenance position remains unknown
4. Statutory obligations, legislative testing programmes unknown
5. Data inconsistent, partial and held in multiple locations
6. Cost of occupation unknown
7. Space standards and utilisation remain inconsistent
8. Space utilisation is unknown
9. Procurement of property services is inconsistent **resulting in the inability**

Service departments are therefore still taking decisions regarding property, including agreeing occupations with third parties or committing to staff relocation without taking advice from the Asset Management team.

This results, at best, in the Property & Assets team being asked to facilitate changes without adequate time to consider all the implications and, at worst, agreeing deals that are not compliant with legislation.

## Why a Corporate Landlord?

The Corporate Landlord approach is designed to enable a local authority landowner to utilise its assets to deliver better, more efficient services to the Council and to communities.

Corporate Landlord is used by most private sector organisations with large property holdings and many Local Authorities have recognised the benefits and already adopted this model.

It is important that only people trained in property can transact property matters for the following reasons.

1. Property legislation is complex and as well as incorporating common law principles includes the statutory requirements of legislations such as.
  - i. Landlord and Tenant Act 1954
  - ii. Various Law of Property Acts
  - iii. Housing Acts where there is a residential element
  - iv. Local Government Act 1972 – S123 and exemptions
  - v. Other duties including best value requirements and general fiduciary duties
  - vi. General Health and Safety legislation, Legionella, fire safety, gas and electricity certification etc. Etc.
2. By centralising the responsibility for property decisions and management, it is possible to see the effect that one property move has on the remainder of the estate and where “gaps” need or can be filled, which is something that individual services can often ignore.
3. The Corporate Landlord approach can deliver economies of scale in terms of capacity, procurement, and opportunities for co-location across an organisation and with other

external organisations. This can lead to rationalisation that can only be achieved by taking a holistic view of property.

4. The cost of holding empty or under used property will be reduced and eliminated as the Asset Management team identifies sharing opportunities and inefficient occupation and takes steps to dispose of surplus property. This will involve full consultation with the relevant service departments.

In taking these steps the Council is able.

1. To unlock the value of assets, seek efficiencies through joint arrangements with public sector partners and maximise private sector investment.
2. To ensure that Council Service Teams have the accommodation that they need to work, particularly in terms of location, suitability, and sufficiency.
3. To support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.
4. To integrate thinking about property with financial, regeneration and other considerations.
5. To be seen to act corporately (and rationally) in relation to its property assets, being able to fully justify decisions made involving property.
6. To ensure that the estate is fit for purpose and disposing of assets that are not required for service delivery or investment.

### **Implementation of Corporate Landlord Model**

Key to implementation is going to be clear communication as to the new ways of working under the corporate landlord model. This will be undertaken through email updates in addition to an area on Insite, where staff can be signposted to.

Property & Assets will work with Service Teams to process map the key stages and sign off processes to ensure that requests can be streamlined, and that robust and resilient decisions can be made.

To assist with this, an Asset Management Panel will be set up, which will be led by the Director of Property and Assets. The full Terms of References will be published on the Insites page. This will be a panel to approve service teams requests, as well as review of each property asset on a cyclical basis.